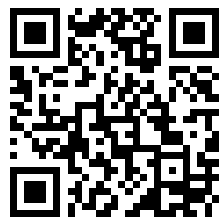

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THE NEW TESTAMENT,
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

The Acts, the Epistles, and the Revelation.

THE TEXT ARRANGED IN SECTIONS; WITH BRIEF READINGS AND COMPLETE ANNOTATIONS,
SELECTED FROM "THE CHOICE AND BEST OBSERVATIONS" OF MORE THAN THREE
HUNDRED EMINENT CHRISTIAN THINKERS OF THE PAST AND PRESENT.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS, MAPS, AND DIAGRAMS.

PREPARED BY

J. GLENTWORTH BUTLER, D.D.

Second Edition.

"So they read in the book of the law of God, distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."—**NEHEMIAH** viii. 8.

"That form of writing which, in my judgment, is of all others most rich and precious, is positive divinity, collected upon particular texts of Scriptures in brief observations; not dilated into commonplaces, not chafing after controversies, not reduced into method of Art. . . . For I am persuaded that if the choice and best observations upon texts of Scripture which have been made dispersedly in sermons . . . leaving out the largeness of exhortations and applications thereupon, had been set down in a continuance, it had been the best work upon divinity which had been made since the apostles' times."—**BACON**, *Advancement of Learning*.

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Explanation of two slight changes made in this volume.

1. In the closer ("solid") setting of the lines in portions of the Text and of the Comment. In the *Text*, this has been done to indicate such paragraphs as may be passed over where for any reason—as in the daily household worship—brevity is desirable; the subject-matter in these paragraphs containing less of vital instruction as well as of practical force. In the *Comment*, the purpose has been simply the abbreviation of space. As a general distinction, especially in the Epistles and Revelation, the introductory, historical, and strictly exegetical matter is set in the "solid" form; while the thoughtful exposition and spiritual suggestion, directly and vitally unfolding the truth, will be found in the open or "leaded" form, as exclusively used in the first volume.

2. In a variation, to some extent, from the *initials of writers* as found in the previous volume. This change is necessitated by the new and different sources from which the matter is drawn.

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THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

Section 190.

I. RELATION OF THE ACTS AND EPISTLES TO THE GOSPELS.

THE *general effect* of the manifestation which is made in the Gospels is such as almost necessitates further disclosures. One shining with the glory of the Only-Begotten of the Father, but clothed in the poverties and infirmities of man, has walked before us in power and weakness, in majesty and woe. He has come close to us, and drawn us close to him; has touched every chord of our hearts; has secured our implicit trust, and become the object of adoration and love: then he has hung upon a cross, has sunk into a grave, has risen, has ascended, and is gone. It was a brief dispensation, and is finished once for all. What did it mean? What has it done? What are our relations with him now? and in what way has this brief appearance affected our position before God and the state and destiny of the soul? What is the nature of the redemption which he has wrought, of the salvation which he has brought, of the kingdom of God which he has opened to all believers? These were questions left for the disciples when Jesus was gone; and, when the reader of the gospel story reaches its close, these questions remain for him. The doctrine delivered in the Gospels appears to need, and to promise, further explanations, combinations, and developments. *It has not the appearance* of being final, and it *explicitly declares* that it is not complete. When it was ended, it was to be followed by a new testimony from God, in order that many things might be spoken which had not been spoken then. The testimony came; the things were spoken; and in the apostolic writings we have their enduring record. In those writings we find the fulfillment of an expectation which the Gospels raised, and recognize the performance of a promise which the Gospels gave. T. D. B.

II. THE BOOK OF ACTS.

THE difference between the historical books of the New Testament consists in this, that while the four Gospels record the history of the revelation of the kingdom of heaven, and of its *foundation* in the

person and the work of the Lord Jesus, the Book of Acts describes the royal administration of Christ as manifested in planting his kingdom in and for the world, by the power of the Holy Ghost working through the apostles. *Lange.*

It is not the function of an historical record to work out expositions of doctrine, but such a book may be expected to present the *general character* which the doctrine bore, and to clear to our view the *agencies and the stages* by which it was matured. This is precisely what is done in the Book of Acts. It is the purpose of the book to do it; a purpose which ought to be more fully recognized than it is. T. D. B.

This "*second treatise*," or Book of Luke, records the *descent of the Holy Ghost according to the promise of the Father, and the resulting diffusion of the gospel among Jews and Gentiles*. It traces the founding, early training, and the expansion of the Christian Church from Jerusalem, the capital of Judea, to Rome, the metropolis of the world. It covers the whole period of transition from the old dispensation to the new, and details those providential measures by which the infant company of believers attained its independent organization, was gradually released from the shackles of the past, was brought to a consciousness of its true character and mission, and was fairly embarked upon its new career, equipped for its work, and secure of its destiny. It is in form a sequel to the gospel written by the same author, who thus intimates the close connection between what is here narrated and the personal ministry of Christ. And it stands in almost perpetual relation with the epistles, upon whose occasion and design it sheds much welcome light, while receiving from them incidental corroboration of many of its statements, and important aid for the more exact understanding of others. *An.*

This book describes what Christ, the invisible head of the Church, "*does*," or "*makes*," by the visible instrumentality, or "*actings*," of apostles, who are his chief ministers. The title is "*Actings of the Apostles*," and two of the apostles are selected as *specimens* of the rest, and certain acts of theirs are chosen as specimens of their operations. The one, Peter, was called by Christ on earth; the other,

Paul, was called by Christ from heaven. One had denied Christ; the other had persecuted Christ. One was an unlettered fisherman of Galilee; the other a learned Pharisee, brought up at Jerusalem. Therefore, in the choice of Peter and Paul as special instruments for propagating the gospel of Christ, his power is signally glorified. The plan, then, of this divine book is to enlarge our view of Christ's ministry; to prevent us from confining it to his brief bodily sojourn on earth; to reveal to us Christ sitting in heaven, not like one of the deities of the heathen world, indifferent to human affairs and controlled by destiny, but enthroned King of kings and Lord of lords, and ever ruling all things by his word, for the advancement of his gospel and the establishment of his kingdom. This book may be called the sum and substance of all Church History. In it we see the laws by which Christ, who is unchangeable, works; in it we see what he *has* done, and from it we may infer what he will continue to do, even to the end. Thus this divine history is also a divine prophecy. Thence we learn that all persecutions without, and all perils within, the Church, will be overruled by the power of Christ for the triumph of the gospel; that all things, however adverse, shall be made subservient to himself. Therefore, from reading this book, we may raise our eyes to heaven, and look for that blessed time when all things will be made subject to Christ, and then he will reign King of kings and Lord of lords. W.

The history of the Christian Church under the apostles runs in two streams, one Jewish, the other Gentile. The Jewish stream for the most part follows the track of the twelve apostles; the Gentile, mainly that of Paul. The earlier part of the Book of Acts presents chiefly the one; the latter, chiefly the other. Religion now becomes, much more prominently than before, a dispensation of the Holy Spirit. It is by a divine power sent from heaven—by a baptism of the Holy Ghost—that men are drawn to God. It had always been so, indeed, and the later prophets had dwelt much on this subject; but now the reality of spiritual agency becomes more obvious, and the third person of the Holy Trinity stands out more conspicuously before the Church, as the great agent in the conversion of men. W. G. B.

The Acts of the Apostles, in a narrative all alive with graphic details, and written in a style of animated simplicity and natural ease, carries us through a period of human history of incalculable interest and importance: one in which the effects of the manifestation of the Son of God were developed and tested; in which the life which he had introduced among men disclosed its nature and power, and the truth which he had left commenced its struggles and conquests; in which the Christian Church was constituted, gradually detached from its Jewish integuments, and brought to the consciousness of its freedom and catholicity; in which it verified its credentials, proved its arms, recognized its destinies, and commenced its victories; in which impulses were given which would never cease to vibrate and precedents were established to which distant ages would refer; in which solemn and exciting scenes, marvels and miracles, saintly and heroic characters, their labors, their conflicts, their sufferings, their journeyings, their collisions with all classes of men, seem to force upon the historian a confusing multiplicity of materials. Yet through all this he makes his way straight in one direction,

as a man guided by that instinct of selection which belongs to the ruling presence of a definite purpose. It is just this definiteness of purpose which is apt to pass unobserved. It is nowhere announced, and the unconstrained freedom of manner and easy in-artificial style suggest no thought of it.

But we know Luke's intelligent, inquiring mind, his opportunities of information, his "perfect understanding of all things from the very first," his personal intercourse with those "who from the beginning had been eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word." We can not for a moment suppose that his acquaintance with the "Acts of the Apostles" was limited to the facts recorded in the book; that he knew nothing of the proceedings of John or James, or of the manifold movements and events which were going on by the side of those which he has related. In fact, there is not a book upon earth in which the principle of intentional selection is more evident to a careful observer. There is indeed no reason *given* why one speech is reported and one event related at length, in preference to others which are passed over or slightly touched; yet when we reach the conclusion we see the reasons in the result. We find that by an undeviating course we have followed the development of the true idea of the Church of Christ, in its relations first to the Jewish system, out of which it emerges, and then to the great world, to which it opens itself. When the words and deeds of Philip or Stephen, of Peter or Paul, are implicated with this progress of things, we find ourselves in their company, but when we part from Peter without notice of his after-course, when we leave Paul abruptly at the commencement of his two years in Rome, we are given to understand that we have been reading, not their personal memoirs, but a higher history, which certain portions of their careers serve to embody or to illustrate. T. D. B.

The political condition of Palestine, at the time to which the New Testament narrative properly belongs, was one curiously complicated and anomalous; it underwent frequent changes, but retained through all of them certain peculiarities, which made the position of the country unique among the dependencies of Rome. The chief representative of the Roman power in the East—the President of Syria, the local governor, whether a Herod or a Roman procurator, and the High Priest, had each and all certain rights and a certain authority in the country. A double system of taxation, a double administration of justice, and even in some degree a double military command, were the natural consequence; while Jewish and Roman customs, Jewish and Roman words, were simultaneously in use, and a condition of things existed full of harsh contrasts, strange mixtures, and abrupt transitions. The New Testament narrative, however, falls into no error in treating of the period; it marks, incidentally and without effort or pretension, the various changes in the civil government: the sole kingdom of Herod the Great; the partition of his dominions among his sons; the reduction of Judea to the condition of a Roman province, while Galilee, Iturea, and Trachonitis continued under native princes; the restoration of the old kingdom of Palestine in the person of Agrippa the First, and the final reduction of the whole under Roman rule, and reestablishment of procurators as the civil heads. Again, the New Testament narrative exhibits in the most remarkable way the mixture in the government—the occa-

sional power of the President of Syria, as shown in Cyrenius's "taxing"; the ordinary division of authority between the high priest and the procurator; the existence of two separate taxations—the civil and the ecclesiastical, the "census" and the "didrachm"; of two tribunals, two modes of capital punishment, two military forces, two methods of marking time; at every turn it shows, even in such little matters as verbal expressions, the coexistence of Jewish with Roman ideas and practices in the country—a coexistence which (it must be remembered) came to an end within forty years of our Lord's crucifixion. G. R.

The oldest known division of the Greek text of the Acts, by Euthalius, who lived in the sixth century, was into forty chapters. The present division into twenty-eight was made by Cardinal Hugo, in the thirteenth century, to facilitate the use of his Concordance to the Latin Vulgate, and was not adopted in the copies of the Greek text till the fifteenth century. The division into verses first appears in the margin of Stephens's edition (1551), and is said to have been made by him during a journey between Paris and Lyons. The actual separation of the verses, by printing them in para-

graphs, appears for the first time in Beza's edition (1565), and although discontinued in the latest publications of the Greek text, still prevails in most editions of the English Bible and of other modern versions. The history of these divisions should be clearly understood, not only to prevent their being thought original, or even ancient, but also to deprive them of an undue influence upon the exposition of the text itself. The distinction of the chapters in this book is often injudicious and unskillful, and at best these conventional divisions are mere matters of mechanical convenience, like the paragraphs and pages of a modern book. J. A. A.

The Book of Acts embraces the period from A. D. 31 to A. D. 64, in which there reigned as Roman emperors: (1) Tiberius (from 19th August, 14), until 16th March, 37; (2) Caligula, until 24th January, 41; (3) Claudius, until 15th October, 54; (4) Nero, until 9th June, 68. The great conflagration of Rome under Nero broke out on 19th July, 64 (Tac. Ann. 15, 41), whereupon commenced the persecution of the Christians. Meyer.

It seems most probable that the book was written in Rome during the latter part of the imprisonment of Paul, narrated in the closing chapter. B.

Section 191.

Acts i. 1-12.

- 1 THE former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and
- 2 teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had
- 3 given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: to whom also he shewed
- 4 himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and
- 5 speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: and, being assembled together
- 6 with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the
- 7 promise of the Father, which, *saieth he*, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with
- 8 water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they
- 9 therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time re-
- 10 store again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the
- 11 times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive
- 12 power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me
- both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the
- earth.
- 9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud
- 10 received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he
- 11 went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of
- Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from
- you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.
- 12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusa-
- lem a sabbath day's journey.

THE ascension of Christ is the great pledge and proof of our eternal state; that our nature is for ever identified with his, so that as long as he is *Man* we must be happy, as one *with Him*; that the great value of this transcendent fact is, not merely that it is an *example* of our future ascension, but that it is our ascension *begun*—we in him having risen to heaven, we in him being at this time present before God, we in him being united with the eternal plans and procedures of heaven, so that we are for ever blended with Christ—his property—his purchased possession—the very members of his body; inasmuch that they who succor his suffering disciples in this world shall be pronounced to succor himself. And if this be so

—if Christ Jesus has thus borne with him our nature into the inmost sanctuary of heaven, if he has not hesitated to wear the form that Adam wore, in that Holy of Holies where angels tremble as they gaze—what ought to be our feelings, as we reflect upon this astonishing transit? How ought we to be animated, as we remember that a body spiritual indeed, but yet tangible and visible—a nature immaculate indeed, but yet human and *ours*—has been uplifted by the energy of indwelling Godhead, and set in the center of the Paradise of God! To know that it has happened mainly with a view to *our own* future exaltation; that it is but the prologue of a drama which is to take in the whole blessed company of the redeemed; that it is a preparatory measure which is to introduce an endless procession of future entrances like itself—saint after saint rising into the glory thus secured by this Captain of Salvation, and each met at the threshold by him who thus has scaled the skies that he might be there before us!—to know this, and to believe it, is to awake to emotions that annihilate earth and open heaven *already* to the exulting soul!

W. A. B.

1. With these words we enter on a new stage of history and of doctrine, and they are words which connect it with the past. The links of Scripture uniting one part to another, and assisting our sense of the continuity of the whole, are worthy of especial notice. Thus does the Book of Acts at its opening attach itself to the preceding record; throwing back our thoughts on “the former treatise of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,” and then passing rapidly in review the last circumstances which connect the apostles with their Lord, as the instruments which he had chosen and prepared for the work which he had yet to do. Thus the history which follows is *linked* to, or *welded* with, the past; and the founding of the Church in the earth is presented as one continuous work, begun by the Lord in person, and perfected by the same Lord through the ministry of men. “The former treatise” delivered to us, not all that Jesus did and taught, but “all that Jesus *began* both to do and teach, *until* the day when he was taken up.” The following writings appear intended to give us, and do in fact profess to give us, that which Jesus *continued* to do and teach *after* the day in which he was taken up. T. D. B.—From the arrangement of these words in the original Greek, two things are plain which escape the English reader: First, there is an emphasis on the verb “*began*”; secondly, there is none on the word “*Jesus*.” The contrast is not that the former treatise related what *Jesus* began, and this relates what some other person or persons continued; but it is that the former treatise related what *Jesus began* to do and to teach; and this relates what *he*, the same *Jesus*, *continued* to do and to teach. A.—There was nothing then on the lips of the preachers of the gospel, but what had been “begun to be spoken” by its first preacher; and in following to their utmost the words of the apostles we are still within the compass of the words of the Lord Jesus. T. D. B.

Mark expands and explains this statement to refer to Christ's ministry, by the Spirit, through his witnessing disciples: “They went forth and preached everywhere, *the Lord working with them*, and con-

firming the word with signs following.” B.—*The Lord working with them.* Yes! in all his rest he is full of work, in all their toils he shares, in all their journeys his presence goes beside them. Whatever they do is his deed, and the help that is done upon the earth he doeth it all himself. This blessed conviction of Christ's continuous operation in and for his Church underlies the language of this introduction. The Gospel records the beginning; the Book of the Acts the continuance; it is one biography in two volumes. Everywhere “the Lord” is the true actor, the source of all the life which is in the Church, the arranger of all the providences which affect its progress. The Lord adds to the Church daily. His name works miracles. To the Lord believers are added. The Gentiles turn to the Lord because the hand of the Lord is with the preachers. The Lord calls Paul to carry the gospel to Macedonia. The Lord opens the heart of Lydia, and so throughout. Not the Acts of the Apostles, but the Acts of the Lord in and by his servants, is the accurate title of this book. A. M.

The kingdom of God was indeed first to be exhibited as a communion of men bound together by the same spirit, inspired by the same consciousness of God; and this communion was to find its central point in Christ, its Redeemer and King. As he himself ordered and directed all things in the first congregation of his disciples, so he was subsequently to inspire, rule, and cultivate this community of men by his law and by his Spirit. The revelation of the Spirit, shared by all its members, was all that was to distinguish it from the world, so called in the New Testament, that is, the common mass of mankind, as alienated from God. And Christ was gradually, through this community, his organ and his royal dwelling-place, to establish his kingdom as a *real* one, more and more widely among men, and subdue the world to his dominion. N.

2. **Through the Holy Ghost.** A remarkable statement, as showing how, to the very end, it was through the Spirit that he did and said everything; and this even after his resurrection. It was not as “God over all” that he instructed his apos-

ties, but as the man Christ Jesus, full of the Holy Ghost. As Prophet, Priest, and King, he was anointed by the Spirit; and it was as one full of the Spirit, and on whom the Spirit rested (Isa. 11: 2), that he came to discharge these his offices. As our Moses, our Aaron, our David, our Melchizedek, he was filled with the Holy Spirit. Thus we see him full of the Spirit *for us*, dispensing that Spirit to us according to our need, that we may come behind in no gift, but receive from him grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. *Bonar.*

3. He shewed himself alive by many infallible proofs. The resurrection of Christ was the great fact in proof of his divinity that the apostles were to preach. And the proof was ample to them. During forty days Jesus appeared ten or eleven times to one or many disciples, in various circumstances, for brief periods of time, when they could judge without excitement; by words and acts simple and significant establishing in their minds such an absolute conviction of the fact, that it controlled their after-life, and led them through persecution to death. *B.*—This period of the forty days was full of the future. During it, his discourses were concerning the kingdom of God—that is, the Church of the future—her constitution and her fortunes. During it were uttered by him those commandments by which their future course was to be guided. *A.*

4. He commands them to tarry in Jerusalem for the Promised Spirit.—They were to remain in order that the miracle of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them might be more striking and convincing, as wrought in the capital of Judea, and at the next great festival after the crucifixion, when strangers from all parts of the world would be gathered at Jerusalem, who would carry back the tidings of that manifestation into all lands; and also that the *Christian Law* might go forth from Mount Zion (Isa. 2: 3; Mic. 4: 2) and so show its harmony with the *Levitical* dispensation. *W.*—**The promise of the Father.** Because it is the one sum and substance of all the Old Testament promises, in that dispensation which was especially declaratory of the Father's purpose and will: it is "*the promise of the Father*," as embracing in one all other promises, and as the inclusive blessing of the covenant, being no less than the entire renewal of man by the indwelling Spirit: a blessing unknown to the earlier dispensation, and by virtue of which the least under the latter covenant is greater than the greatest under the former one. This baptism by the Holy Ghost was to be the fulfillment of that which the baptism of John only foreshadowed.

5. Not many days hence. Why was this especially the time for this indwelling of the Holy

Ghost in our nature to begin? John furnishes us with the answer, when he tells us (7: 39), "the Holy Ghost was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified." On him, the inclusive head of our humanity, the Holy Spirit alighted in his baptism. To him the Spirit was given without measure. But the fullness of the outpouring of this Spirit from him over all flesh summed up in him, awaited the full acceptance of all our flesh in him, when he had by himself purged our sins and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High. It is this which so closely binds on the narrative of the Ascension to all that is to follow. It is this which makes the "not many days hence" so pregnant with deep meaning, as assigning to the greatest event in the Church's history its proper and only place. *A.*—The time is indefinite of purpose. "Not many days," says Chrysostom, "that they may hope, but he does not say *how* few, in order that they may watch." The interval was ten days.

6. The apostles' question about the kingdom was a strange one, yet it had a grand measure of faith in him in it. *He was the Restorer!* They called him Lord, the same word used in the Greek Old Testament for Jehovah. But the question was all wrong in its meaning and spirit. It is at once the most affecting and conclusive proof of their "slowness of heart to comprehend" the essential truths Christ had been gradually disclosing all the way to his betrayal. *B.*—In spite of all that our Lord said and did during his lifetime, and even with the advantage of his second ministry, "speaking to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God," the apostles never advanced till after the ascension to the understanding and apprehension of Christ's peculiar redemptive work. Even after having followed the finger of the Master from scroll to scroll, and from page to page, as he showed to them what was written in the law, the psalms, and the prophets concerning himself, they do not seem to have retained the meaning of the exposition. Their understandings though "opened" got closed again; and, instead of rising to the height of the great argument and learning to preach "repentance and remission of sin to all nations," they sank down into mere expectants of secular glory and national deliverance. This is evident from the fact that, on the very morning of the ascension, they actually proposed the question, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"—thus still dreaming about mere political ascendancy and national advantage, when such pains had been taken, by his opening to them the meaning of the law and the prophets, to make them understand that which had been said, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth" (signifying by what death he should die), "*will draw all men unto me.*" *T. B.*

7. One department of knowledge, our Lord here teaches us, is kept by God within his own power, or, in other words, is reserved to himself, and not laid open before the eyes of mortals. The coming history of the world, the future life of every individual man lies beyond conjecture. Even the events which are to affect his own kingdom of grace God has kept in his own power. He has disclosed a little, he has made the final winding up sure, but this is a region of knowledge where he reigns alone, and shares the particulars of the boundless plan with no other. T. D. W.

If, from a prophetic text or two, we were able to count on our fingers how many years the world will last, such knowledge would puff up, and lead us to talk and speculate, instead of doing with our might what our hand finds to do. It is not enough that we submit to leave the ages and epochs in the Father's hand, because we can not wrench them out of it; we should be glad and grateful that he spares us such sights into the future as we should not be able to bear. It is the part of a dear child to read eagerly all that the Father reveals, and to trust implicitly wherever the Father indicates a design to conceal. "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find"—not predicting, but—"watching." In removing the speculative inquiry, he placed a great practical work in their hands. *Arnot*.

He did not reveal to them plainly the fall of the Mosaic dispensation, accompanied with the destruction of the Jewish state, and scattering of the nation over the world for so many centuries. This was the breaking up of all that they clung to as patriots and Jewish believers. The whole foundation of their faith would be convulsed by the thought of it. It was only the unfolding of Christianity in its spiritual power, the fulfilment of types and sacrifices in more glorious realities, the transference of their affections to a higher fatherland, and the view of the heavenly beauty of the Jerusalem above, that could enable them to bear the loss of their gorgeous ritual, and the dispersion of their race. *Ker*.

8. How wisely kind is his answer! No rebuke now for dullness. Our Lord intimates that there shall indeed be a restoration, though not in the way, nor with the results, they imagined. The final results are in the Father's ordering. But, he says, turning to indicate the very way by which ultimately his kingdom should be established, and really answering their question in an affirmative spirit, *ye shall receive power from the Holy Ghost and shall be witnesses unto me in the whole earth*. "Strike in upon the work, and leave the issue with God" (*Arnot*). You shall be qualified for the work. Power shall be imparted to you by the Holy Ghost. Of that "all power given unto me," shall He bestow

upon you, matching the gift always to your needs. Use the gifts bestowed in toiling to establish my kingdom in human hearts. And we know how, when Christ had ascended and the Holy Ghost had descended, they dropped out of thought for ever their old conceptions about rich rewards and lordly places in Israel's kingdom; how, taught by the Holy Spirit, they linked together in a beautiful completeness all that Christ had taught about humiliation, serving, and suffering, as the way to the kingdom, and faith in Christ with the inward joy and peace of God the Holy Ghost, as itself the kingdom. B.—*Ye shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth*. In these words we have a brief table of contents of the whole book. The testimony in Jerusalem occupies the history as far as the end of chapter 7; in chapter 8 it spreads to all Judæa and Samaria; in chapter 9 we have the preparation, by the conversion of the apostle to the Gentiles, for its being carried over all the world; in chapter 11 we pass from Jerusalem to Antioch, thence over Asia Minor and into Greece, thence, finally, to the world's great capital, Rome. A.—Mark the exactness with which he indicates the lines in which they should go on their journey of witness-bearing and service—the same which in their spirit bind all Christian sympathy and activity to the end of time. First, Jerusalem, their own city; next, Judæa, their own country; then Samaria, their next neighbor, an enemy at that; and finally, the whole earth. B.—The charity that will convert the world is a charity that begins at home—*begins, but does not end there*. Unless our love be of such a kind as greatly to disturb a godless neighborhood at home, it will not set on fire a distant continent. We must go out to the uttermost parts with our message, but must let the men beside us feel the glow of our zeal as it passes by. The command of the Lord is still the rule for his people—beginning at Jerusalem, but not ending till we reach the uttermost part of the earth. *Arnot*.

There is for all of us also a "Jerusalem," a "Judæa," a "Samaria," if not an "uttermost part of the earth"—some well-dressed city with its ragged fringe of want and wickedness, some country district with its neglected and untrained families, some sophisticated brain that has gone astray from the old standards and home of the faith and set up its Gerizim rivalry—some that you can minister to by your charity and win back by your witnessing, if that witnessing is only as zealous as Peter's, and as patient as Paul's, and as loving as John's. F. D. H.

9-11. *The Ascension and the Angel's Message*.—His last words, "ye are my witnesses," spoken—and what intense significance this fact carries to

all disciples!—*He lifts his hands in blessing, and in the act of blessing rises.* Of all that is sublime and tender in this beautiful and attractive life, nothing surpasses in power over a true human heart this spectacle, upon which *we still are looking.* The last act, an abiding memory to us of *blessing*; hands—once outstretched in cruel agony, shame, and death—now for ever outstretched with a benediction, from the living, risen, reigning Christ, of joy, of promised glory, and of everlasting life to every uplooking, fervid, trusting, hoping soul! And we know that the bright cloud that has taken will restore him, in that blessed day when we shall rise with all believers to meet him in the air. This is the message to us of the angels who spake from the hallowed spot on Olivet upon that bright day of Christ's ascension. B.

9. Our Lord after his resurrection seems to have done nothing like a common man. Whatever was natural to him before seems now miraculous; what was before miraculous is now natural. On earth he had no longer any local residence; his body required neither food for its subsistence, nor a lodging for its shelter and repose; he was become the inhabitant of another region, from which he came occasionally to converse with his disciples; his visible ascension, at the end of forty days, being not the necessary means of his removal, but a token to his disciples that this was the last visit—an evidence to them that "the heavens had now received him," and that he was to be seen no more on earth "till the restitution of all things." *Horsley.*

Taken up. They saw with them, as Master, Comforter, Consoler, and Protector, a man, such as they saw themselves. If they saw not something of this kind, they were fain to think him absent; whereas he is everywhere present by his majesty. And it was needful that they should now begin to have spiritual views of him, as the Word of the Father, God with God, by whom all things were made; and these the flesh, which they saw, suffered them not to have. It was therefore expedient for them to be confirmed in faith by his converse with them during forty days; but it was more expedient for them that he should withdraw himself from their eyes, and that whereas upon earth he had been conversant with them as a brother, he should succor them from heaven as God, and they should learn to think of him as God. They would not think of the God, until the man were removed from them and from their sight; so that, when the familiar intercourse which they had had with the flesh was cut off, they might learn, even in the absence of the flesh, to think of his Godhead. *Aug.*—If faith and spiritual affection are the life of the Church, it was for the advantage of the Church that Jesus, instead of remaining in the midst of her, should go

away. Before the departure of Jesus Christ there is no Church, but there is one immediately after. Those men who, after a long residence with their Master, put questions to him, and start doubts which almost make us blush for them, are after his departure enlightened, intelligent, resolute men. This Church, in which he leaves only his remembrance, and in which the visible signs of his power lasted only a very short time, still subsists, and even now, amid the decline of all belief and the overthrow of all systems, is the only thing which has strength, life, and a future. A. V.—Inasmuch as a cloud received him out of their sight, it was declared to them that the human form of the Lord which thus departed from among them has not disappeared into the air, but has entered heaven, the abode of God, and is there working and acting. But how? Entering heaven as the glorified King, it is concerning his kingdom that he is acting and working; but inasmuch as he is withdrawn from them, and no longer personally among them, it is not outwardly and visibly that he is thus working; not concerning a visible earthly kingdom, but only by that outpouring of the Spirit which he is gone up to receive, and concerning an inward and Spirit kingdom. A.—There is among us, ever since that wondrous day, a power beyond all powers, a strength to nerve the feeble heart, an unction to appoint the sightless eye, an energy to revivify the spiritually dead. There is a secret, subtle, unseen power—mightier than all that fabling romance ever dreamed of its magic—it is near us if we will but know it, within us if we will but call it—*this* is the heritage of the believing world ever since that day of Olivet. W. A. B.

What tongue of the highest archangel of heaven can express the welcome of the King of Glory into those blessed regions of immortality? Surely, the empyreal heaven never resounded with so much joy: "God ascended with jubilation, and the Lord with the sound of the trumpet." It is not for us, weak and finite creatures, to conceive those incomprehensible, spiritual, divine gratulations that the glorious Trinity gave to the victorious and now glorified human nature. Certainly, if, "when he brought his Only-Begotten Son into the world, he said, Let all the angels worship him"; much more now that he "ascends on high and hath led captivity captive, hath he given him a name above all names, that at the name of JESUS all knees should bow." And, if the holy angels did so carol at his birth, in the very entrance into that estate of humiliation and infirmity, with what triumph did they receive him now, returning from the perfect achievement of man's redemption! *Bp. H.*

We see humanity glorified when the Son of man thus mounts his Father's throne; and not too high, assuredly, sounded the ancient vaunt of faith,

"that our flesh is in the heaven." "To-day," so spoke the famed Chrysostom, in the most ancient ascension sermon of the Christian Church which has been preserved for us—"to-day are we, who do not seem worthy of earth, taken up into heaven: we win the royal throne; and the human race, who were driven by cherubim from paradise, take even a place above the cherubim." *Van O.*

10. It is said that the apostles "*looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up*"; methinks it is so that we also, as we read or hear this wondrous event, should fix eye and heart upon that heaven which he, the first-born, has preoccupied; that we should feel that in him a portion of *ourselves* has departed thither, a sinless type of humanity, which keeps its place for the rest; and that our heart, in Christ, being already there, all else should struggle, with holy impatience, to follow. W. A. B.

The final demonstration of his Messiahship is complete. Henceforth the Redemption of Jesus, his incarnation, his life, his redeeming death, his resurrection and ascension, enter as living truths, the most vital and grandest truths, into human history. Roman falsehood, Jewish malice, Grecian skepticism, can never crush them out of human thought, or palsy their ennobling power over human hearts. From soul to soul these eternal realities pass into possession; men feed upon them and grow pure and strong. The sphere of faith enlarges from generation to generation, and as it enlarges, new power, new joy, new hope exalts and strengthens man. S. W. F.

Read in the gospels, repeated in sermons, faintly reflected in Christians, that matchless life is every day humanizing, stimulating, rebuking, consoling thousands; impelling to deeds of generous self-sacrifice and difficult self-conquest, which he was himself the first to exhibit, and inspiring with hope those lovers of their race who would otherwise despair of mankind. The perfection of beauty, a full-orbed Sun of Righteousness, there he stands and will ever stand, history's great miracle and the world's great hope, a sign that is still spoken against, but a name which is continually making progress, and daily working miracles. And ever since over Bethany he spread forth his hands and blessed the men of Galilee, a balm has lingered in earth's atmosphere, which was not there before; and we all feel that earth will never again be so bleak since Jesus has been here, nor the grave again so dark since Jesus has been there; just as

we feel that goodness has new charms since he showed us what it is, and that heaven has most nearness since he said, "I go to my Father," and "Lo, I am with you always." *Hamilton.*

11. He will come again; but times and seasons which man can not number will intervene. These are times of witnessing for all the disciples of Christ. They must receive the Spirit; they must be witnesses for Christ; they must begin at Jerusalem; they must reach the ends of the earth. After that shall the end be. The time seems long; and yet it is approaching quickly. That fixed star seems fixed indeed to our eyes; there it has stood in the deep of heaven, and glittered down on the upturned eyes of longing disciples these eighteen hundred years—the bright promise of his coming; but though it seems to stand still, it is moving; it is approaching. Be of good cheer, disciples, your redemption is nearer than when those Galileans first left their nets to follow Jesus. *Arnot.*—The return of Christ is that ultimate and yet most proximate point to which the believer constantly looks, toward which is all his hope, and from which he receives constantly the deepest impulses and motives for purification and diligent labor. The grace of God, bringing salvation, hath appeared—this is our sunrise—teaching us to wait for the appearing of our great God and Saviour—this is our perfect, never-ending day. A. S.

This question, "Why stand ye gazing up?" is the first thing in the order of events, and in the Bible narrative, after the closing of Christ's earthly ministry. Only a little breathing space was to be given them first to gather up their energies, and even that was not to be an interval of idleness. They were to go at once to Jerusalem, as the chosen headquarters of the great warfare for the world's conversion, and their waiting there was to be like the waiting of the still midsummer elements, before the mountain winds sweep down and the tongues of fire leap out—a busy waiting—a preparation for this long campaign of many ages. They were to occupy the ten days from Ascension to Pentecost, with its mighty wind and flame, in making ready incessantly for the coming of the Holy Spirit to inaugurate their work. They were to be earnest and constant in prayer and praise. They were to cease wasting their time on the empty cloud through which the Saviour's form had gone, that they rather might find and follow and possess for ever the living Saviour himself, in doing by faith the substantial service of his love, for his sake. F. D. H.

Section 192.

Acts i. 13-36.

13 AND when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, 14 James *the son* of Alphæus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas *the brother* of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of 16 names together were about an hundred and twenty,) Men *and* brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before con- 17 cerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, 18 and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed 19 out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called 20 in their proper tongue, *Aceldama*, that is to say, The field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his 21 bishoprick let another take. Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all 22 the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a wit- 23 ness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who 24 was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which know- 25 est the hearts of all *men*, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might 26 go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

WHAT an epoch of prayer was that! So elevated are these ardent and consecrated souls toward heaven, so open toward God's spirit, so conscious that they have only to ask to receive, that devotion seems to have become an instinct, and they pray as they breathe. And what followed? The Church grew before men's eyes with such swiftness that a thousand converts were gathered in the time that it takes us to gather ten: in the short lifetime of a single generation the worship of Christ raised itself to power in the chief cities of three continents; the swords of all the Herods and Cæsars and their legions could not strike fast enough to cut down one Christian where twenty sprang up; hundreds were baptized in a day; the times of refreshing had come; the prediction was literally accomplished; the windows of heaven *were* opened, and the blessing was so poured out that there was not room enough to receive it. *These* were the fruits. How can we fail to connect together the fruit with the seed—the glorious movement and the motive power—the Church pure in doctrine and victorious in converting the world with the multitude of her members not only standing full-clad in all the panoply of the Christian warfare, but praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit? All along since the last of the twelve laid down his life, this rule has never had an exception—the Church has been both strong and pure, victorious abroad and peaceful with itself, just according to its spirit of supplication, according to its devotional nearness to Christ. F. D. H.

12-26. From the parting with their ascended Lord, with the vision still in thought of those hands outstretched in blessing, the apostles returned to Jerusalem. In a large chamber in the upper story of a certain house, probably the room already hal- lowed by their last intercourse with the Master, they gather together, and many other disciples with them. For ten days this first assembly of the Christian Church remained in almost continuous prayer, and in perfect unison of feeling, calmly expecting the fulfillment of the Lord's many promises respecting the Holy Ghost. Luke's Gospel tells us that "they went to the Temple daily," at the usual hour of prayer. The whole number was one hundred and twenty, and they are distinguished into four groups: the apostles, the women who had followed Jesus, his mother Mary, and his brethren—*Mary* seen for the last time in the beautiful attitude of prayer *with*

the other believers, sharing their spiritual aspirations and sympathizing in their trust and hope, and equally looking for and depending upon the Holy Spirit; and *his brethren*, now also believing, rejoicing, expectant; and, lastly, the larger assemblage of disciples.

Peter now proposes that the vacancy in the apostleship be filled. After consideration as well as prayer, resort was had to the lot to determine the choice of Christ. This was their last conformity to a usage of the old dispensation, for they were to have from henceforth a better guide to the will of God. Matthias was chosen and numbered with the apostles. Concerning him, as concerning several other apostles, we have no further definite information. This we know, they all fulfilled the ministry appointed them. Each had a history and performed a life-work whose record of fruitfulness and blessing shall be gratefully traced in the studies of the redeemed.

With singleness of expectation and absolute assurance of faith, every heart in perfect oneness with every other, asking, as He had bidden, *in his name*, they quietly awaited the time appointed for the advent of the Comforter. B.

14. There was perseverance in the prayer of the primitive Church—"they continued." There was unity in those early prayer-meetings—they prayed "with one accord." The prayers were not soon broken off, and were not hindered by disagreements among the suppliants. They ascended straight to heaven in a pillar of pure incense, and descended soon in showers of blessing—a great refreshing from the presence of the Lord. *Arnot.*

Mary. The Holy Spirit takes leave of her here, associated with the apostolic company of worshipers in the upper room at Jerusalem. She is one of those who there continue steadfast in prayer. How unlike the spirit and language of the Holy Ghost is that will-worship which takes her out of that holy fellowship and makes her an object of adoration! W.

We see her to have been a devout Jewish maiden, a faithful wife, a loving mother, illustrating in her life a true womanhood. Her faith, her study of the Scriptures, her humility, her modesty, her fidelity—all commend her as an example of the character produced by the grace of God. Not a single hint is given of her sinlessness, or that she differed in her nature from Elizabeth or Anna, or any of those devout and loving women who followed Christ to the cross and early visited his sepulchre. Her honor, her peculiar blessedness consisted in this, that she was chosen to be the mother of Jesus. As woman in Eve bore her part in the fall, so woman in Mary bore her part in giving birth to him who is the Redeemer of the world. To the Church

she sustains no official relation whatever. Christ himself expressly disclaims all such human relationship in his kingdom. The moment he appears she retires. A few allusions, and she vanishes from the scene. The apostles never once allude to her. She is put as entirely aside as if she never had existed. To those inspired men she is utterly unknown in any other relation to the Church than that of a simple believer, saved by the blood of Jesus Christ. There is nothing in the early records, nothing in the early fathers of the Church for the first five centuries, which indicates that Mary was anything more than an honored member of the Church. S. W. F.

John has nothing to say of her, or to report from her. If he had her with him even for years, speaking freely of what she knew, how many things could she have told him that we so much long to hear! And yet the apostle, beginning his gospel far back in the solemn arcana of the Eternal Word, and passing directly over Mary to speak, fourteen verses after, of "the Word made flesh," gives not so much as a trace of mention concerning her maternal place and office in the story. Making no report of her conversations, he is equally silent as regards her death; telling never when she died, or how she died, or in what place she was buried. And it is well; for there was even a much higher necessity in her case, than in that of Moses, that her burial-place should be hidden from mortal knowledge. Otherwise it would be the center of a vaster idolatry than the world has ever known. The divine wisdom somehow took her aside, with a set purpose not to let her mix her human-story products, beautiful and graceful as they were, with Christ's immortal life-word from above. H. B.

15. It is the *commencement of God's kingdom* on which we gaze with quiet admiration, and it may be to us as though we stood beside the hidden source of a stream which thence speeds along to water regions vast beyond belief. These hundred and twenty persons, what a small beginning compared with the vigorous progress and the fair destiny! Still the spiritual kingdom of God stands toward the unbelieving world as for ten days the humble upper chamber stood toward the powerful and magnificent Jerusalem; yet it appears here, too, that the great question is not on what side is the majority to be found, but on what side is the truth. *Van O.*

16. It is natural to suppose that Judas hanged himself on some tree growing out of a precipice; and that the branch breaking, or whatever he hanged himself with, he fell down headlong, and dashed himself to pieces. M.—Supposing this part of *Hinnom* to have been the scene of the suicide, it fits in exactly to the narrative in the Acts. There are places with overhanging trees of various kinds, at which the rugged rock rises sheer up to

forty or fifty feet; and supposing an individual to be suspended by the neck from a branch of one of those trees, there is nothing improbable in the branch breaking, in his falling body being torn by some jagged projecting stone as he descended, and in his being dashed to pieces by the hard rock at the bottom. The potter's field, which was purchased with the thirty pieces of silver, is shown on the same eminence. We found its soil to be clayey as we walked over it; and if you ask almost any potter in Jerusalem where he finds his material, he will direct you to this very Aeldama. *A. Thomson.*—I felt, as I stood in the valley and looked up to the rocky terraces which overhang it, that the proposed explanation was a perfectly natural one. I was more than ever satisfied with it. Trees still flourish on the margin of these precipices, and in ancient times must have been more numerous. A rocky pavement exists, also, at the bottom of the ledges, and on that account, too, a person falling from above would be liable to be crushed and mangled, as well as killed. *Hackett.*

19. This verse should be included in a parenthesis, and thus considered as conveying not the words of Peter but of the historian: which effectually answers the objection from the fact having happened but a few days before the speech was delivered. This also accounts for his calling the Syriac, which was spoken by the Jews at that time, their language. *D.*

24. *Lord.* This word, equivalent to the *JEHOVAH* of the Old Testament, and correspondent to it in the Septuagint version, is constantly applied to *CHRIST* in the Acts, where it is found nearly a hundred times, and is like a sacred key-note of the whole ever sounding forth his divine Lordship in the ear of the world. It is "the *LORD JESUS*" who is said by Peter to have come in and gone out among them. It is he who chooses Matthias; he who sends the Holy Ghost; he who adds believers daily to the Church; he who works miracles by the hands of his apostles. To the Lord Jesus, Stephen, the first martyr, looks up and prays at the hour of death. It is he who calls to the persecuting Saul from

heaven; he sends Ananias to baptize; he sends Peter to Cornelius. He (*says Peter*) is Lord of all. Thus the mind is elevated from earth to heaven, and from the acts of envoys to the majesty and glory of the universal Lord and King, sitting on his heavenly throne. *W.*—It is not said, "Show whom thou *wilt choose*," but "whom thou *hast chosen*." There exists no more decisive proof of the absolute recognition of the divinity of our blessed Lord than this first prayer of his Church. That the prayer is made to him is undeniable. The very word in which he says (John 6: 70), "Have not I *chosen* you twelve?" is also used here: if he chose the twelve, his it was to choose the new apostle. And, the prayer being thus made to him, there is in it attributed to him knowledge of the hearts of all men, and that divine foreknowledge which, before all secondary agents, determines the destiny of men. *A.*—25. The style of the gospel is admirable in a thousand different views; and in this, among others, that we meet there with no invectives on the part of the historians against Judas or Pilate, nor against any of the enemies, or the very murderers of their Lord. *Pascal.*—*To his own place.* In the eternal world every man has *his place*, and it is *his own*. No other can make it, and no other can occupy it, for him. Whatever may be in it outwardly, its essence lies in his own soul and in the condition to which he has brought it. Here in the last issue consists his misery or joy, for only through his soul can his share be measured in the universe of God and in God himself. And God has made the man's own soul witness and judge over itself. This difference only shall exist between the present and the future, that then—confronted with the eternal laws of truth and justice—the witness shall have no power of false testimony, and the judge be unable to use favor or sophistry. Men shall take their own place in the spiritual universe as bodies take their place in the natural—by the power of gravitation which is in them—nearer God or farther from him, as they have impressed the character upon themselves, and in nearness will lie life and peace—in distance, death and misery. *Ker.*

Section 193.

Acts ii. 1-11.

- 1 AND when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one
- 2 place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and
- 3 it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven
- 4 tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the
- 5 Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.
- 6 And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under

6 heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were con-
 7 founded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were
 all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak
 8 Galilæans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?
 9 Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judæa, and
 10 Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of
 11 Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we
 do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.

Jesus has ascended to his Father, but this other paraclete is to come and dwell in his people for ever. His office work is threefold: First, with reference to Christ's immediate disciples, he was the *revealer*—Jesus had instructed and opened truth to their minds; but their minds were weak, their memories treacherous. This Holy Spirit comes to bring to mind his words, to strengthen memory, to fill them with the truth thus spoken in all its vividness and power, and open the true meaning of what was obscure and dark. Nor is this all. There were many things Jesus had for them, which they could not bear, were not able to receive, before his departure. These the Spirit should make known to them; these things to come he should unfold to them. This promise is the foundation on which the whole New Testament rests as the inspired truth of God. They spake, they wrote the things pertaining to Christ and his kingdom, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The second office is that of the *convicter and regenerator*. He is to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, of judgment; and as he convinces and convicts he is to renew and lead them to Jesus. On the day of Pentecost he first demonstrated this divine power; thousands were pricked in their hearts; thousands believed in Jesus. Ever since that time his presence has been revealed in conviction and conversion. Religion advances; Jesus is received; the gospel is victorious only as he brings the truth home to dead hearts of men. The third office is that of *quickener, guide, and comforter*. To the soul once penitent and believing, this blessed Spirit comes and quickens it to see and feel the fullness, and richness, and power of the truth as it is in Jesus; stimulates it to sacrifice and labor, excites to prayer, strengthens against temptation, supports and comforts amid trial, sorrow, and death. Jesus sends this divine Spirit to work in his Church and through its members. This is his great promise, and this completes the cycle of redemption. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, each in their office ministering life and salvation to the world. S. W. F.

1. **The day of Pentecost.** *Pentecost* is a (Greek) New Testament term, meaning *fiftieth*, indicating the celebration of this feast on the fiftieth day from that of the Passover. This is called in the Old Testament the Feast of Harvest; and also the Feast of Weeks, because it was *seven* weeks, or "a week of weeks," from the Passover. The Jews also called it "The Feast of the joy of the Law," as occurring, according to their tradition, on the very day when the Law was given from Mount Sinai, the fiftieth of the Exodus, from the night of the first Passover. And so this Feast of Pentecost associates the old covenant of the Law with the new covenant of the Gospel, the organization of the Old Testament Church under Moses with a partial ministry of the Spirit, with its reorganization under the apostles with the fullness of the Holy Ghost. In this we see the vital connection of the new covenant with the old. B.—At the Feast of the Passover the lamb was slain—at the Feast of Pentecost the Law was given. Coincident with the slaying of the lamb was the death of Christ; coincident with the giving of the Law was the descent of the Spirit. On the first

Pentecost the Law was written on tables of stone; on the last came the Spirit to write the Law on the living tables of the heart. *Arnot.*

In the old dispensation there were three great annual festivals at which the sons of Abraham went up to Jerusalem—that of the Passover, which commemorated and renewed their gladness over their deliverance from the Egyptian house of bondage; that of the first fruits, when the earliest ripe sheaves gave joyous foretoken of the coming harvest; and that of Tabernacles, when for a season their tent-life was renewed, and they blessed God for their settled enjoyment of the promised land. But what was temporary and occasional in the former economy, is permanent under the gospel; and the gladness of all these three festivals is united in the Christian life. The Pascal joy of deliverance—the Pentecostal gladness of first fruits in the possession of the earnest of the Spirit—and the Tabernacle rejoicing in the contemplation, from out the frail booth of the flesh, of "the city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God"—these all combine to make the experience of the believer a

continuous feast, which is not the less real because it is internal and spiritual. W. M. T.

All in one place. It is not of the *apostles only* that the whole history is related. Throughout the latter part of chapter 1 we are in presence of the assembled believers, the hundred and twenty names of verse 15. In verse 23, it is "they" who "appoint two"; in verse 24, "they" who pray; in verse 26, "they" who give forth their lots; in chapter 2 : 1, "they" who are "all with one accord in one place"; in verse 3, it is upon "each of them" that the fiery tongues rest. There is no change of subject throughout. And with this agree the words and acts of the twelve. A.

Our Saviour Christ, who is Lord of the Sabbath, fulfilling the work of our redemption by his resurrection upon the first day of the week, and by his mission of the Holy Ghost miraculously the first day of the week, and by the secret message of his Spirit to the apostles and the primitive Church, hath translated the observation of the seventh day of the week to the first day of the week, which is our Christian Sabbath; that as our Christian baptism succeeds the sacrament of circumcision, and as our Christian pascha, in the sacrament of the eucharist, succeeded the Jewish passover, so our Christian Sabbath, the first day of the week, succeeds the Sabbath of the seventh day of the week; and that morality which was, by Almighty God, under that covenant, confined to the seventh day, is, by the example of Christ and his apostles to us Gentiles, transferred to the first day of the week. Hale.

2, 3. *Suddenly* came the fulfillment for which the disciples now, and the devout of their preceding generations, had waited. And in this his Pentecostal gift we find further evidence that Christ came to fulfill the long promise of the prophets. Two signs preceded, and one followed the immediate advent of the Holy Ghost: First, a *sound*, as of a rushing mighty wind, *without a breath of movement in the air*, a sound sweeping down through the still sky from the upper heaven, a sound, heard in its downward course by many in the immediate vicinity, taking the direction and entering into the very chamber where the disciples were sitting, and there ceasing. This was an expressive intimation to those who understood the symbolic use of the term wind, or breath, or spirit, as applied to the divine Spirit; it was an advance sign from heaven of his coming. Next, in addition to the sound appealing to the ear, instantly followed a light, as of flame, appealing to the eye. An *appearance* it was, of a body of flame, dispersed and distributed in the form of tongues, one resting upon the head of each disciple. A brightness as of fire or flame, but like the bush at Horeb there was no burning. This miraculous light, with its peculiar form, also bore an expressive inti-

mation, which we can as readily interpret. Spiritual light and spiritual energy, coming from the Holy Ghost into the heart, were the experience signified by the seeming flame. "The form of tongues signified that the tongue, the word, or speech, controlled by the Holy Spirit, should communicate all that is heavenly. That such a tongue of light and fire descended upon each individual present, was an emblem of that fullness of the Spirit imparted to each individual as a permanent gift." Thus these signs, audible and visible, impressively indicated the *power* and the *mode of working* of the Holy Spirit. More than this, they were specific pledges of the conquering might of the divine Spirit that should attend the preaching of Christ crucified and risen. B.

Tell it wherever there are ears to hear, tell it to the ends of the earth, *God hath spoken*; man has not been forgotten; there is a *gospel*, a "speech of God"; questions affecting salvation are settled; and our way to holy living and happy dying traced by the Hand which rules both worlds. In strict keeping with the spiritual stamp of Christianity was the symbol which, once for all, announced to the Church the advent of her conquering power. The symbol is a *TONGUE*, the only instrument of the grandest war ever waged: a *tongue*—man's speech to his fellow man; a message in human words to human faculties, from the understanding to the understanding, from the heart to the heart. A *tongue of fire*—man's voice, God's truth; man's speech, the Holy Spirit's inspiration; a human organ, a superhuman power. *Arthur*.—The truth revealed is the condition and the instrument of the Spirit's working. Hence, only when the revelation of God is complete by the message of his Son, his life, death, resurrection, and ascension, was the full permanent gift of the Spirit possible, not to make new revelations, but to unfold all that lay in the Word spoken once for all, in whom the whole name of God is contained. A. M.

4. Immediately succeeding these miraculous manifestations is the *advent of the Holy Ghost*. Of this the simple sublime record is, *They were all filled with the Holy Ghost*. As of old "God was not in" this seeming of the "wind and the fire," but entered invisibly and inaudibly into the hearts of the disciples to breathe into them the fullness of spiritual life and light, to speak thereafter to them in "the still small voice," and to abide in them and with them for ever. *Fullness* and *permanence* characterize the influence and communication of the Holy Spirit from henceforth. Hitherto prophets and apostles, and all believers, had only received in lesser measure partial and limited foretastes of the divine working. B.—As the Son was working in the world long before his incarnation, so did the Holy Ghost also act upon mankind long before his

effusion; as it was at the incarnation of the Son that the fullness of his life first manifested itself, so it was not until the effusion which took place on the day of Pentecost that the Spirit poured forth all his power. *Ola.*

The normal guidance of the apostles by their Lord was not occasional, but *habitual*, not through separate interventions, but *through the Holy Ghost dwelling in them*. So the promise ran that it should be; and so in fact it was. The Day of Pentecost is the opening of the second period of the New Testament dispensation. It stands alone, as does the day which now we call Christmas: the one the birthday of the Lord, the other the birthday of his Church; the one proclaimed by praises sung by hosts in heaven, the other by praises uttered in the various tongues of earth. That change is significant: for now the Spirit conveys the true knowledge of the wonderful works of God into the recesses of the human heart. A dispensation is begun, in which the mind of God has entered into mysterious combination with the mind of man, and henceforth the revealing light shines, not from without, but from within. God at that time not only stirred, but *taught*, the hearts of his faithful people, and sent to them not only the warmth but the *light* of his Holy Spirit. T. D. B.

5. In Christ's time one might have spoken with truth of the omnipresent Jew. "The Jews had made themselves homes in every country, from the Tiber to the Euphrates, from the pines of the Caucasus to the spice-groves of happy Arabia." A mere catalogue of the cities where they had settled at that time—in the far East, in Egypt, in Syria, in Greece and her islands—is astonishing. With but few exceptions, they seem to have been everywhere a wealthy and, in general, an influential class. The decrees issued from time to time by the Roman Senate, favoring or honoring the Jews in the different cities of the empire, were very numerous, and throw much light upon their numbers, character, prosperity, and their civil and social relations and standing. *Merrill.*

6-11. Many of the more devout among these foreign Jews, under the then prevalent belief that the Messiah was about to appear, had fixed their abode at Jerusalem, permanently or for a time. These, with others who came up to this feast, were providentially prepared as witnesses of this great miracle. Subsequently, as the subjects of the renewing power and grace of the Holy Spirit, they were as providentially made bearers of the glad tidings to the nations among whom they dwelt, whose languages they had acquired from birth. Many of them were now gathered in the vicinity of the temple, and heard the strange sound that had fallen from the sky. Among this multitude came the dis-

ciples from the upper room, and, under the prompting and guidance of this new divine inspiration, one and another attaches himself to some group of foreigners, and accosts them in their own language with the wondrous message of the Holy Ghost concerning the crucified and risen Jesus. No wonder that "they were all amazed, and marveled" that Galilean peasants should "speak in their tongues the wonderful works of God"! Here were representatives of all nations: eastward, "the Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and dwellers in Mesopotamia," from the heart of Asia; northward, strangers from "Cappadocia, Pontus, Phrygia, and Pamphylia," and the rest of Asia Minor; southward, from "Egypt, Libya, and Arabia"; and westward, "Cretes and Romans." B.

Proselytes. After the captivity, the proselytes were for the most part willing adherents to the Jewish faith. With the conquests of Alexander, the wars between Egypt and Syria, the struggle under the Maccabees, the expansion of the Roman Empire, the Jews became more widely known, and their power to proselytize increased. The influence was sometimes obtained well, and exercised for good. In most of the great cities of the empire there were men who had been rescued from idolatry and its attendant debasements, and brought under the power of a higher moral law. The converts who were thus attracted joined, with varying strictness, in the worship of the Jews. They were present in their synagogues; they came up as pilgrims to the great feasts at Jerusalem. S.—These were the seed-vessels, now charged with precious seed, and then thrown back upon the countries whence they had come. Thus Christ was preached in many distant countries very soon after his own ministry was closed. A great harvest sprang in many lands from the seed that these worshipers found at Jerusalem—a great flame of spiritual life was kindled far and wide by these fiery tongues of the Pentecost revival. *Arnot.*

11. The miracle of tongues, what is it but a significant intimation of the appointment of Christianity to be the religion of the world? The gospel must speak all languages, and can and shall do so one day, because its deepest marrow and essence, really divine, is also human; not from man, nor according to man, but still for man, for all men without exception, adapted to the deepest, the unvarying cravings of humanity, and alone fitted fully to satisfy them. *Van O.*

THE signs, and that which followed them—the speaking with tongues—were but indications of the deeper and greater event itself, the being filled with the Holy Ghost. The rushing wind and the tongues of flame passed away in a few minutes, the speaking

with tongues in a few years : but the event of Pentecost remains in all its presence and all its power. The filling, teaching, indwelling Spirit is as much with us as he was with them. A.—The condition of the descent of the Holy Ghost with converting power in the Church is ever the same as at his first coming. Oneness of heart, and united, believing, persevering prayer on the part of Christ's banded disciples, will assuredly bring the largest blessing that is asked or desired. "For this I will be inquired of," is still the divine utterance, and the promise yet stands good, I will "increase with men like a flock." Prayers, unhindered by disagreements, by lukewarmness of desire, by diversion of interest and purpose, by wavering faith, or for-

getfulness of the objects, will never be denied ; they will be, must be answered, as God is true. B.—Every accessory, every instrument of usefulness, the Church has now in such a degree and of such excellence as was never known in any other age ; and we want but a supreme and glorious baptism of fire to exhibit to the world such a spectacle as would raise ten thousand hallelujahs to the glory of our King. Let but this baptism descend, and thousands who have been but commonplace or weak ministers would then become mighty. Prayer earnest, prayer united, and prayer persevering, these are the conditions ; and, these being fulfilled, we shall assuredly be "endued with power from on high." *Arthur.*

Section 194.

ACTS II. 12–36.

12 AND they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth
13 this? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men
of Judæa, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my
15 words : for these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day.
16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel ; and it shall come to pass in the last
17 days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh : and your sons and your daughters
shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream
18 dreams : and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my
19 Spirit ; and they shall prophesy : and I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in
20 the earth beneath ; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke : the sun shall be turned into dark-
21 ness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come : and it
22 shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Ye
men of Israel, hear these words ; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by
miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye your-
23 selves also know : him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of
24 God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain : whom God hath raised
up, having loosed the pains of death : because it was not possible that he should be holden
25 of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for
26 he is *on* my right hand, that I should not be moved : therefore did my heart rejoice, and
27 my tongue was glad ; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope : because thou wilt not leave
28 my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made
29 known to me the ways of life ; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men
and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and
30 buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and know-
ing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the
31 flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne ; he seeing this before spake of the
resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.
32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right
33 hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he
34 hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the
35 heavens : but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until
36 I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that
God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

FROM the moment when the apostles saw their Lord ascend, they were in full possession of all the external facts of which they were appointed to bear witness. But they were not in possession of the spiritual meaning, relations, and consequences of those facts, and therefore the hour of their testimony was not come, and the interval was passed not in preaching but in prayer. As soon as the promise is fulfilled, they lift up their voice and speak. Never were men so changed. Who does not note the accession of boldness, faithfulness, and fervor! Their clear, firm testimony rises in a moment before the world, never hesitating or wavering, never to sink or change again, only manifesting more fully, as time advances, the largeness of its compass and the definiteness of its announcements. Ever after they speak as men would do who were conscious of a ground of certainty which could not be questioned, who could say that things "seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to them"; that their word was "not the word of man but the word of God"; that it was "the Spirit that bore witness"; that they "preached the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven"; that they "had the mind of Christ." It is enough. The three testimonies concur—the testimony of him who gave the Spirit, the testimony of those who received it, and the testimony of the facts which ensued on its reception. Are we then at a loss to know what was the nature of the gift which the Holy Spirit brought for the purposes of the apostolic work? Certainly it was vast and various—"a sevenfold gift"; but its most essential part lay not in tongues and powers which witnessed to the gospel, not in the fervor and boldness which preached it, rather *it was the Gospel itself*. T. D. B.

The First Preaching of Christ.—Peter's address is bold and aggressive, not defensive, but his boldness is tempered with the "meekness of wisdom." And, alike in his courage, his gentleness, and his wisdom, we discern the clearest, surest proofs of the power of the Holy Ghost. Nothing less than divine energy could have enabled these timid fugitives of six weeks before to face a multitude of the very men from whom they had fled—nay, more, intrepidly to confess the Master whom they had deserted.

For Peter, the change is marvelous indeed! Not merely in the extreme of daring so soon succeeding to cowardice, nor in the confession of Christ again after his craven denial, but in the subjection of that rough, impetuous, indiscreet temper to the quietness of spirit and admirable judgment manifest in this whole discourse. He is still foremost, indeed—he would not be natural otherwise—but he is not forward. He refutes the rude charge of drunkenness at the outset, but with what mildness of manner and modesty of argument! And nothing can be wiser, no form of argument can be conceived as combining a more excellent judgment and temper, than the whole course of this introductory preaching of a completed redemption.

There is here no direct assault upon Judaism, no reference to its lapse from spiritual truth and life into the barrenness of superstitious form. On the contrary, the Jewish Scriptures furnish his starting-point, his constant resting-place and reference. There is a clear implication running through this sermon (and through all other discourses of the Acts) that the old dispensation was the foundation of the new, the Jewish of the Christian; that the teachings, ceremonies, and events of the Jewish Church all bore with an intense significance upon the development of Christianity. And now, under

the express inspiration of the Holy Ghost, Peter traces (and after him Stephen and Paul) these events which had wrought their wonder to the previous prophecies, and then conclusively shows that Christ himself is the Messiah of these Scriptures. But in the midst and at the close of his reasoning he tells them, with perfect quietness and simplicity of utterance, that *they* have delivered up and crucified this Jesus.

12, 13. A large number were simply astonished at these marvels, and in utter perplexity that they could not account for them. Another class scoffed and sneeringly said, These men are frenzied with strong drink. (*Sicet* wine is referred to, not *new*, made by soaking dried grapes in old wine and pressing them a second time.) We see here, what was so often seen in Christ's own history, of how little avail are miracles in affecting a hardened will and an unbelieving heart.

14, 15. Peter affirms, for his companions and himself, that they are not drunken; and only refers to the improbability of any one being intoxicated at so early an hour (before nine o'clock). For all knew it was a universal rule among the Jews, bad and good, not to eat or drink before morning prayer, which was at this hour.

16-18. He has said, This is not intoxication; now he asserts that it *is* inspiration. What you see and hear is nothing else than the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel; and then he cites the prophet's words. One well remarks here, "Even the illumination of the Spirit can never render the written word superfluous. The apostle, when filled with the Spirit, seeks a firm foundation in the word of prophecy" (2 Pet. 1 : 19). "The last days," referred to here, include the whole period of the Spirit's working—the entire Christian dispensation now far advanced. In this new dispensation, the prophecy

notes as one point of advance that there shall be perfect equality in spiritual privileges. Not only shall the Spirit be poured out, far more largely and abundantly imparted, but in this outpouring of the Spirit all classes shall equally partake, without distinction of sex, of age, of condition, or of race. There shall be no longer a Court of the Women, or of the Gentiles, or even of the Priests, but all partition walls shall be broken down, and the very Holy of Holies opened for evermore to "Jew and Greek," to "bond and free," to "male and female," since henceforth, inhabited by the same Spirit, "all are one in Christ Jesus." These predictions may have manifold applications throughout these "last days." Primarily, they refer to the near destruction of the Jewish state and nation. But they also apply to other nations, that serve not Christ and that hinder the progress of his gospel. And the symbols have in all cases the same meaning. The wonders and signs, of darkness and blood and fire and smoke, are portents of calamities that are familiar in the history of the past, and will be repeated yet more signally until the "great and notable day of the Lord shall come."

But while the predictions of judgment are general and spoken of the mass, the promise of salvation is individual and personal, and, like all the promises of the Old Testament and New, it is without limitation or exception. One condition only, *calling on the Lord*, implying a conviction of fearful personal peril, a belief that the Lord can and will save, a simple trust in him, and reliance upon his faithfulness to his own voluntary promise. With this condition as a permanent inward experience, Christians of this day, and of the very latest days, like those who were saved (every one) from the awful slaughter in Jerusalem, shall be surely delivered, and rejoice in the salvation of God.

22, 23. Peter has accounted for the miraculous sound and gift of tongues. Now he turns to the *main point* of his discourse, that Jesus of Nazareth, the man they had known and crucified, now risen and exalted into heaven, had "shed forth this which" they had seen and heard (verse 33), and that the same Jesus is Lord and Messiah (verse 36). In introducing this central theme of the gospel, the apostle elevates correspondingly the style of his address. Including all foreign and native Jews, under their highest title, Israel, he respectfully solicits their attention, and lends dignity to the charge he lays plainly upon them. "Ye yourselves know," he said, "that Jesus was sufficiently accredited to you by the miracles he did, and the wonderful events that attended him." Precisely this had Christ himself said to them again and again, when claiming perfect unity with the Father in the power of working miracles. Then in the simplest but

most explicit words, forbearing all irritating epithet, he declares that they, knowing these things, had apprehended and crucified him by heathen hands. They had done it, but God had determined the result, as Christ himself had affirmed, "The Son of man goeth as it was determined." So we learn, *signally*, how man is guiltily free, because without compulsion save of his own evil passions, and yet God is holily sovereign. For we see in Christ's death, on the one hand, the free acting of voluntary human guilt, and on the other, a fulfilled decree of God for human redemption. But neither divine decree in the interest of mercy, nor Christ's willingness to suffer, changed their relation to their own murderous act, or relieved their consciences from the burdening guilt. B.—The act is declared to be *wicked*, yet it is equally declared to be by the "determinate counsel of God"; therefore, acts which are evil may be included in the plan of Providence. J. W. A.

24-28. Affirming of his own knowledge that God had raised this Jesus of Nazareth from death, he first assigns the essential reason, that the Lord of life could not be holden of death. So the predictions of the Old Testament assured them. And in proof he cites from the 16th Psalm, and expounds the words cited. David is speaking, not of himself—for in no sense could the words be fulfilled in his experience—but of Christ. B.—It may be conceived that in David the dread of corruption and of the dark valley of death awakened the longing desire of victory over it; and this the prophetic Spirit led him to see realized in the person of the Messiah. Now, in Psalm 16, death is contemplated, first, in relation to the body, and secondly, to the soul. The body is represented as guarded against the last effect of death, viz., corruption, and the soul is described as beholding indeed the dark place of shades ("hell," or better, *hades*), but as speedily delivered from it and restored to the kingdom of light. The exactness with which these points were realized in the development of Christ's life makes the prediction one of the most remarkable in holy writ. *Hackett.*

29-31. To insure their conviction that David is *here predicting the Messiah's resurrection*, the apostle reasons further, simply but conclusively from the death and burial of David, and from his faith in the covenant God had made concerning Christ. Thus the threefold conclusion is reached, the glorious substance of this first proclamation of the gospel: *This Jesus hath God raised up*; having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, *He hath shed forth this*, which ye see and hear; therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that *God hath made this Jesus* whom ye

have crucified both Lord and Christ ! (Verses 32, 33, 36.) B.

One of the blessed fruits of the day of Pentecost was that the Holy Spirit, who had spoken of old by the prophets and in the Psalms, now *interprets* their words by the apostles. On that day he founded in the Church a school of Scriptural hermeneutics. He declared on his own divine authority that certain Scriptures which he expounded by the mouth of Peter, inspired by the divine Teacher the Comforter, refer to *Christ*. He teaches us how they apply to Christ, and has given us a key for unlocking other prophecies of like import. W.—Here, too, we may see how the Old Testament, or Judaism in its purity, underlies Christianity, furnishing its foundation facts and proofs. Both are equally from God, and, of course, in harmony with each other. Each interprets the other. The new or Christian dispensation is the natural expansion of the old or Jewish. The principle of membership, faith, and the spirit of service and worship, are alike in both. The only difference is in the forms of obedience and devotion, and the extent of knowledge. B.

32. Witnesses. They knew that which they affirm. At first, in their anticipations of a visible kingdom, they would not believe that Christ would die. But they were compelled to believe the fact when it transpired. They did not believe that he would rise again ; they even doubted the first report of it ; they yielded at last to the direct, positive, visible fact, and, when thus convinced, they believed fully. Then it was they became witnesses of what their eyes had seen and their hands had handled ; and assured of its truth, as a living confirmation of the divine gospel, they devoted themselves to the proclamation of this truth among the nations. S. W. F.

33. The great gift of the Spirit at this eventful hour came before the universe as the Father's endorsement of the scheme of salvation to which the Son was fully committed. It testified that henceforth the whole Deity—every perfection and power of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Spirit—are at

one in working for this sublime consummation, the redemption of the world to Christ. II. C.

THIS view of the operation of the Spirit, as the medium through which the Lord Jesus wrought and taught, is carried through the whole course of the history which follows. As in the promise, so in the history, "*The Comforter will come unto you*"—"I will come unto you"—are but two sides of one and the same fact. On critical occasions and at each onward step the hand of the Master is made distinctly visible. The first martyr dies for a testimony, which is felt to be an advance on what had been given before, being understood to imply that "*this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and change the customs which Moses delivered us*"; and his words are sealed by the vision of his Lord in glory. The consignment of the gospel to the Ethiopian proselyte was another step in advance, and for this "*the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip*." The preaching of the Word to Gentiles, and their admission into the Church, was a greater step ; and for this the Lord intervenes by the mission of an angel to Cornelius, by a vision and a voice of the Spirit to Peter, and by a kind of second Pentecost to the converts themselves. But when the greatest step of all is to be taken in the onward course of the gospel, then most visibly does the great Head of the Church make manifest his personal administration. A new apostle appears, not like him who was added before Pentecost, completing the number of the original college, and losing his individuality in its ranks, but one standing apart and in advance, under whose hand both the doctrines and the destinies of the gospel receive a development so extensive and so distinct that it seemed almost another gospel to many who witnessed it, and to some who study it seems so still. Thus does he, who at the commencement of the history was seen to pass into the heavens, continue to appear in person on the scene. His apostles act, not only on his past commission, but under his present direction. He is not wholly concealed by the cloud which had received him out of their sight. Now his voice is heard, now his hand put forth, and now through a sudden rift the brightness of his presence shines. And these appearances, voices, and visions are not merely incidental favors ; they are, as we have seen, apportioned to the moments when they are *wanted*, moments which determine the course which the gospel takes, and in which a manifestation of divine guidance proves the divine guidance of the whole. T. D. B.

Section 195.

Acts ii. 37-47.

87 Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and
88 to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto
them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remis-
89 sion of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you,
and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall
40 call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from

41 this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.
 42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking
 43 of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs
 44 were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things com-
 45 mon; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had
 46 need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from
 47 house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and
 having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should
 be saved.

THE Christian faith is shown to us, in the Acts of the Apostles, working out its first simple developments in human society. In that plain picture, we see how this new force, this divine idea, acted on the world of living men and women; how it took possession of them, and organized them into a peculiar institution, which has lived on ever since—the Church. Christ's visible presence is withdrawn out of the world at his resurrection; but thenceforth he appears to mankind in the living body of his Church, which, holding in its heart and its hand his Spirit and his Word, takes the place of his physical form. F. D. H.

Doubtless the form in which spiritual life now appears, differs in many respects from what it was at first; but in essence and principle it is the same, and all who are now gathered into the Church of the redeemed are really akin to the first confessors of the gospel. It is a church consisting of such as shall be saved; it is the spiritual body of Christ born of the Holy Ghost. It is wholly our own fault if we are not members of it; it is wholly the grace of the Lord if we are in truth brought into it. *Van O.*—Daily, ever since men were multiplied on the earth, have the saved streamed through the strait gate into life, and now a multitude whom no man can number inhabit the mansions of the Father's house. He added the saved to the Church: added them in the act of saving, saved in the act of adding. He does not add a withered branch to the vine; but in the act of inserting it, makes the withered branch live. "Daily" some are added: every day some; but only while it is day this process goes on. The night cometh wherein no man can work—not even the Son of man, Son of God. He is now about his Father's business: he is finishing the work given him to do. "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts," for the day is wearing away, the day of grace. The night cometh, cometh—how stealthily it is creeping on!—the night wherein not even this Great Worker can work any more. *Arnol.*

37. *Effect of the First Preaching of Christ crucified, with the Power of the Holy Ghost.*—Peter has proved to them, according to the clear statements of their own Scriptures, that Jesus was their long-looked-for Messiah; that they had rejected and slain him; but that he had risen, ascended, and from the throne of heaven had sent forth the Holy Ghost to teach, to convince, and to quicken. And the proof of the Spirit's convincing power we behold in this his first work upon multitudes of the guiltiest among the then living—of those to whom pertained the guilt of crucifying their own Messiah. *Pierced in the heart*, their understandings convinced, their feelings deeply stirred, and their wills mightily influenced by the combined force of the truth and the Spirit, they ask the one question of conscious guilt, *What shall we do?* Utterly self-condemned, their consciences demanding relief from the tremendous pressure of such guilt, they turn to these very Galileans whom they had despised, and with an awakened gentleness of penitence, answer back the address of Peter, *Men, brethren!* tell us, what shall we do to be saved? B.

The divine Spirit may, and, for aught that appears to the contrary, *must* use the instrument of Truth in this, his *first* act, as well as in any and in every *further* operation. And *when* he speaks, he *makes the deaf to hear*, as well as the *hearing to understand*. "When they *heard* this, they were *pricked* in their heart," was the experience of the three thousand to whom Peter preached the gospel on the day of Pentecost, and whose hard hearts the Spirit pierced by what they heard. J. S. S.

38. *The One Counsel and Promise of the Gospel to those convinced of Unbelief and Guilt.*—The counsel is twofold: Repent and be baptized; likewise the promise, the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Christ, on the eve of his ascension, had instructed them to preach *repentance and remission of sins in his name*, and Peter now uses, so far, his very words. The word "repentance" means simply "change of mind," the reversal of a man's controlling thoughts, feelings, and aims of life. Sorrow forms no part of the meaning, but sorrow is involved in and precedes it. More than this, "godly sorrow," *sorrow toward God*, "work-

eth repentance," leads to a radical change of sentiment, feeling, and purpose, with respect to man's relation and duty toward God. Repentance, then, is the turning of the whole soul from self to God, and involves the breaking off from a selfish, sinful course of life, and the entrance upon a life of obedience, trust, and supreme devotion to God. And this repentance, while it is man's own act, is not simply of his own unaided and spontaneous doing, and so meritorious; but it is performed under the prompting and with the help of God himself. And so in this, as in all else, *salvation is wholly of grace*. The cases before us admirably illustrate and impress this meaning of the familiar gospel term.

The additional outward requirement of *baptism* was designed as an expression of their faith in Jesus as Messiah and Saviour, and of their open consecration to his service. On God's part, it is his seal of acceptance and of his fulfillment of all the promises included in the covenant of grace. As Christ had commanded, baptism was administered in the name of the Three Divine Persons. Hence the expression here, *in the name of Jesus Christ*, signifies the recognition of his authority and the acceptance of his doctrine, his mediatorship, and his service.

Of the twofold promise, enforcing the counsel or exhortation, *the remission or forgiveness of sins* stands foremost. So it stands first in David's enunciation of mercies in that life-psalm of the grateful heart, the one hundred and third. It is first, not merely as it ministers quiet to conscience and heart, but as it changes the standing of the pardoned soul with reference to the law of God, and makes the further gifts of God consistent and meet. The *gift of the Holy Ghost*, next promised, refers not to any miraculous tokens such as they had heard that day, but to that indwelling and in-working of the divine Spirit which is given to every penitent believer in Jesus.

39. "*The promise*" is that of which he has been speaking (verses 17, 21), the quickening power of the Holy Ghost, and the "being saved" by Christ. *To you and to your children* this promise is given. To you, though you have crucified your Saviour. To your children, meaning, in the passage from Joel, and in similar passages in Isaiah and elsewhere, to your descendants or posterity. But the implication is clear, that *children as children* are also included. For from the first day of the covenant with Abraham, the children of every covenanting parent were distinctly recognized, and the recognition sealed by divine ordinance, as members of the Church and people of God. B.—We are expressly told that under Christ, in the New Testament, the same covenant is renewed, only expanded and deepened. Throughout, the law of descent is

carefully respected. The hereditary tie is recognized. Offspring, at birth, are supposed to be bound up in the same bond of Christian privileges and helps which encircle their believing progenitors. F. D. H.—*And to all afar off*, is the simple widening of the hope and promise of the gospel to include Gentile with Jew. It is the plain intimation that the divine forgiveness and indwelling are in purpose designed, and in measure adequate, for the race of guilty men.

40. *The Discourse prolonged but not reported, save in its Substance and Conclusion*.—In keeping with the great essential truths already stated, he continued to *testify and exhort*. The order of these words, especially the *dependence* of exhortation upon testimony or *instruction*, is worthy of note. It intimates that what is called "*exhortation*" is Scriptural and useful, when it follows and is strictly based upon Scripture truth. Peter's concluding exhortation is brief and to the point—"Save yourselves," or *be saved*, by separating yourselves from this perverse and gainsaying generation, and so escaping its doom.

41. *The Result of that Day's Ministry of the Gospel with the Holy Spirit*.—"Greater works than mine shall ye do," said Christ, "because I go to the Father, and send upon you the Spirit." And now, at the very outset, closely following his ascension to the Father, three thousand souls *gladly receive* the glad tidings, are *baptized*, and enrolled as members of the infant Church of Christ. An amazing fulfillment, too, of the word of Christ to the fisherman Peter, "From henceforth thou shalt catch men."

42. *Four Essential Elements in the Christian Life of these First Believers*.—First, as most important, they received needed *instruction* from the twelve, and perhaps from others. This was as the Master had directed. After making disciples, and baptizing, then teaching more fully *all things I have commanded*—so ran the commission. And this is still the only wise, true method. After receiving and enrolling disciples, *then instruct fully*. Steadfast heed to instruction in God's Word *was and is* needed, not only for personal growth in the Christian life, but for the great life-duty of every believer, of *bearing witness concerning Christ*. How well these early believers *learned* the spirit of Christ, we see from their continuance in *fellowship*. This means *communication*, not communion, and refers particularly to that self-sacrificing spirit of love to our neighbor and fellow which prompts to deeds of helpfulness, the actual communication of good in supply of his need. The idea is actualized in the facts stated in verses 44 and 45. The third particular, *the breaking of bread*, refers to the Lord's Supper, which was naturally a divine means of deep

and tender impression, as well as of confirming other instruction. Such is still its purpose, and may be, if rightly partaken, its increasingly happy effect. The last element of Christian life in the practice of which these first believers continued steadfast, was *prayer*. All other means and evidences of life or growth are vain where prayer, fervent, continuous, and expectant, is wanting. "Behold, he prayeth!" was the offered and accepted proof of Saul's conversion. And it is the surest, safest test of continued Christian life.

43. The Impression made upon the Multitude of Unbelievers.—"Fear came upon every soul!" This shows how broad and deep was the impression wrought by the miracles and the preaching of those wonderful days. The great body of the people were subdued and awed. No voice of mocking was heard, no thought of persecution was cherished among them. Not till the instigators and leading actors in the Crucifixion, the chief priests and rulers, were aroused by hearing of these wonderful effects, did persecution begin. B.

44. All things common. There was a special reason for this at Jerusalem, where converts to Christianity would be regarded by the Jews as renegades, and be cut off from domestic intercourse and from former means of subsistence. The need to be met was instant and special, and such as did not exist afterward among the churches formed among the heathen. K.

45. The Mutual Abounding Helpfulness of these First Christians.—In this sharing and distribution of goods there was no surrender of personal rights of property, as Peter's words to Ananias clearly show. There was no "community of goods," as each proprietor himself sold and distributed such portion as he pleased. But as each one having possessions saw the needs of others, and felt the call and obligation to aid, he sold so much as his judgment prescribed, and "parted," distributed to them relief. That is, a conscientious judgment was exercised in connection with charitable feeling. There was no compulsion of apostolic commandment, nor any improper self-impoorishment. What heart conscience and judgment together dictated, they gave, according to the gospel principle of stewardship and trust (so thoroughly taught to and by the apostles). Alike in their worship, their helpfulness, their active ministry for Christ and for men, and in receiving their daily food, gladness and singleness of heart prompted them to blend, with all, the praises of God. How

beautiful, yet natural, this conclusion of the briefly told story! And how natural, too, the recorded result of this harmonious, praying, self-denying, praising, happy fellowship! The accordant daily prayers and praises are heard and accepted. The single-hearted love to God and man, evinced in faithful word and helpful deed, deepens grateful devotion to the Lord of all grace. And as the blessed effect of answered prayer, accepted praise, and helpful word and deed, Christ, the Lord, adds to their number daily of *the saved*! And ever since, through the same instrumentality of human prayer and praise, of faithful, self-denying word and deed, the saved have been daily added to the blessed family of which Christ is the head! B.

46. In the temple. The apostles and primitive disciples would not separate themselves from the Temple, but resorted habitually to it, that it might not be supposed that the gospel which they preached was at variance with the law of Moses, and that they might give a practical confirmation to their argument that Christ has been foretold by Moses and the Prophets, whose office it was to prepare the way for him. W.

The first representatives of the Christian Church on earth were the disciples, of varied name and pursuit—men and women who first adhered to Christ with intelligent faith in him, as the Saviour of the world. The first local and particular church was that formed in Jerusalem. But there was in fact little of "forming" in the matter. It formed itself, as it were. It was a collection of believing men and women, who were baptized in testimony of their Christian belief. All the organization there was about it appears to have been as exigencies arose, necessities required, and proprieties prompted. What Christ enjoined was, that every creature should believe on him as the personal Redeemer; that all who believe on him should observe his ordinances, baptism, and the Lord's Supper. Nothing beyond this do we find in the record. Our Lord always individualizes men. Faith in the heart of the particular man is the essential thing. All those who believed on him after this manner, gravitating toward a common center, naturally and voluntarily associated together, and so particular churches were formed and organized, by the election of their own officials and the administration of their own rules. So simply lies the whole matter in the New Testament. W. A.

Section 196.

Acts iii. 1-26.

1 Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the
 2 ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid
 3 daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered
 4 into the temple; who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms.
 5 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed
 6 unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have
 7 I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up
 8 and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up: and immediately his
 9 feet and ancle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered
 10 with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people
 11 saw him walking and praising God: and they knew that it was he which sat for alms at
 12 the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that
 13 which had happened unto him. And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and
 14 John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly
 15 wondering.

16 And when Peter saw *it*, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye
 17 at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we
 18 had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God
 19 of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the
 20 presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let *him* go. But ye denied the Holy One
 21 and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life,
 22 whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And his name through
 23 faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which
 24 is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. And now,
 25 brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did *it*, as *did* also your rulers. But those things,
 26 which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer,
 he hath so fulfilled.

1 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the
 2 times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus
 3 Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the
 4 times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy
 5 prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall
 6 the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in
 7 all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul,
 8 which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and
 9 all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have
 10 likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant
 11 which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the
 12 kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent
 him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

THE apostle enforces his exhortation to repent by an appeal to the final coming of Christ, not because he would represent it as near in point of time, but because that event was always near to the feelings and consciousness of the first believers. It was the great consummation on which the strongest desires of their souls were fixed, to which their thoughts and hopes were habitually turned. They lived in expectation of it; they labored to be prepared for it; they were, in the expressive language of Peter, *looking for and hasting unto it*. It is then that Christ will reveal himself in glory, will raise the dead, invest the redeemed with an incorruptible body, and introduce them for the first time and for ever into the state of perfect holiness and happiness prepared for them in his kingdom. The apostles, the first

Christians in general, comprehended the grandeur of that occasion; it stood forth to their contemplations as the point of culminating interest in their own and the world's history, threw into comparative insignificance the present time, death, all intermediate events, and made them feel that the manifestation of Christ, with its consequences of indescribable moment to all true believers, was the grand object which they were to keep in view as the end of their toils, the commencement and perfection of their glorious immortality. In such a state of intimate sympathy with an event so habitually present to their thoughts, they derived their chief incentives to action from the prospect of that future glory; they hold it up to the people of God to encourage them to fidelity, zeal, and perseverance, and appeal to it to warn the wicked, and impress upon them the necessity of preparation for the revelations of that day. *Hackett.*

1. Strong as was the contrast in natural character and disposition between Peter and John, these were the two of all the twelve who finally drew closest together. The day of Pentecost wrought a great change upon them both, and by doing so linked them in still closer bonds. The grace was given them which enabled each to struggle successfully with his own original defects, and to find in the other that which he most wanted. It is truly singular, in reading the earlier chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, to notice how close the coalition between Peter and John became. W. H.—Now and for a considerable period, they are joint leaders of the apostolic band, Peter the speaker, John the counselor and inspirer.

While on their way to the afternoon service of daily worship in the temple, they are accosted. It should be borne in mind that the disciples had no command to withdraw at once from the Jewish worship. According to the universal law of God's acting, there were no sudden or extreme transitions directed by the Holy Spirit. Judaism was not to be overthrown and obliterated, but gradually transformed by the infusion into it of the spirit of Christianity. Sacrifice and incense were to them merely *symbols* of the death now accomplished for sin, and the intercession now availing in the heavens. For a time, therefore, and with the purpose of using these ceremonials to impress the realities they shadowed forth upon other minds, the disciples retained their relation to the Jewish church, and conformed to its pure temple worship. We shall find the illustration of this in the further history.

2, 3. *A Lame Man asks Aid of Peter and John at the Temple Gate.*—The parallel to this case is the impotent man at Bethesda (John 5). That man was thirty-eight years a wreck. This one had never walked, and for forty years had been recognized and known as a helpless dependent cripple. For a long time he had been carried every morning to the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, there to solicit help from the multitude of passers-by. As the name implies, this was the most magnificent and costly of the nine chief gates. Forming the eastern entrance to the Temple, it fronted the holy place or sanctuary, and was more frequented than any other. (Vol. I., p. 628.)

4-6. *Peter's Double Reply.*—First, concentrating his gaze, with that of John, upon the suppliant, he answers, "Look on us!" They had *learned* the Master's method, and were now practicing it. He, almost always, tarried to question, or to interpose some act which required delay. And his purpose was always the same; to excite or deepen expectation, faith, hope on the part of the helpless needy one. He always helped the *spirit* first; led it to *trust*, and then deepened the trust by rewarding it with healing. So the twain disciples stirred the man to *expect* some gift—how much, he knew not.

Then followed Peter's response to the man's entreaty: "Rise, walk, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth!" A stupendous, sublime faith in Christ's absolute Deity and Lordship stands out in these bold words! To these disciples he is indeed the living reigning God. His own spirit of mercy toward misery led them thus to invoke his willing might for deliverance of the wretched. And it is the title of the *Cross* by which they invoke his presence and favor, the name by which he was lifted up, by which he was already known, and by which he would draw all men unto him. Surely the poor sufferer had heard and knew full well this name, and the sound stirred his heart to more than expectation, even to faith. For there was no doubt or hesitation. He obeyed so far as he could, in his will and heart. And this was faith, a dawning feeble but real faith!

7, 8. *The Restoration, and its Effects upon the Healed Man.*—Not only by Peter's expression of utter dependence upon the power of Christ, but also by *his act* in taking the man's hand and lifting him up, do we distinguish the disciple's miracle-working from the Master's. Christ spoke, sometimes touched, but *never* used physical strength in connection with any miracle. This act of Peter has also significance, on one side, as proving his faith in his own bold command, to rise; and on the other, as indicating that faith to the man, and so helping to excite the corresponding faith and effort in his soul. The restoration which instantly followed, and the added miracle of instantaneous ability to walk and leap (for one who had *never* walked), proved and justified the word and deed and faith of Peter. And the restored man's exclusive praise to

God, in entire disregard of the apostle for the time, as conclusively proved the reality of his faith, and of his recognition of Jesus Christ as Lord and God. So "*his name, through faith* in his name, made this man strong."

Like many miracles of healing, this may be regarded as a parable of redemption. It suggests these points: imperfection of a far deeper and more grievous kind as the universal birthright of the fallen soul; its helplessness and hopelessness of human cure; the limit of friendly interest and help, bringing the soul in the arms of faith, and pleading with God the prayer of faith; the sinner's responsive willingness, desire, and faith; and the consequent healing and forgiveness in the name and by the Spirit of Christ.

Obedience, willing submission to God is the first act of a returning soul. This man obeyed in his will and heart, and in this he did all that he could. So let every soul seeking life obey the first felt duty, obey it by prayer, or act of consecration, but obey it in *will and heart*. Then Christ's Spirit will give life. We may well believe that this man's soul was quickened to a peculiarly deep trust and consecration. In him, and in the many Christ had healed, apart from their natural joy and thankfulness for great restoration, there must have been wrought a depth and strength of conviction concerning his divine Messiahship that nothing could shake. "I, at least," each must have said and often repeated, "I, at least, know him to be my Saviour and my Lord!" And how large the ministry and effective the testimony for Christ, of this vast company of the physically and spiritually healed, none can adequately measure! B.

9-11. *Effect upon the People.*—For years he must have been one of the persons best known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and this tended further to magnify the miracle when he appeared at the hour of public prayer in the Temple, "walking, and leaping, and praising God." K.—They saw him restored, heard him praising God for his restoration, and knew that it was the same whom they had long noticed lying helpless at the gate; and they were filled with wonder and amazement. Isaiah's prophecy had been literally fulfilled before their eyes, "The lame man shall leap as a hart." Other wonders had the apostles performed during the now considerable interval since the Pentecost, but none so marked as this by the clearest proof of divine power. It was designed, we afterward see, as an occasion of another great discourse, another immense ingathering of saved souls; and also proved the immediate cause of the first hostile movement of the priests and rulers. The tidings of the miracle rapidly spread through the city, and a multitude of people thronged into the Temple. They gathered

in the wide space, beneath the lofty double-pillared portico on the eastern side, called Solomon's, because standing on a terrace which he had raised from the valley beneath. Here they found the healed man standing between Peter and John, holding a hand of each in token of his grateful affection to them, while still praising God for his restoring power. And with this visible, most affecting testimony before them, Peter, as a fisher of men, seizes his opportunity, and preaches again to the multitude Christ and him crucified. (Vol. I., p. 620.)

12. He *answered*, not to any uttered question, but as Christ so often is said to have answered, to the unspoken state or inquiry of the minds and hearts gathered around him. And as we have seen the power of Jesus' name in the healing of this one body and soul, so in the result of this second sermon we see it in the healing of thousands of souls.

13-15. *Their God had glorified, but they had denied and killed Jesus, the Prince of Life.*—It was no other than the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, *their only*, proudly acknowledged God, whose Son this Jesus was, whom they had just before rejected, scorned, and murdered. This great crime is pressed upon them in its particular *aggravations* by sharp contrasts. Peter thus helps them to see themselves and their guilty deeds as the God of their fathers sees it. The Holy Spirit directs and uses the charge to *convince of the sin of not believing in Christ*—everywhere, in all generations, the sin of sins, set down as the only sin that brings condemnation. So the apostle tells them that when Pilate, an uncircumcised, untaught heathen, sought again and again to rescue and release this Son of their God, they, whose accepted Scriptures plainly revealed his divine Sonship, yet pushed their cruel murderous hate to the very end, and killed their own Prince and Saviour. Still more to press their consciences, he contrasts with this pure spotless being, whose death they had demanded, the murderer Barabbas, whom they in their madness of unbelief had preferred and released from deserved death. "You spared," he says, "the destroyer, and doomed to destruction the Saviour of life!" He concludes this clear, plain-spoken home-charge with the assertion, again, of the *resurrection* of Jesus, as a proof that he is the Prince of life. And he responds again to the Master's word, "We are witnesses!"

16. *Christ's Name or Power, exerted in Response to Faith, had healed the Lame Man.*—"Ye delivered him up, denied him, preferred a murderer, killed him, but he, the Prince of Life, risen again and ascended, hath wrought this soundness in the man before you, because of our faith, and his, in his divine willingness and might." B.—The old carnal thoughts of his mission had been

left in his grave, and could never rise from it again. It was the "Prince of Life" who had risen from the dead; it was the "King of Glory" who had passed into the heavens. And no less did these facts declare the *spiritual consequences* of his manifestation, since they carried with them the implication of those three corresponding gifts, which we celebrate for evermore, saying with solemn joy, "I believe . . . the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting." Toward these topics the preaching of Christ in the Acts of the Apostles continually turns. T. D. B.

17, 18. Peter has spoken plainly. The truth of his charge made it severe. He sees the effect, and then practices another lesson he had learned from the Master. With gentleness and an excusing spirit he seeks to heal after wounding. So Christ had excused the three unwatchful disciples (Peter among them) during his agony, "The flesh is weak." And so had he pleaded on the Cross for his slayers, "They know not what they do!" Now the disciple calls these murderers *brethren*, and repeats in substance that plea upon the Cross, "Through ignorance ye did it"; and still further goes his gentle, forgiving spirit (now so changed!), "as did *your rulers*."

And, as Joseph to his brethren, "Ye meant it for evil, but God for good." Peter comforts them with the fact that their guilty deed God had overruled for (it might be) even their own salvation. All their prophets had announced this very deed of theirs as God's way of showing mercy to transgressors. He means to assure them that Christ's blood, though shed *by* them, was also shed *for* them, for their forgiveness and cleansing.

19-24. Recall and fix the meaning of these words. *Repent* is to change the *mind*, to reverse the current of thought, feeling, will, from self to God; therefore the Scripture says repentance *toward* God. *Be converted* is to change the *life*, to correspond with the changed thought and feeling. One result of this double, *entire* change is the utter erasure of the sin that our past life has set down in the Book of Account. So God says, "I have blotted out thy transgressions, and will not remember them any more for ever."

The other result is figuratively intimated here. There are diversities of interpretation concerning the *times* here spoken of. It would seem that the "times of refreshing" referred to the fullness of blessings possessed under the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, *until* the "times of restitution," or restoration. These *latter* times, and *their* consummate blessings, *avowedly* attend and characterize the *second coming* of Christ. To *all* these blessings, promised by all the prophets, and especially by *that prophet* to whom Moses explicitly referred, by Christ him-

self, to all the blessings that he has introduced with his first coming, and all that he shall bring at his second coming, the repenting, returning, forgiving, believing soul has access now and hereafter. While from these "every soul who will not hear that prophet" shall be excluded. This is the substance of Peter's earnest plea. It is made more effective with them, as it is based upon the declarations of Moses and all their own prophets. Compare Gen. 17 : 14 and Deut. 18 : 15-19. And now, in conclusion, he gathers and emphasizes the entire truth he has spoken, his charge of guilt, his excuse, his counsel and encouragement to repentance and faith in Christ. In the way of concentrated promise and appeal,

25, 26. *He declares Jesus to be the Promised Seed of Abraham, the Son of God, sent to bless them, every One.*—"Children of the prophets and of the covenant," he calls them; those who have a hereditary interest and intimate connection with the prophecies and promises of God. Frankly Peter acknowledges their descent and their privileges, purposely classing himself among them to strengthen the force of his words that follow: "Unto you *first*," in the fulfillment of this long-continued covenant, God has sent this Jesus, his Son, to bless you. But plainly and faithfully he tells them, what as a people they had long been ignorant of, that the main blessing of this their old and long-trusted covenant first made with Abraham was the *turning away every one from his iniquities*. Not restored temporal power or national exaltation, which had been their dream for generations, but the cleansing of their souls through the blood of Christ. And he intimates as clearly that without this *saving from sin, through personal repentance and conversion*, all the covenants and promises, through patriarchs and prophets, would be only occasions of a deeper condemnation. The discourse was rudely interrupted at this point, but not till it was completed. The effect is narrated in the next chapter. Two thousand more believed—5,000 men in all.

SUMMARY OF LEADING THOUGHTS AND LESSONS.

We discern a wonderful comprehensiveness and unity in the discourse. The substance of all revelation, the purpose of all the divine counsels and acts from the beginning, the subject of all divine predictions by the mouth of successive prophets, the theme of all divine promises, center in and upon the person, the suffering, the sacrifice of Christ, upon the incomparable spiritual and eternal blessings he has brought with his first coming, and will bring with his second appearing. John sums it all up in a single sentence at the close of the inspired canon: *The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy!*

The one purpose of Christ's coming is to bless *every one* in turning him from his iniquities. Faith in his name, trust in his blood, with personal repentance and conversion, are the conditions of renewal by the Holy Ghost. And whatever period and blessedness are intended by the "times of refreshing and restitution," this is clear, that it is only the repentant and believing, the forgiven and sanctified of all nations, who shall know and experience all their meaning and reality. The Jew first—but the Jew as believer, not as Jew—and also the Gentile.

Both discourses of Peter, with their effect, admirably interpret and illustrate the Holy Spirit's office work as described by Christ (John 16: 8-11). He *convince*s of the sin of sins, the not believing in Christ; of the justifying righteousness wrought by Christ through his substituted sacrifice; and of the judgment of God against the finally impenitent and unbelieving. B.

These successive witness-bearings of Peter are all framed on one model, all strike the same note. In every one there is—1st, a Scriptural argument,

more or less full, identifying Jesus with the Messiah of the prophets; 2d, a plain, piercing charge, laying the guilt of crucifying Christ to the door of his audience and judges; and 3d, a tender and pressing offer of mercy, through the blood of Christ, to his murderers. *Arnot.*

The hearers of these discourses had been among the multitude who had answered Pilate, "His blood be upon us and our children!" That blood was upon all of them, upon the five thousand who believed and repented for their justification and eternal life, and upon the unrepentant and unbelieving for their condemnation and eternal death. So has it ever been, so is it now; in every individual case either the blood of forgiveness and blessing or of abiding wrath and curse.

Whatever view be taken of Christ's second coming, let it be seriously considered that almost every page of the New Testament refers to the sublime fact and its consequences, in the way of appeal and motive to Christian practice and life, side by side with the fact and results of his first coming! B.

Section 197.

Acts iv. 1-31.

- 1 AND as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the
- 2 Sadducees, came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached
- 3 through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put
- 4 *them* in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide. Howbeit many of them which
- heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.
- 5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas
- 6 the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kin-
- 7 dred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set
- them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?
- 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and
- 9 elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man,
- 10 by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel,
- that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from
- 11 the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which
- 12 was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is
- there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men,
- whereby we must be saved.
- 13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were un-
- learned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they
- 14 had been with Jesus. And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they
- 15 could say nothing against it. But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the
- 16 council, they conferred among themselves, saying, What shall we do to these men? for that
- indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them *is* manifest to all them that dwell in Jeru-
- 17 salem; and we cannot deny *it*. But that it spread no further among the people, let us
- 18 straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they
- 19 called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But
- Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to

- 20 hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things
 21 which we have seen and heard. So when they had further threatened them, they let them
 go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people: for all *men* glori-
 22 fied God for that which was done. For the man was above forty years old, on whom this
 miracle of healing was shewed.
- 23 And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests
 24 and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to
 God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou *art* God, which hast made heaven, and earth,
 25 and the sea, and all that in them is: who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said,
 26 Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth
 stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ.
 27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and
 28 Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to
 29 do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord,
 behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may
 30 speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may
 be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.
- 31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together;
 and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with bold-
 ness.

THERE is no power but life-power. You can not move a dying world by speculation, by eloquence, by majestic thought, by argument, by persuasion, except it be kindled, inspired, and accompanied by the Holy Spirit, except it be set on fire of love. If we would speak of Jesus to others, we must have been with him ourselves. If we would speak of heaven to others, and of God, and of sin, and of hell, with the tone and power of reality, with the vividness and fire of one thoroughly in earnest, we must be much with Christ in secret. A Christian can no more be a fervent messenger for God, while running on his own errands, with heart and mind absorbed in the things of this world, than he can serve God and mammon. G. B. C.

There is no way under heaven to be interested in Christ, but by believing. *He that believeth shall be saved*, let his sins be ever so many or great; and *he that believeth not shall be damned*, let his sins be ever so little or few. *Brooks*.—If men need not go to heaven by the Cross, but by some other way, then the Cross may become an old, worn, unused way; no footfall of a traveler may cheer it, heaven may be filled through other avenues, and other songs than those of praise to the Lamb may echo through the arches of the upper Temple. If Christ is not the exclusive Saviour, then other Saviours could be made without the Cross, and the Cross is all an idle waste. We are lost men outside of God's kingdom. There is a way into it—Jesus Christ. There is a name given whereby we can be saved. That name is Jesus. There has come from the sweet heavens over us no other. It is enough. We need no other. J. D.

PETER's *second* address to the people, upon the miraculous restoration of the disabled man, was interrupted by the officials of the Temple, who arrested and imprisoned both apostles for the night. The next morning they were formally arraigned before the Sanhedrim, the supreme tribunal of the nation, consisting of the high priests Annas and Caiaphas and their kindred (of the same office), with the elders, or rulers, and scribes, to the number of seventy. These were the men who had tried and condemned Christ. The reference (verse 2) to the resurrection recalls the singular fact that we hear nothing of the Pharisees after Christ's apprehension, although up to that period they had been his leading opponents. At the trial and after it, the Sadducees assumed the chief direction and responsi-

bility of the opposition and condemnation of Christ and the apostles. For to this sect belonged the chief priests and the more prominent of the rulers and scribes. B.

1. **The captain.** The officer of the priests and Levites who kept guard at the Temple—not a Roman functionary. The Romans do not appear, in the Acts, as persecutors of the apostles. **The Sadducees.** They said that there was no resurrection. They foresaw that their own influence with the people would be impaired if the apostles succeeded in convincing them of the truth of the resurrection in Christ. Hence *their* activity against the gospel *after* the resurrection. The high priest and many of his assessors and associates were Sadducees. W.—We find the Sadducees established

in the highest office of the priesthood, and possessed of the greatest powers in the Sanhedrim: and yet they did not believe in any future state, nor in any spiritual existence independent of the body. They do not appear to have held doctrines which are commonly called licentious or immoral. On the contrary, they adhered strictly to the moral tenets of the law, as opposed to its mere formal technicalities. They did not overload the sacred books with traditions, or encumber the duties of life with a multitude of minute observances. They were the disciples of reason without enthusiasm—they made few proselytes—their numbers were not great, and they were confined principally to the richer members of the nation. H.

6. Annas. *Annas* is here called the high priest, and placed before *Caiaphas*, who was the high priest. The reason seems to be, that though *Caiaphas* was high priest *de facto*, being intruded into the office by the civil power of Rome, yet *Annas* was high priest *de jure*, and was regarded as such *ecclesiastically*. Hence our Lord was taken to *Annas* first (John 18: 13). *Annas* was the head of the Jewish hierarchy. The nominee of Rome, *Caiaphas*, had, as such, a subordinate place. W.—Pontiffs and priests, scribes and Pharisees, Herod and Pilate, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, condemned the Truth; they crucified and buried it; but it rose from the tomb and conquered them all, sending forth in its stead twelve preachers of the Word. Huss.

8-12. Peter's Good Confession of Christ, and Daring Impeachment of the Chief Priests and Rulers.—This judicial investigation gave Peter the opportunity which he boldly and faithfully used, while standing in the very place of his Master, of proclaiming Christ crucified as the only Saviour of men. Mark these particulars: Christ's promise that the Spirit should speak in them when they were brought before councils, was here fulfilled. Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost. He speaks respectfully and with dignity, recognizes their rightful authority in the terms of his address. He answers directly to their question, declaring that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth—using again to them the title of the Cross—the man stood before them whole. More than this, standing where his Master had stood when he had denied Him, the now rock-like apostle fearlessly charges home upon the very murderers the crime of Christ's crucifixion, and reasserts the offensive doctrine of his resurrection by the God of Israel. And to both the charge and the assertion they were silent. The crucifixion they could not deny, and concerning the resurrection they dared not now repeat their own previous falsehood that the disciples had stolen the body of Jesus by night.

But the brave and faithful preacher of Christ

goes further still. He has asserted the facts of Christ's death and resurrection. Now he emphasizes the central truth of their own Scriptures, and asserts it to be the central truth of all divine revelation. This Christ, he tells them, the Son of God, whom they, the representatives of God himself in the nation and so the builders of God's spiritual house, had rejected, was himself the corner-stone of that spiritual fabric. So their own Scriptures declared. And then, plainly interpreting the figure as Jesus had done (Mat. 21), the apostle, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, declares to all the race of sinning men the one supreme disclosure of heaven, that *there is salvation in Christ, and in none other!*

The whole scene is deeply impressive—a reproduction in many points of the Master's trial! Arraigned before the same judges, the disciple also arraigns and by their own Scriptures convicts them of that crime of the deepest dye—the killing of the Son of God. Nay, he goes further, he preaches salvation through that very Cross to them by whom it had been raised, and, plainly as the Master, utters words of warning to the men before whose bar he stands! B.

10, 11. The way in which the apostles referred to Christ is precisely the way in which he referred to himself. They do not profess to teach simply what he taught; they do not confine themselves to ideas which he put into words. These were not, in their estimation—valuable as they might be in other respects—the one thing needful, the saving truth, the unspeakable gift, the source and means of immortal life. No; it was not what Jesus had said that they dwelt upon, but what he was—what he had done. They preached HIM—they spoke of what he had “accomplished,” and spoke of it in such a way as to show that he, personally, was the life of the world and the light of men, and not that he had simply taught or revealed it. T. B.

13. Better, “when they beheld the freedom of speech of Peter and John, having also previously known, etc.: and they recognized them, that they had been with Jesus.” A.

Effect of this Bold Address upon the Sanhedrim.—They wondered at the boldness of Peter and John, and well they might, for these unknown Galilean peasants, in the presence of the highest in the nation, had dared to turn defense into accusation. With no token of mere fanatics, but with respectful manner and manifest sincerity of conviction, they had spoken and acted. The council wondered too at the knowledge of the men, at their familiarity with and understanding of the Scriptures. And while thus marveling they remembered that this boldness and knowledge had been even more signal-ly evinced by him whom they had crucified, and this likeness of the disciples to the Master led to the

further recollection that they had seen Peter and John with Jesus.

14. They could do no more than marvel. They could make no reply, for there stood the man they had so long noticed and known; his very posture a proof, his silent gratitude and eager interest a further confirmation of the miracle.

15-18. *Confuted and silenced, they confer together, and seek to quench the Spirit with the Truth by silencing the Human Agents.*—The people, to whom Peter had twice preached, convinced of their guilt in crucifying Christ, had asked of the disciples, What shall we do for ourselves? But these proud priests and rulers, untouched in heart and will however convinced in understanding, ask of each other, What shall we do with these men? Gladly would they have stoned them, as soon afterward, when grown a little bolder through increasing malignancy and passion, they stoned Stephen. But now they dared do no more than forbid to preach, or even speak, the name of Jesus. So they forbade Peter and John to continue their work of witnessing for Christ. Mark here, that they said nothing about the further working of miracles. It was not the effect of miracles so much as the word that was preached in explanation of the miracle, the facts of Christ's death and resurrection, attested as the Son of God and Saviour of men by the miracle. So it has been ever since. The word about Christ, convincing of sin and offering mercy, this is the only influence under heaven which leads to repentance and faith, or which hardens the hard soul and stimulates the malignancy of the determinedly malignant.

19, 20. *The Brave and Noble Answer of the Two Apostles.*—Instantly, tarrying for no conference, of one mind and soul, yet with all respect to the tribunal, they first appeal the question back for further consideration and judgment by asserting this prohibition to be contrary to God's command; and then calmly say that they must speak that which God hath bidden. And, with all their previous knowledge of Christ, with the power of his character and words, with the events of his agony, betrayal, death, resurrection, and ascension, impressed in all their vividness of reality and sublimity of meaning by the Holy Ghost, how could these first heralds of the Cross and ambassadors of the Crucified fail to stand, in this crisis, for God and for the gospel! B.—They had seen and heard such things of and from Christ, they had received such a commission to proclaim him to the world, that it was morally impossible for them to obey the commands of the Sadducees. The courage to obey God rather than man proceeded from what had come under their own experience, from Christ's words, from his works, his life, his resurrection. But this outward experience could have inspired

them with no such boldness, if it had not aroused an inward experience; if it had not attached them to Christ as a Friend, a Master, a Saviour, and a King. The influences of things seen and heard within their souls and in their lives created their strength to endure, to resist, to hope on amid discouragements, to believe in the efficacy and the triumph of the gospel. T. D. W.

Here, at its outset, Christianity recognizes the full liberty of the individual conscience, and in so doing puts responsibility solely upon the individual. Thus it establishes the right and the duty of private judgment. B.—Bearing in mind the fact that a right to preach the gospel involved a right to organize churches, and through them carry on a systematic effort to change the religious life of the whole people, it is safe to conclude from these replies that neither civil nor ecclesiastical rulers are authorized to determine what forms of religion may be taught among the people. In obvious harmony with the apostles' language to the Jewish Sanhedrim was their conduct ever after. They acted on the assumption that religious truth should be laid before the mind of every man, in order that he might accept or reject it freely. Hovey.

21, 22. *With Further Threats, the Sanhedrim direct the Release of Peter and John.*—The manly appeal of the apostles is disregarded. It can not be answered or turned aside with reason. Afraid to go further with persecution, they resort to the persecutor's first and feeblest argument, threatening.

23-30. *The First Recorded Prayer of the Christian Church.*—Naturally, on their release, the two apostles sought their companions in the faith, the body of believers, and told their story. Then uprose from the hearts of the gathered disciples a simple Scriptural prayer, an appeal based upon what God had revealed of his own power and of his purposed redemption by Christ. All their preaching and prayer are confessedly based upon the very Word of God, apprehended and believed. Notice here, that it is to great truths rather than to special promises they refer. They rest their faith and appeal upon the sovereign might of God, and the certain accomplishment of his plan in the face of all opposition. (The quotations are from Psalm 146 and Psalm 2, and are made clearer by the whole context.) This prophecy of David concerning Christ had been first and most emphatically fulfilled by Herod, representing "the kings"; by Pilate, "the rulers"; by the Roman soldiers, "the heathen"; and the Jews, "the people." But it has had continuous fulfillment in the continuous conflict of Christianity with its foes.

The point upon which they rest in this portion of the prayer is the same Peter brought out in his

discourses. They here believingly recognize that this combined agency of rulers and people against Jesus only accomplished the merciful purpose of God, and laid foundations for the establishment and spread of his gracious salvation in all the earth. And with this basis of faith in God's overruling power bringing to pass his purposed redemption, how simply unselfish and manly is the spirit and substance of their prayer! "*Now, Lord, behold their threatenings!*" No word or thought of vengeance against these malignant murderers and persecutors. Only, *behold* thou, and interpose as thou wilt, and when thou wilt! And for *themselves*, they ask no immunity from further persecution or danger, only that their faith and courage may not fail, that they may hold on in their work of testifying for Christ and preaching the Word. Not for the destruction of their enemies and the removal of obstacles, but for steadfastness to endure persecution, boldness to face and strength to surmount difficulties. They do indeed ask for God's miraculous interposition, but not for *their* help or comfort. Stretch forth thy hand in healing to give *assurance* that the *Word is thine*, and that Jesus is Lord and Christ. There is a wonderful simplicity and concentration of faith in God's Word and Christ's work embodied in this first prayer of the infant Church! And the faith was regarded in the instant answer. B.

We see here a Church *that prays*, and just by this gives incontestable evidence of awakened inward life. Here is, moreover, a Church that *prays for her servants*. Although we may pray for ourselves, who among us pray for others? Especially

what amount of personal and social prayer ascends from us in behalf of the ministers of the Word, from whom so much is required, who are so severely criticised, so often with or without cause condemned, and who must first receive before they can impart to others? *Van O.*

31. *The Sublime Effect wrought outwardly by Miracle and inwardly by the Holy Ghost, in Response to their Prayer.*—They had appealed to the *might* of God, and *that* appeal was responded to by the palpable interposition of his power in the shaking of the place where they were gathered. They had besought help to obey Christ's last word of direction, faithfully to witness for him, and the Pentecostal power was communicated afresh to them: they were *all filled* with the Holy Ghost. Their one personal request was that they might, with steadfast, undaunted spirit, stand in the front of peril and declare the word given them to utter. And the answer is recorded in the very terms of their asking: "And they spake the Word of God with boldness." B.

A congregation shows itself here which unites *servent prayer* with *unanimous work*. They do not leave the work entirely to the apostles, but co-operate with them; and, as though reanimated by this awakened life in the Church, these last soon with greater boldness bear witness to the resurrection of the Lord. What think ye? Should no greater blessing be expected on such unanimous prayer and labor and struggle, than on the endless lamentations over both the friends and foes of the Lord, in which so many appear inexhaustible? *Van O.*

Section 198.

Acts iv. 32-37; v. 1-11.

33 AND with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: 32 and great grace was upon them all. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any *of them* that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the 35 prices of the things that were sold, and laid *them* down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

36 And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The 37 son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold *it*, and 1 brought the money, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet. But a certain man named Ananias, 2 with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back *part* of the price, his wife also being 3 privy to *it*, and brought a certain part, and laid *it* at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* 4 of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou

5 hast not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and
 6 gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the
 7 young men arose, wound him up, and carried *him* out, and buried *him*. And it was about
 8 the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. And
 Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said,
 9 Yea, for so much. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to
 tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband *are*
 10 at the door, and shall carry thee out. Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and
 yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying *her*
 11 forth, buried *her* by her husband. And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as
 many as heard these things.

THE same Peter, who in Christ's name had spoken so gently, and even excusingly, to the very crucifiers of Christ, here, in the same name, denounces the most fearful judgment of God against *professed* followers of Jesus. Thus the Gospel repeats the declaration of the Law, that God will by no means clear the guilty; while the injunction is sharply emphasized, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." And the chief danger to the Church to-day arises not from outward assailants, but from inward corruption or unfaithfulness; from the false vows of counterfeit members or hypocrites; and from the incomplete vows or partial consecration of true members. Still Christ's word needs to be heeded by all, *Take heed and beware of hypocrisy!* Still the Holy Ghost exhorts, *Pay unto the Lord thy vows*, and *Lift up holy hands!* Without honest service, sincere, hearty giving as well as praying, let there be no guise of service, of charity or worship, for a Pharisaic show or reputation!

Nothing in human character is so valuable, so beautiful, so Christlike, and therefore so all-essential as *truthfulness*. Regarded from a merely human aspect, it is the cementing force and safeguard of society. Falsehood, of word or act, is destructive of the order and peace of human fellowship, vitiates the currents of intercourse in the family, in traffic, in social life, and undermines the very foundation of the Church. And God's hatred of hypocrisy and regard of truth, read upon every page of his revelation, may be summed up in two or three statements: *Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord; but they that deal truly are his delight!* Of the dweller in God's holy hill it is said with a singular emphasis, *He speaketh the truth in his heart!* And the *girdle of the Christian armor*, that which binds and holds together the entire panoply, *is truth!* Then let every disciple of Christ, and every partaker of human fellowship, by word and by life, unweariedly emphasize the supreme worth, and exemplify the inherent beauty of truthfulness! B.

"Jews and proselytes" had come up to the Festival of Pentecost from the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, of the Nile and of the Tiber, from the provinces of Asia Minor, from the desert of Arabia, and from the islands of the Greek Sea; and when they returned to their homes, they carried with them news which prepared the way for the glad tidings about to issue from Mount Zion to "the uttermost parts of the earth." But as yet the gospel lingered on the holy hill. The first acts of the apostles were "prayer and supplication" in the "upper room"; breaking of bread "from house to house"; miracles in the Temple; gatherings of the people in Solomon's cloister, and the bearing of testimony in the council chamber of the Sanhedrim. H.

32-35. *The Beautiful Picture reproduced, of the Unity, Mutual Sympathy, and Helpfulness of the First Christian Disciples.*—We would read verse 33 first, and then 32, 34, 35 together. While *all* were filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake the word, the apostles, as ordained leaders and witnesses of the resurrection, were specially endued with power to

impress the truth, and when necessary to work miracles in confirmation of the word.

But as in *all* faith was working actively by love, so *great grace*, the marked favor of God, was upon and with *them all*. Then, as a token and evidence of this grace, the story of their oneness of spirit, of their true sympathy one with another, evinced by acts of self-sacrifice, by the sharing of their means with those who had any need, is here told again. It is repeated, we infer, partly because it is inherently so beautiful and effective as an example for all coming ages, and partly to introduce the two persons, *Joses* and *Ananias*, and to contrast their spirit and actions respecting this practical matter of consecrating possessions. B.

This is a picture of what every Christian Church ought to be, and what every Christian Church will probably be, when the fullness of the Spirit shall be poured out in the last days. Here we meet with no factions or divisions on the part of the people, no jealousy, no party spirit. No desire of distinction disturbed the harmony of the primitive Church.

The first law of their divine Master was fulfilled: mutual and holy love was the sacred bond of their union, the ruling principle of their life and actions. G. T.—They regarded themselves as one family, with one heart and one soul, with common needs and common joys and common sufferings. This is the perfection of that unity in his Church for which Christ prayed, and it showed as in a pattern what all should aim to realize in *spirit*. W.

The elements of prosperity in a family or church of Christ are these: Christ preached, as God incarnate, crucified, risen and reigning; living in the Church and working through the Holy Ghost; and oneness of heart evinced in prayer and in mutual helpfulness. Where these are found, faith appropriates Christ's person and work, effectually pleads his power and promise, and "*works by love*." Thereby all essential conditions of life and prosperity are met. B.

33. With the apostles, especially in the Pentecostal period, the resurrection is the palmary proof, the invincible assertion of the truth of Christianity. That Jesus was literally risen was for the apostles a fact resting upon distinct evidence of their senses. Their first effort was to publish this fact, and so to let it do its proper work in the understandings and the consciences of men. When therefore the author of the Acts of the Apostles is describing the missionary action of the earliest Church, he tells us that "with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." H. P. L.—Everywhere they preach a "Christ that died, *yea*, *rather*, that is risen again." This event is presented by them not simply as the seal of his teaching, or more generally (to use the poor and shrunken phrase of later times) as the proof of his divine mission, but as itself the cause and the commencement of that eternal life which was consciously the hope of man. T. D. B.—As they looked with the eye of faith upon the interests of eternity, the relations and interests of time dwindled into insignificance, and with fearlessness, with simplicity, and with great power, gave they witness to the central and incontrovertible fact of the resurrection of Christ, and to the freeness and preciousness of the salvation that is in him, and left the event with God. Pursuing this course, Christianity was aggressive and triumphant. M. H.—This is our testimony still—a testimony concerning the risen Christ. This is the very core and kernel of our preaching. Our glad tidings are, "The Lord is risen." It is a risen Lord that we follow. It is to a risen Lord that we are conformed—a risen Prophet—a risen Priest—a risen King! Bonar.

34, 35. With reference to the sale and sharing of their possessions, all that can properly be inferred is that there was a *voluntary* disposing of a *portion*

only by the rich, and a distribution in accordance with the actual need of the poor. There was no community of goods, no giving up of all he had by any one. Neither example nor precept of such fatuity have we in the Acts or Epistles. But the grand principle is inculcated here most impressively—a principle that should characterize the disciples of Christ and the spirit of church fellowship in all time—that the strong should aid the weak, "especially those who are of the household of faith." The spirit of the Master and of his gospel lays a tax, proportional and voluntary, upon the worldly goods, as well as the personal sympathies and counsels, of more gifted believers in the interest of those less endowed. No other subject is more fully unfolded by Christ and the apostles than this of consecrated earthly possessions, and the teaching has been but imperfectly learned thus far. The summing up we read in the words of the final award, "Inasmuch as *ye did it*, or did it *not*, to these!"

It is to be noted that the largeness of the gifts referred to here grew out of the peculiar circumstances of the case. Jewish prejudices would at once cast out the poorer believers from all customary employments, and so leave many entirely destitute. This was the case for many years, as we know from Paul's "gatherings for the poor saints at Jerusalem" in almost every foreign city. And the same circumstances produce like effects in heathen lands to-day.

36, 37. *The True Spirit and the True Gift of Barnabas.*—*Jose*s, afterward called Barnabas, the first named convert from the priestly tribe of Levi (whose conversion was soon followed by that of "many priests," ch. 6), begins his long and useful career by the willing, glad consecration of a portion, it might have been all, of his possessions. His surname, "Son of Consolation," may have referred in part to this giving of his whole estate in help of the destitute, or to the special magnetism of his sympathy and wisdom of his comforting counsel. And, we remember, Barnabas it was who brought Paul to the apostles, and who was associated with him in his early missionary journey.

1-11. The beautiful picture of church fellowship is now to be sadly marred. The native evil of the heart shows itself even among the little band of Christ's proscribed followers. And, as throughout the Old Testament, the fact is shown, by way of contrast and comparison, in the history. We have had Barnabas with his attractive character and his true-hearted sacrifice. Now we have Ananias and Sapphira (with *names only* significant of "grace" and "beauty") illustrating falsehood in its most daring and impious form, a *counterfeit offering to God himself*. And the teaching by comparison goes further. It presents the two Personal Beings, the respective sources and inspirers of truth and false-

hood, the Holy Ghost of God, and Satan, the unholy spirit of evil. The Holy Ghost *fills* the heart of the true disciples ; Satan “fills the heart” of these two false professors.

The timing of Satan's appearance, at the out-start of the infant Christian Church upon its witnessing mission, was in exact accordance with his previous methods. As he came to Adam and Eve in the garden ; to Cain, the first born man ; to Nadab and Abihu at the commencement of Israel's national life, and afterward to Achan in the first establishment of Israel's power in Canaan ; and above all, as without effect he came to Christ at the very outset of his personal ministry ; so now and here, “when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them.” He would fain use the time of inexperience and feeble faith to detach one and another, and so undermine the power and destroy the life of the Church of Christ.

Concerning this signal judgment of God, let two facts be borne in mind : 1. Many miracles of mercy had already been wrought, and many more were subsequently done during the ministry of the apostles. This is the one only miracle of judgment. So was it even under the Law of Moses as ministered by himself and the prophets. The *many* miracles were of mercy. Only at long intervals were single tokens of judgment. While in the personal ministry of Christ himself, we find none but miracles of mercy to men. His only direct judgment was against a fruitless, senseless tree. 2. The one manifest purpose of *every direct judgment* of God, in the Old and New Testament times, was to impart needful knowledge and warning *when* it was most needed, and so *impressively* that it would be heeded. Therefore it was in the critical time of inexperience and weakness, the very time when Satan was busiest, that the clear manifestation of God's authority and might were most necessary as a warning to counteract the temptations of Satan. For this reason, the first Sabbath-breaker was stoned (Num. 15 : 36) ; the first breach of a special commandment after Israel had taken possession of their inheritance, the concealed sacrilegious theft of Achan, was visited with death upon himself and his family ; and now, the first impious deception and falsehood, under the guise of piety and worship, in the new-born Church, was thus decisively adjudged and punished. These and other cases of flagrant impiety demanded and received the open and palpable judgments of God, that his people might be warned, and the guilty taught, that he saw sin in the heart and would assuredly punish the sinner. No other means than those direct severe personal visitations could so well have wrought this necessary knowledge and conviction in their minds.

1-6. The Sin, the Judgment, and the Doom of

Ananias.—His sin was not the bringing “a certain part of the price,” for this he might rightly have done if he had done it avowedly. As Peter said, it was in his own power, subject to any disposition he pleased, after the money was received. But while—for *selfish* motives of some kind, we *know*—keeping back part of the money, he professed to have devoted *all* that he received. And this transaction was a public one, nay, was a part of *worship* in which all were associated, nay, further still, on his part it was an *act of professed devotion to God himself*. And he knew it was a lie. He was deliberately mocking God under pretense of worshiping him ! Peter knew it too. By extraordinary gift of the Holy Ghost he saw into the very heart of Ananias, knew the whole transaction ; and by the impulse of the same Spirit he opens the whole to the assembled body of disciples by these successive burning questions, ending with the terrible affirmation, “*Thou hast not lied to men, but unto God.*”

Without a word Ananias fell to the ground dead. He was not prostrated by the shame of exposure, nor the sharpened sting of an aroused and terrified conscience, overwhelming as their force might be ; but the direct fiat of God adjudged him to this instant doom. Not by any word or purpose of Peter, but solely by the act of God was the fiat executed. For this *once*, in the New Testament Christian history, “sentence against an evil work *was* executed speedily.” And the lesson was heeded. Great fear, fear of God, an intelligent fear of his searching vision and unerring sure judgment, and a dread conviction of the deadliness of sin, “came upon all them that heard these things.”

In an orderly manner, and in accordance with the usual custom of burial on the day of death, the younger men then bore the body of Ananias to the place of interment outside the city. During their absence, for three hours, it would seem that the body of disciples remained together. At their return it was that Sapphira, ignorant of what had occurred, and doubtless supposing that the fraud upon which they had agreed had been successfully achieved, came in to the assembly.

7-11. The Falsehood and the Doom of Sapphira.—Peter gave her no time or opportunity to learn what had transpired. Instantly he asks the plain direct question as to the sum received for the land. And as instantly, unhesitatingly, she reaffirms in words the acted falsehood of her now dead husband. To this, her last utterance, Peter responds by stating the aggravation of their guilt, in their deliberate agreement to deceive and defraud the Spirit of God, and then prophetically announces *her* like fearful doom and burial with her husband. Speechless, also, *she* falls and dies ! By the same hands her body is laid beside her husband. The

bodies lie together in the tomb—the spirits together in the realm of eternal doom.

Again the record declares, that great fear came upon all that *heard* as well as witnessed those things. Deep indeed would be the impression and long the memory of so awful a judgment of the manifest God! And thus was the infant Church taught and warned and guarded in her time of greatest weakness and need against corruption from within, especially against “that leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy,” an evil always greater and more demoralizing than persecution from without!

Some Leading Truths.—While personal influence, even to the *working* in human hearts, is ascribed to Satan, yet his power is only that of temptation, and is resistible. It is the *man* that *sins*, by his own uncontrolled *act of yielding* to the temptation. Hence the helpful injunction, “Resist the devil, and he will flee.”

Every human heart is under the influence of the Holy Spirit or of Satan, but under compulsion of neither. What the Holy Ghost has aimed to do in the saving of all that have been saved, he still seeks

to do in behalf of the lost and imperilled. And what Satan has done to destroy, what he succeeded in accomplishing by his influence with Saul, Ahithophel, Judas, and now with Ananias and Sapphira, *he seeks now, as earnestly, to do with every one.*

In this fearful twofold judgment we have God's protest and refutation respecting the false tenet or belief, that because he *is* infinitely merciful and long-suffering, he will clear the guilty and transform hell into heaven. The voice of this judgment is, *Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth that shall he reap: In no wise shall enter they who make a lie: For our God is a consuming fire.* B.

No matter whether the miracle happens once or every day. It is simply the type of a law inevitable and universal. Whether the outer stroke should ever be repeated or not, it was only the visible sign of a thing that is always going on while the world stands—unrighteousness blasted, lying exposed, the cheating man and the cheating woman, in spite of their skill in concealment, sent down at last to misery. F. D. H.

Section 199.

ACTS v. 12-42.

13 AND of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them.
12 And they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. And by the hands of the apostles
15 were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; insomuch that they brought
forth the sick into the streets, and laid *them* on beds and couches, that at the least the
16 shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude
out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were
14 vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one. And believers were the more
added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.

17 Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the
18 Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on the apostles, and
19 put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison
20 doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people
21 all the words of this life. And when they heard *that*, they entered into the temple early in
the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and
called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the
22 prison to have them brought. But when the officers came, and found them not in the
23 prison, they returned, and told, saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and
the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man
24 within. Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple and the chief priests
25 heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow. Then came one and
told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and
26 teaching the people. Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without
27 violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. And when they
28 had brought them, they set *them* before the council: and the high priest asked them, say-
ing, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold,
ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

29 Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than
 30 men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him
 31 hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to
 32 Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also
 the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

33 When they heard *that*, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them. Then
 34 stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in
 reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space;
 35 and said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as
 36 touching these men. For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be some-
 body; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain;
 37 and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought. After this man
 rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him:
 38 he also perished; and all, *even* as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. And now I say un-
 to you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of
 39 men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be
 40 found even to fight against God. And to him they agreed: and when they had called the
 apostles, and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus,
 and let them go.

41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted
 42 worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they
 ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

"They ceased not to teach and preach Jesus the Christ." Similar expressions continually recur in the Acts. No such announcements are heard in the Gospels. The preaching spoken of there is not of the person, but of *the kingdom*. In the Acts the two expressions are sometimes united, as when the Samaritans "believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of the Lord Jesus": and yet again, with more evident purpose, in the closing verse of the book, which describes the two years' continuous ministry by the words "preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ." The two expressions are combined to show that the preaching of the kingdom and the preaching of Christ are one. All is founded upon the old Jewish expectation of a kingdom of God; but it is now explained how that expectation is fulfilled in the person of Jesus; and the account of its realization consists in the unfolding of the truth concerning him, "the things concerning Jesus." The manifestation of Christ being finished, the kingdom is already begun. Those who receive *him* enter into *it*. Having overcome the sharpness of death, he has opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Those, therefore, who were once to "tell no man that he was Christ," are now to make "all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom they had crucified, both Lord and Christ"; yea, they are to proclaim that fact to every nation under heaven. Through the blessed ordinance of a written word they have not ceased to do so now. To us they preach him still; a Christ "who died for our sins and rose again for our justification"; a Christ who saves without the Law, yet one who is witnessed by the Law and the Prophets. So they preach, and so we believe. This was the beginning of the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope to the Church at its birth, and this beginning it will hold firm unto the end. It is for us to see that we bear our part in the long history of the faith, finding its reality in the joy of our own salvation, and transmitting its testimony to the generation to come. T. D. B.

12-16. *Effects wrought among the People by the Apostles' Preaching and Healing in the Name of Jesus.*—These verses cover a considerable period of undisturbed ministry. The most appropriate order would probably be this: verse 13; the last sentence in verse 12; the first sentence in the same verse, attached to verses 15 and 16; and verse 14. Read thus, without any parenthesis, the meaning is clear and the narrative orderly and progressive.

The rest, the multitude without, had been so impressed by the miraculous judgment upon Ananias

that they stood in awe of the apostles as divine messengers, and none ventured to join the company of believers unless drawn by a true faith and honest confession. Nevertheless they "magnified," in their hearts honored, the character and work of the apostles. They had *learned* at least the difference between false pretense and true service.

Solomon's porch was now the daily meeting and preaching place of the apostles. No other place was large enough for the concourse of believers and people. (Vol. I., p. 620.)

The account given in verses 15 and 16 recalls similar statements respecting great periods and wide circuits of Christ's ministry in Galilee. Everywhere from within Jerusalem itself, and from the numerous cities adjacent, the sick and the possessed with unclean spirits were brought by *multitudes* to the apostles. And the result is told in the old language of the gospels, "they were healed every one." Not, we suppose, that any one was healed by the lengthened shadow of Peter's person, as he returned toward sunset from the crowded evening service in Solomon's porch. Yet we know that the sick were afterward healed by the touch of aprons and handkerchiefs that had been in contact with the person of Paul; and we remember how one was healed by the touch of a garment-hem. There *may have been such faith*, as these cases showed, in the placing of the sick within the line of the apostle's shadow, and if there *was*, God *may* have healed in like condescension to human ignorance and infirmity. But the text does not furnish any inference that there was such faith, or that healing was wrought by this means. The *fact* is stated to show the extent and pervasive character of the influence which had already gone forth from these few illiterate fishermen, within the city and outside of it.

The "many signs and wonders" now "wrought among the people" were in answer to the first prayer of the Church. They were designed to honor the apostles in the sight, and so with the favor, of the people; that the people might interpose, as they did, to protect them against the assaults of the rulers. But, chiefly, their miracles of healing were wrought, like their Master's, to show how much God's mercy delighted to rejoice against his judgment, how much more willing were his helpful, gracious, loving purposes and acts, than his enforced strange deeds of judgment. And all these ends of miracle, we read, were accomplished.

14. Believers were the more added. This is the natural close to this whole statement. Even the terrible judgment combined with the multitude of healing mercies, in connection with the *preaching of Jesus*, produced far more faith than fear. Of the vast numbers who had been outwardly convinced by miraculous demonstration, many were inwardly touched by the truth concerning Jesus impressed by the present mighty Spirit of God. *Multitudes both of men and women were added to the Lord!*—to Christ, not to the roll of the Church. Here, as before, the LORD, i. e., CHRIST, added to the Church the saved! but *first*—then, now, and ever—*added to the Lord!* as branches to the vine, by the principle and through the divine implanting of a spiritual life: living branches, and fruitful if living, in the living vine—these only are "the saved," these only make up the roll of the *true* Church, visible or invisible! B.

17-19. The apostles are brought forward to preach before the Sanhedrim the doctrine of the resurrection, by the agency of the Sadducees who denied it. The Sadducees imprison the apostles; but the angel of the Lord opens the prison doors. Thus Christ overrules the designs of the Sadducees, who denied the existence of angels, and makes the Sadducees themselves to be the means of showing to the world that his angels are ministering spirits, encamping about his Church. W.—As their hate increased, their malignity gave them increased courage to seize and imprison the apostles. While these imprisoned men are filled with the Holy Ghost, and leave all things quietly with God, their persecutors—into whose hearts we are continually permitted to see—are filled with Satan, and undertake themselves to carry out the devices he has inspired.

But! This is a divine "but," which deranges all their plans. The excess, or "remainder," of men's wrath over what may be needful in the execution of his plans, God easily restrains, and generally by his usual methods of providence. Here, for the same purpose that he wrought by miracle, he sends an angel to release his first "ambassadors" to the world. Silently, and unnoticed by the slumbering guard, the prison doors are opened, and the rescued, newly animated disciples are bidden to resume their work for the Master. Go, as heralds go, not seeking safety in concealment, but before the face of the people. Utter the message of *life*—all of it—faithfully to *all the people!* It was a reaffirmation of the commission from their risen Lord, uttered under circumstances of implied approval, encouragement, and yet larger promise. And there was no hesitation or wavering in their response. Early in the morning, soon as the temple gates were opened, they gathered in Solomon's porch and taught the thronging crowds. B.—The Lord sent his angel and set his servants free. He showed the persecutors that they had no power over these men, "except it were given them from above." But having done this, the Master left the witnesses in their enemies' hands. His will was, that his servants should neither flee nor fight; that they should preach the Cross, and bear it; that they should overcome as he had overcome—by enduring. *Arnot.*

21-26. Then came the specially called meeting of the great Sanhedrim, showing how exasperated the priestly party were and how determined *now* utterly to destroy these teachers of Christ. "All the senate," i. e., all the elders of the nation, were called in to give counsel and add weight to the judgment of the Sanhedrim. The officers were sent to the prison, and excitedly returned with the wonderful story of an empty ward and carefully guarded doors and building. The *meaning* was, that there was full proof of divine interposition in the

escape. And while the assembly were amazed and wondering what would come out of these marvels, one came with the intelligence that the men who had mysteriously disappeared out of their prison were boldly preaching again in the temple. At the instance of the high priest, the captain of the temple—the custodian of the sacred house—then went with his own band and quietly summoned the apostles into the presence of the assembled council. The obedient response of the apostles prevented any outbreak among the people.

The strongly favorable feeling of the people in behalf of these persecuted disciples is the instructive and cheering fact of this portion of the narrative. Many causes combined—all of them noble and grand—to produce this feeling. These lowly but bold disciples had dared to come right from the prison to the sanctuary and stronghold of their own and their Master's persecutors, instead of fleeing from them. They spake with like boldness as they acted; repeating in calm and serious words the offensive doctrines. Here were evidences of their own truthfulness, of their belief in the word they preached, and of a wonderful strength of personal trust in the Christ they proclaimed and urged upon others. And their forbearance equaled their courage and truth. Though their release showed that superhuman power was theirs, yet they did not seek to employ it in opposition to the high priest and elders. Not to resist the rulers, not to smite with judgment-might the men who had accumulated a vaster amount of even more aggravated guilt than the false Ananias, but to heal the sick and suffering they used the might of miracle.

And perhaps the "signs" most wonderful and powerful with the people were the signs of their Christlike spirit—their utterly unselfish lives and ministry—the *avowed* purpose of their preaching as well as the manifest *ultimate* object of their miracles, *to save the lost soul!* In palpable contrast to these "signs and wonders" of Christlike spirit and living, had been life-long presented before their eyes the selfish greed and rapacity, the open hypocrisy, and especially the utter lack of sympathy or care for others, which characterized the priests and rulers of that day above any other time even in Jewish history. Multitudes, therefore, of the *common people* *heard* these true-hearted apostles, also, *gladly!* They heard the words and read the life, and the Holy Ghost impressed his own truth in both forms, and wrought miracles of deliverance for multitudes of penitent, believing souls, more wondrous far than the angel's release of the imprisoned bodies of the apostles!

27, 28. If we needed proof of the superior intelligence and shrewdness of these foremost priests and rulers, we have it in their discriminating appre-

ciation of the *preaching* and *doctrine* concerning Jesus as the source of the apostles' power, and of their own consequent danger. These men of the Sanhedrim cared nothing for mere miracles. They did not want to know, they wished not to know, how the apostles escaped from the prison; and passed that matter over in silence. But when the known companions of Jesus *preach a spiritual religion*, and declare a *salvation of grace*, when their preaching is attested not only by numerous and stupendous miracles, but by an unselfish, true, pure, and helpful life, when the religion they preach and practice stands forth in striking contrast with the teaching and life of authoritative Jewish teachers, and when, for all these reasons, multitudes from city and country are drawn to seek healing and find repentance in the name of Christ, no wonder these false hypocritical leaders take alarm, and seek to silence and destroy the apostles.

But the charge they make of a design "to bring *this man's blood*" (purposefully throwing contempt upon the *name* that the apostles had exalted) "upon them" is surprising, when we remember that these very rulers had led in that answering cry to Pilate, "His blood be on us and on our children." But they had an object in saying this now; they wished to create an impression among the people that the apostles were actuated by revengeful and hostile feelings in making the charge. B.

29-32. Critics have noticed the structure of Peter's brief defense as one of the finest specimens of pleading on record. It is a proof that the promise, "It shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak," was amply fulfilled. It is clear and cogent; it is very short, but it is long enough. The speaker says all that is needful, and stops when he is done. In this short space he defends himself, confounds his adversaries, and commends Christ to the bystanders. *Arnol.*

Taking no notice of their attempt to create odium against himself and his companions, with manly boldness he repeats the main points of his previous address. Again he reverses the position of the parties, becomes himself the accuser of his judges, and preaches the gospel plainly to them. So did Stephen afterward, before that very same tribunal.

29. First, he declares directly, not as before in the way of appeal to their judgment, that God must be obeyed rather than men. In saying this, he boldly implies that *they are* commanding things contrary to God; and he justifies the disregard of their injunction solely on the ground of obedience to the *higher* authority of God himself. He does not deny the allegiance properly due to these rulers as the highest human authority in the nation. He claims and attempts no right of open opposition or organ-

ized resistance. But he must speak the word, and so obey the supreme command of God. B.

How much the world owes to the word that Peter uttered before the Sanhedrim that day! It is the foundation of all the true liberty that exists in the world. On this rock—the word that the Holy Spirit spake by Peter's lips—has the liberty of the Church been built, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Leaning on this, human liberty has been able to maintain a footing on the world during the dark centuries that are past; and that liberty, wherewith the Son has made his people free, is waxing apace, as the dawn advances into day. Freedom of conscience—the subjection of a human spirit to God, and its emancipation therefore from all inferior control—is deposited here in the ground as a living seed. Thence it has sprung and spread; thence it will spring and spread until all superstition and tyranny shall be swept away. *Arnot.*

30. Next Peter reasserts the offensive doctrine of the resurrection of *Jesus*, carefully naming him whom they would not name. Still speaking as himself a Jew and to them as Jews, he declares that *their* God had “raised up *Jesus*,” and unqualifiedly to their faces reaffirms the charge that they had slain him by crucifixion. It was true that Christ's blood was upon them. No words could be more direct or pointed; yet he instantly follows them with other words of promise and hope.

31. The same God, *their* God, had exalted this *Jesus*, who is already a Prince and Saviour—names well known to them as applied by Isaiah to the Messiah—by him to give repentance and forgiveness to *Israel*! The statement was very plain and the meaning very clear to them. All the facts of Christ's life—his character, his wondrous deeds and yet more wonderful words, his death and rising again—all accorded perfectly with the known and accepted teaching of their prophets. Even the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was distinctly promised. In all this Peter was speaking no enigmas to them.

32. In further asserting that the apostles are witnesses of all those things respecting Christ, Peter still refers them back to Isaiah (43 : 10, 12, and 44 : 6, 8), where the Lord the Saviour, Israel's King and Deliverer, utters these very words. Repeated by this Lord himself, after his resurrection, in the ears of the disciples, Peter now triumphantly responds to them, and affirms that they are his witnesses! And then, in support of their merely human testimony, and in *conclusive proof* of all these things respecting Christ, he refers to a divine witness, the long-promised and now received Spirit of God. *This* witness, the Holy Ghost, with his internal convincing testimony, he declares to these heartless, disobedient priests of the Temple, God will give to them that obey him.

Thus calmly, without sign of personal feeling, save earnest, faithful kindness, in the very spirit of the Master, this brave apostle preached to the Sanhedrim the whole doctrine of Christ and the Holy Ghost; to them he offers salvation by repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, through the inworking of the Holy Spirit.

33-40. *The Counsel of Gamaliel, and the Final Judgment of the Sanhedrim.*—The same excessive madness of rage and hate that filled them against the Master was now excited toward the disciples. Under the first impulse, they would have done with these what they had done with him. But at this crisis God interposed for his people's sake, and raised up a helper in the person of the most influential and least moved of their number.

Gamaliel, here referred to as one of the council or Sanhedrim, a Pharisee, a teacher of the law, and of high repute among the people, is said by the Talmud to have been the grandson of Hillel, the founder of the then leading Rabbinical school. They say further that he was the second and last who “obtained the name of Rabban, a title of the highest eminency and note of any among their doctors.” Apparently he is the only one unmoved, and therefore apprehends the peril of murdering the apostles, and certainly, though unconsciously, he is actuated by a divine impulse in his interposition. But he shows masterly skill and judgment in reaching his object. He removes these hated men out of sight, and so takes away one stimulus and supply of their excited feeling. He tells his colleagues of their peril in undertaking this murderous scheme. He recalls two well-known instances, of many similar ones in the history of the time, where insurgent leaders had taken advantage of strong Jewish expectation and feeling, and undertaken the overthrow of the Roman dominion, but had been themselves slain and their bands dispersed. With the *designed intimation* that such would be the issue with the movement begun by the apostles, he counsels that these men be let alone. And then he enforces all by stating a fact and using it as a basis for a principle—the fact that man's plan or work can not stand as against God's; and the principle that one should wait for the actual issue to determine whether a work is God's or man's.

From this method and reasoning of Gamaliel we may take this one bare grain of wisdom out of a full measure of folly and mistake. It is wise and right to deal tolerantly with errorists in sentiment; and intolerance with supposed error is always unjustifiable and wrong. In conclusive proof of this, we have Christ's spirit, his words, and his acts. But Gamaliel's *principle*, his main argument with his fellow-councillors, is essentially and most hurtfully wrong. It is conspicuously untrue, as applied

to present results, in time, that all which fails to succeed is not of God. For many true churches of God in every age, and other beneficent Christian institutions, have been suffered to languish and become extinct. And we need not speak of unnumbered personal sacrifices of possessions and life for Christ and the truth. Only as applied to ultimate and eternal issues is it true that failure is God's condemnation. And as obviously, for similar reasons, it is untrue that seeming success and continuance in this life is certainly of God. David's teaching, as well as that of David's Lord, is clear and abundant upon this point. Nothing short of or prior to the final plaudit at the judgment is decisive of God's purpose and part in any life success.

Further, Gamaliel's *counsel* is fatally defective in this, that not only as responsible men, but especially as accredited teachers of a divine religion, as the ministers of a divinely ordained worship, they were bound to ascertain if these men were not really on God's side, and if they were, to side with them. They *had* God's "counsel" in their Scriptures, and could compare it with the words and works of "these men." Nay more, as we have seen, Peter had expressly referred them to these Scriptures throughout. And all the facts of Christ's career and of the Pentecost, to which he had also referred them, were open to their knowledge, and abundant for their conviction of the truth. For these reasons their obligation was to inquire and to act according to their best knowledge, not to ignore the matter as of no concern to them.

Perhaps they appreciated the counsel. Perhaps they did not feel quite strong enough to kill so many men in face of the protest of a friendly people. But they did not entirely "refrain"; for they severely scourged the apostles before they let them go. This scourging gave trifling relief to their wrath as well as their offended dignity; it served to show the people that they had not made so much stir without cause; and it would operate as a warning, if not to the apostles, to deter persons of feeble will and timid spirit from joining them.

41, 42. *The Joy and Unchanged Fidelity of the*

Apostles.—Thus far they had encountered threats, imprisonment, and scourging, but none of these things moved them except to joyfulness, that thus the force of their testimony might be strengthened. It is a beautiful expression, evincing a depth of humility and strength of devotion that is marvelous in such weak men as they had been: "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." The lesson of the Passion and the Cross, from which they had shrunk, was now fully learned!

Released once more, they went again "to their own company" and to their appointed work of preaching Jesus Christ. This they did daily, in the Temple at the hours of concourse for worship, and in every house where they were welcomed. Christ had delivered them, in order that they might continue in the fulfillment of his commission. And for a considerable period again they had rest, while believers continued to multiply under faithful teaching, with the power of the Holy Ghost.

CHRIST is Prince and Saviour. He rules in all whom he saves, and saves all in whom he rules. Christ rules among his enemies and protects his friends. His Church will abide against "the gates of hell," and his kingdom shall come. "The extension of this kingdom depends on the counsel of God and the work of man." Let us loyally look for the counsel and the needed grace, and faithfully do the work assigned! B.

The Christian, if at least he is a genuine believer, can not constantly remain silent concerning Christ! The same thing which we see here in the apostles, the experience of every really living Christian confirms. To speak of the Lord may often be difficult; to be continually silent regarding him is impossible. Our *privilege* is too great for us to be silent; our *vocation* is too exalted for us to leave the testimony regarding Christ to others, since we are personally destined each in his own circle to be the light and the salt of the earth. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh; out of the animated word the life speaketh; and life alone is able to awaken life. Van O.

Section 200.

ACTS vi. 1-15.

- 1 AND in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the
- 2 daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples *unto them*, and
- 3 said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and

4 wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually
 5 to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude:
 and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Pro-
 6 chorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch: whom
 they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid *their* hands on them.
 7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem
 8 greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. And Stephen, full
 of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.
 9 Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called *the synagogue* of the Liber-
 tines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with
 10 Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.
 11 Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against
 12 Moses, and *against* God. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes,
 13 and came upon *him*, and caught him, and brought *him* to the council, and set up false wit-
 nesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy
 14 place, and the law: for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy
 15 this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us. And all that sat in the
 council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

THE transfiguration of Stephen is always a thing of the present, filled with a fresh life which touches our deepest nature whenever we look on it. Material scenes of the highest grandeur live only in the pages of history; and they become dimmer as distance intervenes. But spiritual greatness is everlastingly new, and we can be as closely in its presence as when it first appeared in the world. As time tests it and brings out its reality, we see and feel more of its ever-during power. Of this kind are all the moral evidences of the truth of the gospel, all the signs of the higher life which then entered the world, which never become old with years, but renew themselves in us as we open our souls to them. To this the form of Stephen belongs; not the angelic face alone, but the angelic spirit of which it was the index, a thing which never appeared in the world till Christ was heard of, and which true Christianity alone can reproduce. The canvas of that picture never decays, the dust of time does not gather on the features. It is no picture, for we may come and feel the life in it while we look, and share it as we gaze on the great object of his view. So true is it that we are come even now "to spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of the New Covenant." *Ker.*

The things within affect the outward appearance, and find there perpetual expression. Facial brightness, if you have it—and you may have it with any kind of features—what is it but an overflowing from the light of God within? Calmness on the countenance is index to peace in the soul. Benignity appearing in the features is the flushing out of indwelling love. Keep soul-brightness, and the smile will some way ripple through. Keep soul-peace, and fear or misery will not settle on your face. Steel your heart with heroic purpose, and you will never go with bloodless lips and coward eye. Love God with heart and soul and strength and mind, and your neighbor as yourself, and you will never need to think of putting up a face-advertisement of what will be found within. The poor will bless you, and the fallen will look up in your face, as they looked in the face of Christ, and see pity and help written there. Be a Christian man through and through, in belief and practice, among fellow-disciples, among worldly people, and the Lord your God will put his "beauty" on you, in one or other of its many forms; and in some supreme moments of life, in suffering, in trial, in death, may give your friends beholding you the privilege and joy of looking as it were upon the face of an angel. A. R.

1. Hebrews. The Jews of Palestine and Syria, with those who lived on the Tigris and Euphrates, interpreted the Scriptures through the Chaldee paraphrases, and spoke kindred dialects of the language of Aram: and hence they were called *Aramaean Jews*. **Grecians.** Of the other part of the nation dispersed through those countries where Greek was spoken, Alexandria was the capi- tal. They used the Septuagint translation of the Bible; and they were commonly called *Hellenists*, or Jews of the Grecian speech. The mere difference of language would account in some degree for the mutual dislike with which we know that these two sections of the Jewish race regarded one another. We can not be surprised that, even in the deep peace and charity of the Church's earliest days, this

inveterate division reappeared, and that the old jealousy between the Aramaic and Hellenistic Jews reappeared. A murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, or of the Hebrews against the Grecians, had been a common occurrence for at least two centuries; and, notwithstanding the power of the divine Spirit, none will wonder that it broke out again even among those who had become obedient to the doctrine of Christ. H.

Differences of feeling found expression in connection with the ministration to the poorer disciples. The complaint made by the foreign Jews that the widows of their number were neglected was probably just. But there is no implication of ill feeling or intentional injustice on the part of the native Jews who had charge of the daily ministration. These persons could not know the circumstances of the foreign widows, and the latter would not, naturally, press the statement upon them. 2-4. The apostles took prompt measures to remove the trouble. Their plan was to *put definite responsibility for this special work upon men of conscience, heart, and eminent godliness*. A division of labor was demanded at this point, and a new office grew out of this necessity, as *every true office only can grow, or afterward subside*. We note, in passing, an indication here of the advance of the New Testament Church or dispensation over the Old. In the New, measures of administration are planned and set in operation as called for by actual occasion. In the Old, divine laws and ordinances are devised and published in anticipation of both ignorance and need. B.—The apostolic institution of the office of deacon seemed to grow naturally out of a providential occasion. That occasion illustrated what was likely to be a common and permanent want of the Church, a want clearly foreseen, no doubt, by those inspired men. It was simply the need of a systematic arrangement for distributing the Church's alms among her needy members equitably and satisfactorily. The apostles intended to secure such provision for needy Christians, in such a way as to relieve themselves of attention to it. They were called to the *deaconry of the word*, and would remit the *deaconry of tables* to other hands. These phrases illustrate the greater expressiveness of the original, in which one term is applied to both kinds of *ministration*. Nelson.

The method of accomplishing their plan also accorded with the simplicity of the Christian system, and with the principle of equal personal right everywhere embodied in the gospel. The body of the members were bidden to make the choice of men for the new office, men of good *reputation* as well as good character, actually held in esteem as wise and true men, indicated as such by the manifest Spirit of God in their words and life; and, further, qualified by sound practical judgment. In a

word, they were to select seven godly men for their aptness in administering these temporal affairs, and for their heart and skill in blending spiritual counsel with help. They were to choose, the apostles to put in place; how, we shall see.

For themselves, the apostles, as ambassadors of Christ, concentrate all the purposes of their self-consecration in these two: prayer, and preaching of the Word. It is the ministry of the Word that God employs to save and sanctify. But it is through prayer, through the *actual dependence of the man of God upon God in his actual preparation and utterance of the Word*, it is through such an unceasing spirit of trusting request, that the minister of the Word receives the guidance and help which are vital to success in his ministering.

5-7. *The Seven chosen and ordained. Still Greater Expansion of the Church.*—Of five of these seven men we know nothing save this record. The names are all Greek. Some, a majority certainly, were "Grecian" or Hellenist Jews; so that *they knew* and could help the foreign widows. But some, we infer, were native Jews, since Greek names were also common among these. The "appointing" by the apostles was, in its accompanying worship and in its outward form, simple and significant. There was a recognition of God in the call and appointment, and a resting upon his communicated grace and benediction to make the proposed service effectual; this was the meaning and design of the *prayer*. And there was a formal indication of setting apart to office in the name and by the authority of Christ; this was the meaning and design of the *laying on of hands*. And this is New Testament ordination.

Perfect harmony was now restored, and, as before, the power of the Spirit and the Word was more widely exerted. As ever it had been, an earnest, harmonious, praying, and working Church, with a fervent active ministry, rejoiced in a great development of spiritual life, and in a large increase of disciples. And, as a signal proof of divine converting grace, many priests were obedient to the faith; men whose prejudices against the Christian doctrine were most intense, and who forfeited their birthright position and living upon the avowal of their belief in Christ. This was the culminating point of popularity and power with the primitive Church at Jerusalem. The Sadducees of the Sanhedrim had suspended their open persecution—the priesthood and the people were being gradually brought to respect the apostles' influence and to heed their teachings.

But, in God's purpose, through men's evil design, there came an assault from the old enemies of Christ, the Pharisees, who since his apprehension had withdrawn from the leadership of the opposi-

tion. The Sadducees had been compelled to cease their persecution, because the Pharisees had really sided with the apostles in the question at issue—the fact of a resurrection. But the old Pharisaic spirit began to be stirred by the plain preaching of the disciples; and, mainly through the bold fidelity of Stephen, speaking as his Master had done, a bitter intolerance and hatred grew up afresh among the Pharisees. And again, we shall see, the predominant influence of this sect with the people was successfully exerted to bring about the killing of the first martyr to Christ and his Cross.

8-10. Stephen maintains the Faith of Christ against opposing Pharisees.—Brief but beautiful is the story of Stephen; beautiful because so eminently Christlike in temper, in self-forgetting fidelity to truth and to God, in clear reasoning upon the Old Testament Scriptures, in boldness of warning and directness of accusation, and in the final issue of trial before the same tribunal. Rapidly maturing under the tuition of the Holy Ghost, first, the outward gifts of miracle-working are added to his qualifications as servitor to the poorer saints, to keep pace with the expanding inward forces of faith and love; then, without formal indication of transfer, the Holy Ghost advanced him to the higher office of ministering the Word, as afterward Philip was similarly advanced. The fullness of the power of the Holy Ghost is shown in his discriminating and thorough exposition of the Christian doctrines of grace, in comparison with the Old Testament teachings, and in sharp contrast with gross and destructive Pharisaic errors. In his discussions, referred to here, with the men of the synagogues, as in his subsequent defence before the Sanhedrim, he lays down in outline and substance the doctrinal scheme afterward so sublimely expanded and applied by Paul.

As a Hellenist or foreign Jew, Stephen was admitted to the synagogues mentioned in verse 9, of one of which he was probably a member. Of the synagogues in Jerusalem, some were established by the foreign Jews for their own use and for that of their sons, sent thither to complete their education at the schools and colleges which in most instances were attached to the synagogues. With the young men of these schools as well as the older members of the synagogues Stephen was thus brought into contact. And it was his decisive and irresistible preaching of *Christ crucified and risen* that awakened such intense hostility on the part of both older and younger adherents of the Pharisaic doctrines, and led to their determined and organized persecution against him. To one of these synagogues, that of the Cilician Jews, the young Saul of Tarsus then belonged; and the inference is strong, that he was a *listener* at least to these unrecorded words of Ste-

phen, as he almost certainly must have been to the martyr's noble defense before the Sanhedrim.

11-15. The Arrest, Arraignment, and Charge against Stephen.—Failing to find accusing testimony in his words or acts, as they had done with his Master, these malignant Pharisees sought false witness against him. By circulating the old charge of blasphemy against Moses and against God, they awakened afresh the hostile feeling of the bigoted people, who instantly joined the elders and scribes (the *Pharisaic party*) in seizing Stephen and hurrying him tumultuously before the Sanhedrim. B.

It is evident, from the vivid expression which is quoted from the accusers' mouths—"this place," "*this holy place*"—that the meeting of the Sanhedrim took place in the close neighborhood of the Temple. Their ancient and solemn room of assembly was the hall *Gazith*, or the "Stone-Chamber," partly within the Temple court and partly without it. The president sat in the less sacred portion, and around him, in a semicircle, were the rest of the seventy judges. H. (Vol. I., p. 623.)

There the charge is repeated and amplified by particulars which serve to unite all classes, Pharisees and Sadducees, rulers and people, in the common purpose of destroying the disciples as they had destroyed the Master. Perverting Stephen's language respecting Christ, as before they had perverted Christ's words respecting the Temple, they charge him with speaking against their holy Temple and Law, and with some truth they add, predicting the overthrow of their national customs and worship by "this Jesus of Nazareth." Thus, in the person of Stephen, the issue is joined for the first time but *finally* between the *people*, hitherto favorable and friendly to the apostles, and the infant Church or company of believers in Jesus. From thenceforth the great commission takes on its broader terms, and those who bear it know that they who have begun its execution in Jerusalem must go forth into neighboring and distant regions.

But for the central object of this malignant throng, the arraigned disciple before the already prejudging, condemning tribunal, for him who stands in the Master's place, environed by all the Master's peril, surely destined to the Master's doom, stands he as the Master stood, calm, unflinching, with the Master's promised peace in the heart and manifest upon the countenance? The record answers: *They saw his face as it had been the face of an angel!* He stood before them seemingly transfigured with a reflected glory, with the brightness of a seeming preternatural light. And yet, was it other light or halo than came from the inner soul of an already triumphant faith and hope in the near prospect of that fulfilled Christ-longing prayer, breathed forth at the moment of his heavenward flight? B.

Section 201.

Acts vii. 1-53.

1 THEN said the high priest, Are these things so? And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers,
 2 hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopo-
 3 tamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and
 4 from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee. Then came he out of
 the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was
 5 dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. And he gave him none
 inheritance in it, no, not *so much as* to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give
 6 it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when *as yet* he had no child. And
 God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they
 7 should bring them into bondage, and entreat *them* evil four hundred years. And the nation
 to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come
 8 forth, and serve me in this place. And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so
Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac *begat* Jacob; and
 9 Jacob *begat* the twelve patriarchs. And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into
 10 Egypt: but God was with him, and delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him
 favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over
 Egypt and all his house.

11 Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Chanaan, and great affliction:
 12 and our fathers found no sustenance. But when Jacob heard that there was corn in
 13 Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. And at the second *time* Joseph was made known to
 14 his brethren; and Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh. Then sent Joseph,
 15 and called his father Jacob to *him*, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls. So
 16 Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers, and were carried over into
 Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money of the sons of
 17 Emmor *the father* of Sychem. But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God
 18 had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, till another king arose,
 19 which knew not Joseph. The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated
 20 our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live. In
 which time Moses was born, and was exceeding fair, and nourished up in his father's house
 21 three months: and when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished
 him for her own son.

22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words
 23 and in deeds. And when he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his
 24 brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one *of them* suffer wrong, he defended *him*,
 25 and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: for he supposed his brethren
 would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they under-
 26 stood not. And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would have
 set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another?
 27 But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a
 28 judge over us? Wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday? Then fled Moses
 29 at this saying, and was a stranger in the land of Madian, where he begat two sons. And
 30 when forty years were expired, there appeared to him in the wilderness of mount Sina an
 31 angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush. When Moses saw *it*, he wondered at the
 32 sight: and as he drew near to behold *it*, the voice of the Lord came unto him, *saying*, I *am*
 the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.
 33 Then Moses trembled, and durst not behold. Then said the Lord to him, Put off thy
 34 shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground. I have seen, I have
 seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and
 35 am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt. This Moses
 whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send *to*
 36 *be* a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush. He
 brought them out, after that he had shewed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in
 the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years.

37 This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A Prophet shall the Lord your
 38 God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. This is he, that
 was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina,
 39 and *with* our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us: to whom our fathers

would not obey, but thrust *him* from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt, saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for *as for* this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices *by the space of* forty years in the wilderness? Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen. Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David; who found favour before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. But Solomon built him an house. Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven *is* my throne, and earth *is* my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what *is* the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things? Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept *it*.

God gave the covenant to Abraham for all believers in *Jehovah Jesus*! This is the original, ever vital charter of restored sonship to God and heirship with Christ. It is one and the same covenant of grace, unchanged amid all changes of outward dispensation and ordinance of worship. Upon this covenant, ratified and sealed in the blood of Christ, rest the hope of the generations living and to come, and the blessed life of all the dead in Christ.

No histories so naturally and thoroughly impress us with the *fact* of God's providential supervision and control, as these of the prominent men in Israel's earliest period, including the three great progenitors of God's chosen people. Yet of all that are prominent until Moses, Joseph occupies a unique pre-eminence. Honesty in truthful speaking and pure, faithful action—an honesty avowedly the product of an exalting fear of God—formed a characteristic which *shone* in scarce another Old Testament leader, and which was conspicuously absent in many at some period of their career. This beautiful lesson, of so true and pure, so generous, forgiving, and beneficent a youth and man, may well be emphasized afresh, whenever brought to view. B.

LIKE John the Baptist, Stephen had a brief but effective career; his words were bold and trenchant, and his death was that of the martyr. The source of his courage and endurance for Christ is disclosed in the expressions by which he is characterized: *Full of faith and the Holy Ghost—full of faith and power. He believed, and therefore spoke and acted.* The power of the Holy Ghost wrought in and by him.

As the Jewish leaders could not gainsay his Christian teachings, nor deny the miracles done by him among the people, they resorted, as in the Master's case, to false witnesses. First, before the people, these charged him with blaspheming Moses and God. Then, when the people had been stirred up to arrest Stephen, and when the crowd stood with him before the Sanhedrim, the charge was that he had spoken blasphemous words against the Temple and the Law. For, they said, *we have heard him say*

that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs (ceremonial rites) which Moses delivered us.

For the understanding of Stephen's answer, note carefully that Stephen *had* taught that Christ was about to abrogate the Temple and its ceremonial service, and to introduce a new and more spiritual form of worship. The charge of blasphemy was false; but the statement upon which they based the charge was *true*. Stephen *had* so taught, and he proceeds directly to *justify this teaching*. Of *himself* he says nothing; attempts no personal defense, but in this, his last discourse, preaches the gospel as taught in God's dealings with his ancient people.

The Jews had come to believe that the Temple, with its ritual worship, was a permanent divine institution. Therefore when Christ, and after him Stephen, intimated its abrogation of God, they were

charged with blasphemy. One of Stephen's two objects was to answer and refute this charge. This he did by showing from the history, that from period to period, God had different places and methods of manifesting himself, and variable ordinances of worship. Many localities in alien and heathen countries he had made sacred by his presence. Differing forms of outward worship he had prescribed and accepted. His entire dealings with the Jewish nation were characterized all along by changes of dispensation and method, and by progress through change. Therefore it was not blasphemy to believe in another change. It was rather in accordance with his plans in the past to look for a further and even greater change. It was in harmony with the progress thus far manifest to expect a dispensation wherein God would make a fuller personal revelation of himself in connection with a more direct and spiritual worship.

While Stephen's whole address implies that their Scriptures actually taught the advent of this new dispensation and its inauguration by the "Spirit of God," yet he refers to the Son of God as the authority for all that he has preached. But this Christ of God they had rejected and now denied. Therefore, as his *second* object, Stephen suggests successive points in the history bearing upon the claim of Christ, and upon their rejection of that claim. The persons referred to—Abraham, whose noted faith centered upon this Messiah; Joseph and Moses, David and Solomon, the signal types of Christ in office-work and in life experience—these persons suggested and enforced the claim of Christ. And the treatment of Joseph and Moses, here discoursed upon at large, as sharply impressed their treatment of Christ. As their fathers had disbelieved and rebelled against God, so they, his accusers and judges, were guilty of similar unbelief and rebellion: *Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye! Of the Just One ye have been now the betrayers and murderers!*

In the outline of the history he chooses details which bear upon this double object, justifying what he had taught about the displacing of the Jewish by the Christian economy, and dealing faithfully with their souls, in the spirit of prophet and apostle. So, plainly and effectually, he transfers the charge of blasphemy from himself to them.

1, 2. *The Question of the High Priest, and the Formal Opening of Stephen's Reply.*—"You are permitted to answer this accusation," was the meaning of the presiding high priest's words. And Stephen's personal address was respectful to the Council and friendly to the people. Like Peter, he claimed a common interest in their nationality and history, as God's chosen people. His argument and appeal, too, rested on the facts of their history. Both argu-

ment and appeal were honestly addressed to candid hearers. The argument was designed to instruct misguided Jews concerning their great error, their reliance upon the Temple glory and ritual as the source and hope of national continuance. And the appeal was intended to convince them of *their* sin in rejecting and crucifying Christ. One of his hearers, the only one that is mentioned by name, then a conscientious persecutor, but afterward a Christian leader, sums up Stephen's meaning in Heb. 1 : 1, 2.

3-8. *Points of Abraham's History.*—The brief clause, *The God of glory*, forms both a fine introduction to this discourse and a striking contradiction of the charge of blasphemy. His reference, as they well knew, was to the Shechinah or former *visible glory* above the mercy-seat. It was *their* God and *his* God, of whose dealings he was about to speak. And this *glory of God* Stephen saw at his death hour (v. 55).

The first departure of Abram from Ur, Stephen said, was at the call of God. This we may infer from Gen. 11 : 31. The call was repeated at Haran, here called Charran (the Greek form). The summons to separate utterly from his idolatrous kindred and people was imperative, while the direction of his journey and place of his sojourn were indefinite. Yet with implicit faith he obeyed. And this absolute faith and heroic obedience justly stands commended in the Old Testament by God himself, by Christ and his teachers in the New. A chief lesson suggested is this: "There is no grace which God delights more to exercise and try than the faith of his people; as faith puts honor upon God, so doth God put honor upon faith; and faith never honors God more, nor is more highly honored by him, than when it is put upon the greatest exercise and trial." (*Durkitt.*)

Not only does Stephen recall the forgotten faith of their father Abraham, but he reminds them that neither Abraham nor the twelve patriarchs, nor the nation which sprang from them, had for long centuries any temple or ritual, any city or even country that they could call their own. Thus he rebukes, indirectly but forcibly, their extravagant and idolatrous reverence for their Temple and its ceremonial, their capital and nationality. Further to emphasize this rebuke, he quotes the divine prediction to Abraham, that his seed should be enslaved and degraded for four centuries. Yet in all this homeless and oppressed period, Abraham and the patriarchs and their descendants practiced some kind of worship. So, Stephen intimates, as worship existed before Jerusalem and the Temple, it *may* exist when these are no more. And more, as God once called Abram from idolatry and heathenism, so he may call idolatrous Jew and barbarous Gentile to

the exercise of Abraham's faith, and to the blessings of his covenant with Abraham.

Mention of this covenant is made to show that God's promise of grace preceded by many centuries the law and customs given to Moses. The promise or covenant was simple and unalterable, while the ceremonials were many, various, and changeable. Take away the covenant, and there was left no ground or hope for worship. But take away the ceremonials, and the heart could worship just as well and truly. This, also, was a part of Stephen's answer. In predicting change or abrogation of the Mosaic customs, he surely had not blasphemed the God or the worship of Israel.

9-16. Outline of Joseph's Story.—Prominence is next given to Joseph's history to show how God's plan of his people's progress is developed by changes. Here, as at almost every step, the purposed advance is made by his interposing deliverance in peculiar crises of individuals or of the people. When some of his brethren would have killed Joseph, God led Reuben and Judah to save his life. When he was sold, God directed the event, and brought him to Egypt. And God rescued him from an unjust imprisonment and led him, by successive steps, to become a ruler and deliverer of Egypt and a savior to his brethren. Thus *God was with Joseph* to rescue and exalt him, and through him to bring the sons of Israel into Egypt for present safety and future increase into a nation. *Seventy-five souls* (cited from the Greek translation of the Old Testament) thus multiplied into two millions in four hundred years; their isolated compacted condition, even with servitude, kept them from the dispersion which must have ensued from the nomadic life of Canaan. All these facts Stephen glances at in support of his point, that at every age, in all change of circumstance, God was with his people, and was producing progress by changes, either small or great.

Another reason for the fullness of Joseph's story may have been his singular resemblance to Christ, in his rejection by his brethren, his exaltation to power, and his deliverance of those who rejected him.

17-34. The Earlier Years of Moses.—At the expiration of the four hundred years of bondage (v. 6) occurred *the time of the promise* (v. 7). It would seem that the oppression had been comparatively light during nearly this whole period. At length, toward the end, arose a king of a new dynasty who beheld the wonderful increase of Israel's descendants with alarm. Various devices (Ex. 1) were carried into effect to destroy the young children among the Hebrews. And the burdens were made heavy and galling so as to induce Hebrew parents to consent willingly to the destruc-

tion of their male children. But all these events, also, God overruled to accomplish his purpose and promise.

Two facts in this part of the narrative concerning Moses are to be briefly noted. One suggests Stephen's charge against *them*; the other forms part of his answer to *their* charge. The first is the rejection of Moses by his brethren when he would have delivered them. Indirectly the connection of Moses with Christ is here intimated. For like Moses, Christ was rejected as a deliverer by his brethren. The sequel of Stephen's words shows this to have been his meaning. And verses 26, 27 disclose this other point of analogy: that as Moses was "thrust away" because he urged right doing, so Christ was rejected because of his demand of righteousness in heart and life.

The other fact, helping to answer *their* charge, is the manifestation of God to Moses in the burning bush. Five centuries before the Temple was built and its inclosure made holy ground, in an alien and afterward hostile country, God had sanctified by his presence a portion of the ground. So—Stephen suggests to their quick apprehension—when the Temple is removed, he may reveal himself elsewhere, nay, everywhere. Afterward, as before, he may be worshiped without a ritual. Afterward, as before, he may deal directly, spiritually, with the individual soul, without intervention of altar, priest, or sacrifice.

35-38. Moses, sent of God, Israel's Deliverer from Egypt, Leader in the Wilderness, Lawgiver, Prophet, and Mediator.—*This Moses whom they refused* is the emphatic thought in these four verses. He whom God sent as their savior from bondage, through whom he wrought stupendous miracles for their deliverance and preservation, through whom he transmitted living precepts and truths, and whose mediation he appointed and oftentimes graciously accepted, *this Moses* was refused by the people for whom he so faithfully wrought and interceded.

And in the very midst of these weighty particulars respecting Moses occurs his signal *prophecy of Christ*. One, like unto himself, should deliver, teach, intercede for, lead, and provide for his people. Such a one, whose offices of redemption, whose coming, life, death, and resurrection, were further set forth by David and the prophets, Stephen here asserts that *this Moses, their Moses*, had promised in the future. And until Christ, no being answering in person and work to the promise had appeared. But *this Christ* had fulfilled to the letter every statement of prophecy, every particular of promise. This was the culminating intimation conveyed in the address of Stephen. With all that had occurred in the events of Christ's history and of the apostle's subsequent teaching and miracles, these keen-witted priests could not mistake his

meaning. And if Christ were the prophet predicted by Moses, they could not but feel the charge as proven against them which they had brought against Stephen. For they were dishonoring Moses in rejecting Him whom Moses had foretold.

39-43. *How Israel refused Moses and rejected God by turning to Idolatry.*—Stephen refers only to their prominent sin as a conclusive illustration. The making and worshiping the calf of gold was an open defiance to God. And it was prefaced with scornful contempt of *this Moses*. Reminding his hearers of this to deepen previous impressions, he also tells them plainly what God did to the rebellious people: how when they turned from him he abandoned them to their own desires and left them to idolatrous worship. In verse 43 he refers to the unnatural and murderous sacrifices offered to Moloch and to the star-god Remphan (in Amos 5: 26, Chiun), or Saturn worshiped under the image of a star. And he cites the threatening of God, afterward sorely fulfilled to their fathers, to drive them out into distant captivity. Thus plainly Stephen reminds them of their father's guilt and its punishment to point his own severe charge that follows.

44, 45. *Their Possession of the Tabernacle an Aggravation of their Guilt.*—In this structure, built and furnished under God's direction, the law of God was kept and the symbol of God's presence was visible. And God had shown his presence and power by driving out idolatrous nations from their promised inheritance. So that the generation in the wilderness and the after generations to David were without excuse for their disobedience and idol worship. B.

46, 47. There is really a tacit contrast between David and Solomon, in favor of the former. Solomon, notwithstanding his wisdom and the splendor of his reign, holds a very inferior place to David in the Scriptures. This being well known to the priests and scribes whom Stephen was addressing, he employs it to enforce his argument, but tacitly and indirectly, lest he should appear to speak indecorously of so great and wise a king as Solomon. What is thus suggested or implied may be brought out more distinctly by a paraphrase. "So far is a permanent and solid temple from being essential to acceptable worship, that even David, the favorite of Jehovah, the man after God's own heart, whose darling wish it was to find a shelter and a home for his divine protector, was not suffered to erect the house which he had planned, and for which he had collected the materials, but it was Solomon who built it!" J. A. A.

48-50. *Even the Temple shown by Solomon and the Prophet Isaiah to be an Insufficient Dwelling for the Lord of Hosts.*—Their superstitious and idolatrous veneration for their temple, in which God had

never visibly entered, Stephen rebukes, while he still more effectually refutes their charge of blasphemy "against this place." He reminds them that even Solomon, who built the first temple by *express command* of God, who had seen the symbol of lighted flame descend from heaven, *God himself*, enter and abide within the completed structure—even Solomon at that very time publicly declared that the Most High dwelleth not in, is not confined to, any hand-made temples. Nay, more than this, Stephen's mind, under its divine inspiration, expands to the wider, grander thought of Isaiah (66: 1, 2), where his prophecies culminate in the sublime prediction of God's universal spiritual indwelling in human hearts. Then shall be no longer temple, ritual, nor priest. Then the framer of the heavens and the earth, he who formed and lighted every world, whose power holds or energizes all natural things, will be worshiped in spirit and truth! How grand the climax and how complete the proof, in the martyr's argument! How clear the *prophetic* prediction of the very change of dispensation announced by Christ and by Stephen, a change which these sharp-minded, *convinced* Jewish priests and rulers saw already taking place in the marvels of the infant Christian Church of Jerusalem! B.

51, 52. One of Stephen's lines of argument was now completed. He had shown, by a simple but masterly historical deduction, the temporary nature of the ceremonial law, and of the Temple as a part of it, concluding by a reference to Solomon himself, and to Isaiah, who had foretold the same changes now foretold by Stephen. What link could have been added to this chain of proof? All that was left then was to take up and complete his other line of argument, designed to show, by means of the same history which he had been expounding, that the Jews had always been unfaithful to their trust, and that the abrogation of the present system was not only necessary to the execution of God's purpose as revealed from the beginning, but a righteous retribution of the sins of those by whom the system was administered. Having prepared the way for this conclusion by referring to the sins of Joseph's brethren, and of the Israelites in Egypt and the wilderness, he now suggests the conclusion itself, not by a formal inference, but by a terrible invective, summing up all that he had said on this point in a brief description of the men whom he addressed, and of the nation which they represented. As the ancient Israel had been rebellious and unfaithful, so the present generation had exactly the same character, and therefore might expect the evils threatened to their fathers. To them the prophets had applied the same reproachful epithets which Stephen here applies to his accusers and his judges. The compound terms, *uncircumcised in heart and*

ears, mean those who hear and think and feel like Gentiles, like the heathen; and their sudden application to the Sanhedrim, instead of necessarily implying a departure from the theme of his discourse, is rather a tremendous summing of it up in the conclusion, that these proud representatives and rulers of the chosen people were in fact mere heathen.

53. Who have received the law, and have not kept it. The Jews, as a nation, had betrayed the highest trust, and proved themselves unworthy of the greatest honor ever granted to a people. They, the recipients and depositaries of an exclusive revelation, had themselves endeavored to defeat the very end for which it was vouchsafed to them. Beyond this, accusation or invective could not well be carried. In point both of rhetoric and logic, Stephen could not have concluded more effectively. J. A. A.—They could deny nothing, for Stephen had stated only *facts*. The *inferences* they perfectly understood. The points he had made, in his own justification and in the plainly implied charge against them, *Stephen knew that these sharp-witted leaders both apprehended and felt*. They were prepared for a direct accusation, and Stephen's conscience as well as his argument pressed him to make it. So, as first the Master and afterward Peter, in the identical tribunal and before the very same priests and rulers, Stephen now reverses the position of the parties. Guided and girded by the in-

dwelling Spirit of Christ, he fearlessly arraigns his judges for a far higher crime before a more august tribunal.

Up to this point, he had only implied this charge and laid a broad foundation for it. But now, concentrating in one view the crimes of many generations of their fathers against God, he boldly affirms that *of all these they have been guilty*. As their fathers resisted the Holy Spirit of God in his partially exerted force, they have openly defied the same Spirit now manifest in his mightiest energy of blessing and life. As their fathers persecuted the prophets who announced the coming and the redemption of Messiah, the Just One, *they* have pursued to the death the Just One, the Christ himself. And as their fathers, so *they* have despised the holy Law of Jehovah. This Law they professed to honor as sent through their great leader Moses. He reminds them of an even greater dignity, upon which also they prided themselves, in its transmission to Moses through the instrumentality of angels. Yet this Law, in itself of divine origin and ordination, transmitted through agents so august and revered—this Law, which they had falsely charged him with blasphemy, *they* themselves had utterly disobeyed and dishonored. And in truth, as Stephen charged, they were not the true, the *spiritual* Israel. With all their proud boasting, they were only aliens and heathen. B.

Section 202.

Acts vii. 54-60; viii. 1-4.

- 54 WHEN they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with
 55 *their* teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and
 56 saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see
 57 the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they
 58 cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and
 cast *him* out of the city, and stoned *him*: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a
 59 young man's feet, whose name was Saul. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*, and
 60 saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice,
 Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.
 1, 2 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And devout men carried Stephen to *his burial*,
 and made great lamentation over him. And at that time there was a great persecution
 against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout
 3 the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles. As for Saul, he made havock of the
 church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed *them* to prison.
 4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.

THE death of Stephen is the New Testament translation, and he is to be set as the third with Enoch and Elijah, only higher, inasmuch as each manifestation of God rises while time moves on. It is a greater thing to overcome death than to be carried past it, and here it is no fire-chariot which lifts to

heaven, but the outstretched hand of Christ, according to his own word, "I will come and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." In the death of Stephen it is intended that we should see how thin the veil is between the two worlds—how the Lord stands on the very confine, sending across his look and arm and voice, so that ere his servant left the earth he saw his heavenly master, heard his words, and returned his smile. And, in our own time, God lets us see how he can lighten the dark valley with his presence, and make his most beautiful gems sparkle in the coronet of death. He reveals to us in our Christian friends oftentimes such a beauty and tenderness of soul in the hour of parting, that we can see they were directing their look clear into the heavenly world, and we walking with angels unaware. The calmness and tender sweetness of the dying hour, the faith and patience and hope, are most evident tokens of the presence of Christ's Spirit; but may not the smile of more than human joy, the glow which sometimes suffuses the countenance till it is seen like the face of an angel, be the reflection of the look of Christ himself, and the first faint ripple of the waves of unutterable glory that are beginning to touch the feet and sparkle in the eyes of the awakening soul? Most sure, to those who have witnessed it, is the conviction that there must be light beyond, that this gleam is not from death's darkness but God's own day, and may well be encouragement to us "to hope in his word, and to wait for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning; yea, more than they that watch for the morning." *Ker.*

54. *Deeply stung by the Direct, Incisive Charge of Stephen, the Leaders and People are maddened with Rage against him.*—As he intended, his words are truthful home-thrusts that can neither be avoided nor turned aside. And where conviction does not melt into penitence, it hardens into a stronger hate, and flames into a fiercer wrath. So here, the hate and the wrath seek God's sent reprove. They would rend to pieces the Christlike man who now stands calmly before them, with eyes upcast, and with the "sheen of heaven" still upon his brow.

55, 56. *His Vision of the Opened Heavens, the Glory of God, and the Man Christ Jesus standing at the Right Hand of God.*—The very first words of Stephen were, *The God of glory.* These words comprised his theme. In the ways and working of this God, traced to his incarnation in Christ, he finds his justification and defense. And now this God confirms the martyr's truth by a palpable vision of his glory in vital association with the *person of Jesus, the Son of man.* Instantly the self-forgetting Stephen avails himself of the vision for his enemies' advantage. Virtually continuing his address, he fervently preaches Him whom he now beholds. With a testimony so clear and marvelous that demanded belief, he proclaims the risen and glorified Christ to these hardened men, if he may move them.

Concerning this marvelous experience of Stephen, it was certainly true that a supernatural spiritual illumination was vouchsafed, which had all the effect of actual vision. The latter *may* have been added. But the *purpose* of this opened heaven and visible Christ seems to be clear and manifold. As it related to the martyr himself, it was designed to lend in this crisis hour special strength to his faith, and so give a tone of triumph to his final testimony.

But there seems to be a more significant purpose and use intimated by the form of Stephen's declaration. To these very men, only three or four years

before, Christ had said, *Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God!* Now Stephen affirms in their presence that this assertion of Christ is fulfilled: *Behold, I see the Son of man standing on the right hand of God!* Thus another most powerful testimony to the truth and Godhood of Christ is added to deepen the impression upon their minds. That Stephen's words are designed to be thus responsive to Christ's, we find strong confirmation in his use of the expression *Son of man.* Nowhere but here, in the Gospels, Acts, or Epistles, is this title applied to Christ *except by himself.* If here used by Stephen in responsive quotation or parallel, we have a reasonable explanation of his use of a title so solemnly appropriated by our Lord himself.

A minor difference between the two utterances of the Master and disciple carries with it a touching suggestion. In Christ's words, and elsewhere, he is described as *sitting* on the right hand of God. Stephen beholds him *arisen* as if ready and waiting to welcome his first martyred disciple!

57, 58. *Stephen is borne, with Outcry and Violence, out of the City and stoned.*—The enraged leaders and people understand his meaning, but they scorn the Christ he declares to be God. To their blinded minds and envenomed hearts, Stephen's words only aggravate his guilt. Their cry of blasphemy now rings loudly out on the air. Then, without further form of trial, without a moment's respite or a thought of pity, the maddened throng seize this unbefriended man, drag him with insult and stroke through the Temple gate outside the city, and there maim and crush his body with stones to the death. *B.*

Somewhere about the rocky edges of the ravine of Jehoshaphat, where the Mount of Olives looks down upon Gethsemane and Siloam, or on the open ground to the north, which travelers cross when

they go toward Samaria or Damascus—with stones that lay without the walls of the Holy City—this heavenly-minded martyr was murdered. H.

The witnesses, according to the law (Deut. 17: 7), were required to cast the first stones and afterward to lead the rest, in the execution of sentence. They laid aside, therefore, the outer garment, or mantle, that their action might be freer. The garments were put in charge of Saul, who, in God's purpose, will ere long take this stoned man's place as witness to Christ. Saul's only human teacher was Stephen. He was instructed if not convinced by Stephen's address. He could not but have been impressed by the martyr's bold fidelity and utter self-consecration. He must have felt that sublime trust which expelled all fear and power of death. And deeply must he have been touched by the beautiful spirit that added to forgiveness of his murderers fervent intercession with God in their behalf. For Saul certainly, probably for many besides, Stephen's intercession availed as a means of ultimate conversion. B.

It is deeply interesting to think of Saul as listening to the martyr's voice, as he antedated those very arguments which he himself was destined to reiterate in synagogues and before kings. There is no reason to doubt that he was present. And it is evident, from the thoughts which occurred to him in his subsequent vision within the precincts of the Temple (Acts 22: 20), how deep an impression Stephen's death had left on his memory. We can not dissociate the martyrdom of Stephen from the conversion of Paul. The spectacle of so much constancy, so much faith, so much love, could not be lost. It is hardly too much to say with Augustine, that "the Church owes Paul to the prayer of Stephen." H.

59, 60. The Dying Prayers and the Death-Sleep of the Proto-Martyr.—For himself and for his murderers, he prays; as before, in like experience, the Master had prayed. Only this difference in the petition for himself: Christ had commended his spirit to the Father. But He had taught his disciples that *they* belonged immediately to *Him*; and that *He would receive them again unto himself* at death. So understanding and believing, Stephen simply responds, *Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!* B. —Plainly in this prayer Stephen honored the Son even as the Son honored the Father when he prayed, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." As plainly neither the Master, nor this first martyr among his followers, questioned the separate existence of the spirit after death. O. E. D.

And the prayer for his murderers is identical in spirit with Christ's upon the cross. Specially touching are the circumstances of this prayer. While crushing blows were overwhelming him and his life-blood was freely flowing, mindful only of

their guilt and God's mercy, he gathers his last strength, *kneels down*—that they may *see* his attitude of prayer—and *prays with full voice*—that they may *hear*—for their forgiveness. Thus, in Christlike love, under circumstances never humanly matched, he deliberately leaves this last impression of his spirit and purpose. And this completes and crowns his ministry that day to them. He had "magnified Christ in his life" by Christlike fidelity and boldness. And now he "magnifies Christ in his death" by his tranquil and triumphant faith, and by his fervent intercession for his slayers. As he stands or kneels, the target of their murderous rage, their tumultuous, passionate outcry is met by his calm, patient endurance, his steadfast heavenward gaze, his fervent prayer, his trustful self-commitment—and then his falling asleep!

And when he had said this, he fell asleep. Sleep is Christ's word for death, which Luke and his teacher Paul have thoroughly learned. But how striking its use just here! Amid such tumult, while raging passions are actually venting themselves in violent outcry and murderous deed, how does this figure of perfect calmness in a soul departing from its crushed body add wonderful testimony to the truth and power of the Christ here appealed to!

Now that they have silenced this faithful voice, and stilled this fervid heart in death, the Jewish priests and leaders seem to have prevailed. But they were the conquered, not the conquering party. From that one sacrifice sprang many new-created souls, as gracious trophies of the power that from the planted seed brings life out of death. B. —The revelation of such a character at the moment of death was the strongest of all evidences, and the highest of all encouragements. Nothing could more confidently assert the divine power of the new religion; nothing could prophesy more surely the certainty of its final victory. H.

At the martyrdom of Stephen, the malice of the Jews became, under the power of Christ, the means of proving that He, whom they had crucified, the divine proto-martyr, Jesus Christ, now reigning in heaven, is the source of all the courage of martyrs in the dying hour, and of all the hope which gives them a foretaste of bliss, and of all the charity which makes them love and bless their persecutors. W.

The reader is not likely to die for his allegiance to Christ under a shower of stones, but how does he bear it when a single stone is thrown at him? He may be assailed by injurious words, which often wound more sharply, leave uglier scars, and are harder to be borne; and does he hold fast his serenity and good will? Trivial trials may be as decisive of character as martyrdoms. Many a disciple to-day in some obscure lot of suffering or want

treads as closely in the footsteps of the Master as his first martyr Stephen. O. E. D.

1-4. The first seven chapters trace the founding of the Christian Church, and its extension among the Jews. The eighth and ninth chapters sketch some marked details of its transition from the Jews to the Gentiles.

Stephen's bold declaration that the Temple and its service were to be laid aside struck directly at the most deeply rooted prejudices and feelings of the people. Against the apostles, who said nothing about the Temple, but simply preached Christ as the Messiah of the Hebrew Scriptures, the people had taken no decided part. They had little sympathy with the priestly party, by whom mainly the apostles had been prosecuted. But now, thoroughly roused by Stephen's defense and not satisfied with his destruction, the people turn their persecuting rage against the body of believers in Jerusalem. Of this persecution Saul was the leader. And so sharp and fierce was the pursuit, that the Church

fellowship was broken up, and its members compelled to disperse. In small detached companies they went into the whole region of Judea, and thence northward into Samaria; so fulfilling the terms of the Master's commission. A few, doubtless, remained with the apostles in Jerusalem. B.

The martyrdom of Stephen forms an epoch in the early history of the Church, the date of which is the more interesting on account of its bearing upon Paul's life. But the narrative in the *Acts* supplies us with no chronological data, from the day of Pentecost in A. D. 30 down to the famine under Claudius and the death of Herod Agrippa I. in A. D. 44. That Paul's conversion followed at no long interval after Stephen's martyrdom seems clear; and various indications concur to place it somewhere within the limits of Caligula's four years' reign. Coming to narrower limits, we shall see that the strongest arguments and the best modern opinions concur in fixing the conversion of Paul about A. D. 37. S.

Section 203.

Acts viii. 5-40.

5 THEN Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And
6 the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and
7 seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of
many that were possessed *with them*: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame,
8 were healed. And there was great joy in that city.

9 But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: to
10 whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power
11 of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them
12 with sorceries. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.
13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip,
14 and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent
15 unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down prayed for them, that they
16 might receive the Holy Ghost: (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they
17 were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they *their* hands on them, and
18 they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this
19 power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said
20 unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may
21 be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is
22 not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if
23 perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art
24 in the gall of bitterness, and *in* the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said,
Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon
25 me. And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south,
27 unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusa-

28 lem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet.
 29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran
 30 thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what
 31 thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he
 32 desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the Scripture which
 he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his
 33 shearer, so opened he not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was taken away:
 34 and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch
 answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or
 35 of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and
 36 preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water:
 37 and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip
 said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I
 38 believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still:
 and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.
 39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip,
 40 that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was
 found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cæsarea.

THE one theme of apostles and disciples all—of Peter, Stephen, Philip, Paul, and of the many here unnamed—was Jesus Crucified. This word of Isaiah about the Crucified and Risen One is preëminently that which moves the selfish dull heart. The preaching of law and morality either strikes against an antagonistic will or quiets the conscience by falling in with the self-righteousness of the heart. But to stir the soul to a needed sense of sin, and awaken the craving and the cry for peace and pardon, this can be effected by nothing save the sublime fact of a divine self-sacrifice for human guilt; nothing but the preaching and the telling of Jesus. B.—The treasurer had come from Ethiopia to Jerusalem with the burden of sin; he was going away with it, much as he came, when the Holy Spirit turned his eye to the Sin-bearer, the Lamb of God. He saw that the sin-bearing work was done; he accepted the divine testimony to that finished work; and in the acceptance of that testimony he found immediate joy. What he read was as blessed as it was true, and *our joy comes from* the same testimony to the same finished work. The passage of Scripture may be different; that matters not. There are a thousand passages, and a thousand testimonies, all bearing on the one cross, the one propitiation, the one Lamb of God, the one blood, the one sacrifice. Any one of these testimonies in the hand of the Holy Spirit can pour in gladness into the soul. Bonar.

5-8. Stephen's death, introducing a general persecution of the disciples, formed the turning point of the gospel's extension among the Gentiles. For *they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word*. Of the many, Luke, under inspiration, briefly refers to Philip, who had been a fellow-deacon with Stephen, and was also a Greek. *Like the many* who preached, this man was ordained to the higher ministry directly and only by the Holy Ghost. By the Spirit he is first led to a city of Samaria. We know not what city. But we may well infer that it was Sychar, where Christ had privately taught for two days with wonderful results. He performed no miracle, yet they acknowledged him to be *indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world*. Now we see further fruit in their hearty reception of Philip's preaching, accredited as he was by many miracles. The simple recital of the effect wrought in his ministry is noteworthy: *And there was great joy in that city*.

9-11. *The Previous Influence of Simon the Sorcerer in that City*.—This man was one of a class who had existed from the earliest period in all the kingdoms of the East. With various names—soothsayers or sorcerers, magicians or conjurors—they pretended to possess supernatural power from the spirit world. In ignorant and credulous ages, when superstitions of every sort abounded, it was easy to delude by professed enchantments and by the assumption of a superior nature and force. Thus did the magicians in Egypt and the astrologers in Assyria and Persia. The Samaritans held this man in fear, "because for a long time he had astonished (not bewitched) them with sorceries."

12, 13. *Effect of Philip's Preaching upon the Samaritans and upon Simon*.—Mark what it was that Philip preached, and how he was accredited as from God. He preached the kingdom of God as opened by Christ: Christ, of whom they knew in their Scriptures, with whose teaching and recent

death they were familiar. Against this the Samaritans opposed no prejudice of false Pharisaic teaching. To them, too, the miracles of Philip were proven to be real by their blessed effects in healing and restoring. Therefore they *believed him*, and received his teaching; while by Simon's wonders of jugglery, subserving no useful purpose, they had only been amazed. So God contrasted the real with the counterfeit miracle, and the real prevailed, as it had aforetime with Moses before Pharaoh. The people believed, and were baptized in testimony of their belief. And their belief, as subsequently proven, was *genuine*.

But *Simon believed also, and was baptized*. He believed—what? Just that which his unenlightened mind understood of the statements of Philip. He believed in the bare fact of marvels pertaining to Christ's nature, life, and resurrection, *because he saw absolute miracles*: effects clearly supernatural, utterly overmatching his poor deceptions. But of the spiritual aspects and truths lying beneath the outward statements and facts he had no discernment, and of course could exercise no faith. He believed in the miracles, and in the necessary inferences of fact suggested by the miracles, but no more. As the people had *wondered* at him, so, Luke says, *he wondered* (the same word translated "bewitched" before), as he closely watched Philip, and "the miracles and signs done." Only, like "the devils," he "believed and trembled." Yet, without an *idea* of spiritual saving faith, he went through the form of profession; he dared to attach himself to Christ's visible body.

14-17. *The Mission of Peter and John to Samaria*.—The apostles as a body still directed and controlled the great religious movement. So had Christ ordained. As a body, without a primate, they *sent* Peter and John to Samaria so soon as they heard the results of Philip's preaching. John *once* would have called down destroying fire upon the Samaritans. Now he gladly seeks to bring upon them the blessed baptism of fire from the Holy Ghost. Together these fervid brother-apostles plead for this special power, and their prayer is answered. B.

It is not surprising that the college of apostles, when they heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, should send a deputation to the place where the good work had begun; not because Philip was only a deacon, for he was more; or because they were jealous or suspicious of him; or because they doubted the sincerity or depth of the Samaritan conversions; or to show that the apostles, though this work began without them, still retained their old position; but because they were the constituted organizers of the Church, and as such not only authorized but bound to enter every open door, whoever might have opened it. J. A. A.

They received the Holy Ghost.—The meaning seems to be clear. They, like all true converts, *had* received his *ordinary* gifts bestowed in regeneration. Now they receive the peculiar, *extraordinary* gifts of Pentecost, of special illumination and knowledge of truth. These gifts were needed in that crisis by many in various regions. And they were imparted here in connection with a special formality, the imposition of hands by these divinely guided apostles.

18, 19. *Simon's Sacrilegious Proffer and Request*.—Evidently Simon was not of the number who received the Holy Ghost, or he would not have made this request. He *saw* in others the effect of this special divine gift, and so was led to ask: He did not offer *himself*, as others had done, to *receive* the gift, but he offered *money* to *buy* it. And this offer, together with his proposed use of the power, plainly show what his spirit and purpose were. He wished to *be* the "great one" that he had before proclaimed himself. He would use this surpassing power as he had used his own trivial sorceries, for his selfish ambition, enrichment, and gratification. A fearful condition of heart indeed, that dared cherish and express such a sacrilegious purpose in the face of these servitors of the Most High God, nay, more, in presence of stupendous tokens of the manifest God himself.

20-23. *Peter's Sharp Rebuke and Exposure of Simon's Impiety, and his Faithful Counsel*.—The apostle did not need a special gift to discern this man's spirit, for the attempt to influence *them* by money considerations showed plainly that *he* was controlled by selfish motives. Peter's rebuke was an outburst of holy indignation, not an utterance of divine judgment, as in the case of Ananias. The difference in the cases and circumstances accounts for his different dealing. Calvin interprets verse 20, "Thou art worthy to perish with thy money, when thou dost blaspheme the Spirit of God." The apostle tells him that his profession of Christ and his baptism were worthless, because his heart was not right in God's sight. He is still what he had been before, with the poison of sin embittering his nature and its servitude binding his life. Therefore he counsels repentance of this wickedness and prayer for forgiveness. As Peter had condemned the *thought* of Simon's heart, not the act it prompted, so now this is the point of the prayer he urges: "Pray God, if perhaps the *thought* of thine heart may be forgiven thee."

24. *Simon's Reply, showing only an Ignorant and Untouched Heart*.—No proper sense of sin was awakened by the apostle's warning. He was temporarily alarmed, but only on account of threatened punishment. Instead of praying as a consciously sinful penitent man for his own forgiveness, as Peter had bidden him, he selfishly begged the apos-

ties to pray that the *consequences* of his sin might be remitted: Ignorant of the very rudiments of divine teaching, he dreams of forgiveness without either faith, repentance, or prayer of his own. And so he disappears from the history, without hint of after change in his stolid heart.

25. *The Home Journey of the Apostles a Missionary Circuit through Samaria.*—By the way of many villages of the Samaritans, in each of which they tarried to preach the gospel, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem.

26-37. The spurious conversion of Simon is here contrasted with a true one, in connection with the same ministry. *That* was an enforced alarming belief in the mere miracle-working power of the Christ who was preached. *This* is a glad belief of the heart in Christ's personal love and full redemption. Another contrast we see in the sphere of Philip's ministry here. Multitudes heard, heeded, and believed, when he "preached Christ" in that city of Samaria. One man believed, when "he preached Jesus" in an untraveled highway. Yet he went willingly from the large "field" to the small; toiled far more, and preached as fervently to one man as to the multitude. Philip was obviously an excellent example to *all* who in Christ's name say, "Come." Another useful thought, of wide application in our New Testament study, is that both these instances of Philip's preaching, with its diverse effects, are given simply as sufficient illustrations of his whole ministry, and of the ministry of all who "went everywhere preaching the Word." They are designed to show how the gospel was carried abroad, and made effectual in winning individuals and communities. And herein lies the peculiar purpose and value of the Acts. All after individual experience and church history is shadowed forth or plainly exemplified in this book.

26. *Philip's New and Special Commission.*—He had finished his designed work in the Samaritan city. He is now called of God elsewhere. By the ordinary intimations of Providence the Spirit had guided him to Samaria. By an extraordinary message through an angelic messenger the same Spirit now sends him on a peculiar errand. The direction is simple in terms: *Go to a certain road!* Yet it is vague, for it indicates no point or place in the road. The road is one of many from Jerusalem to Gaza. It is a desert road, passing through a region without cities or villages. No point upon this road, no time, and no duty, are indicated. To realize how indefinite the direction yet how surely divine the appointment, remember that this road was sixty miles in length, and a considerable portion of it was "desert." But Philip at once obeyed. Like a commander who sails for a given point, with sealed orders to be opened there, he

reached the place, and found his further procedure definitely marked. And, throughout, he was obedient to the heavenly vision.

27-29. *His Meeting with the Ethiopian Chamberlain, and the Further Direction he received.*—Himself on foot, he is overtaken by a chariot and its attendants. In the chariot sits a stranger, a high court officer of the reigning Queen of Ethiopia. He is returning southward from Jerusalem, where, as a Gentile proselyte of the Jewish religion, he had gone to worship. Now he is reading aloud, as he journeys, from a scroll containing the prophecies of Isaiah. This simple fact, showing his interest in the truth and earnest desire to understand and receive it, is evidence of some special influence of the Holy Spirit in preparing him to accept Philip's teaching. Thus we see the Spirit operating on both sides, sending the teacher, and making ready the heart to be taught and convinced. Nay, more, he leads this interested man's thought to the central theme of the Old Testament Gospel. And it is always thus. The Spirit of God prepares the agents and means and *the heart* itself in every case of true conversion. Now by an inward voice the Spirit bids Philip run after and overtake the chariot, which had passed on. Other subsequent divine directions to Philip appear in the part he took in the conference that followed.

30, 31. *The Question of Philip and its Answer.* "Understandest Thou?"—A question of vital moment—now as then! "Ye know not the Scriptures," was Christ's bold declaration to the cultured Sadducees. And the question repeats itself, the charge lies against multitudes to-day who *profess* to read them. Frankly and humbly this Ethiopian, nobler in this frank humility than in his high position, acknowledges his ignorance. He asks the poor foot-traveler to sit beside him in his chariot, and to be his guide to the "understanding" of the Scripture. As frankly and as humbly Philip assents, and takes the equal place assigned him.

32-35. *The Question of the Ethiopian and Philip's Answer.*—He was reading the 53d chapter of Isaiah; the signal prophecy of Christ's vicarious sufferings, many times distinctly referred to. Seven centuries had passed since it had been recorded for the Jewish people. But it had never been apprehended, much less accepted, by the Jews; for it disclosed a suffering Messiah, and they looked only for a world-conquering and long-reigning king. Reading about this patiently suffering *Servant of God*, his heart is moved. He has heard no Jewish interpretation, and yet wishes to know to whom this sad story refers. A tradition of the Jews described the persecution of Isaiah, and his death by being sawn asunder. Is it then himself to whom the prophet refers, or some other man?

No better text for his one great theme could Philip desire. From it he began, and *preached unto him Jesus*. Jesus the suffering Lamb of God, taking away the sins of men. Not as fully as Christ upon his resurrection afternoon had expounded to the two disciples, on another road, all "the things concerning himself." But, led by the Spirit, his words were satisfactory to this open-hearted, devout listener. He answered all the questions that were proposed, and at length the man's mind was convinced that Christ was the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, and his heart converted. There remained but one thing: avowedly to join himself to the company of Christian believers.

36-38. *The Baptism of the Believer in Christ.*—The Scripture has doubtless been explained by Philip in accordance with the direct command of Christ. So the newly converted man expresses his wish, and avows his purpose to stand openly on the Lord's side, in the question, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" If the reply of Philip belongs to the inspired account (v. 37), which is more than doubtful, it would seem that he had learned caution from Simon's case. For he asks a heart-test of the man's faith. Satisfied with the test, Philip descends with him to the water, and baptized him there. B.

39, 40. These two were brought together by the agency of an angel, and now they are parted asunder by a miracle, but a miracle of wisdom as well as of power. For this sudden and supernatural removal of the preacher was a powerful confirmation of the doctrine which he taught, and had an obvious tendency to impress on the mind of the new convert this important truth, that although a man had been employed as the instrument of his conversion, yet the work itself was truly divine, and the glory of it due to God alone. R. W.—They met and parted in a few hours. But those hours were charged with experiences for ever memorable to both. As there had been *great joy in the city* upon Philip's ministry there, so now the Christian eunuch goes on *his way rejoicing*, when his human *guide* had disappeared. For a divine companion, a perfect *guide unto all truth*, even the Holy Ghost who shows the things of Christ, is with him now. And Abyssinia

traces to this man (Indich he is called) the source of that influence which made many of her people Christian in name.

Philip was next heard of at Azotus or Ashdod, another of the five cities of the Philistines, north of Gaza. From that point he preached in all the cities on or near the sea-coast, including Lydda and Joppa, until he reached Cesarea. In Cesarea he made his home, and became an evangelist for that region. Here, twenty years afterward, he entertained Paul as his guest (Acts 21 : 8).

Truths worthy of Thought.—Every saved soul, in the history to be read hereafter, will learn that a vast amount of labor and an accumulation of combined influences were expended by God in the saving. First, chief, and in all, the Holy Spirit; then the word and the providences of God; and in a place appointed, the human teacher and pleader.

Another truth respects the actual work of the Holy Spirit in behalf of human conversion. On the one hand, every believer—preacher, parent, teacher, or simple disciple—just in proportion to the willingness and earnestness of his desire to do good, is *specially prompted, guided, and enabled to speak or act effectively for Christ and for souls*. And on the other hand, every unbeliever receives the same divine help, in proportion to his simple willingness to be taught and led of God. This double truth stands out in this incident: the entire control of all its details and issues, of its two characters and their actions by the Spirit of God. Let this be thoroughly pondered! B.

THE preaching of the gospel, begun from Jerusalem according to Christ's command, had embraced all classes of the Jewish name—the pure Jews and the despised Samaritans, the representatives of the dispersion, and the circumcised proselyte from the far southern region which Christ himself had called the ends of the earth. Such were the results accomplished about the epoch marked by the death of the Emperor Tiberius (A. D. 37), and distinguished also by the disgrace of Caiaphas and Pilate, the two chief actors in the death of Christ. S.

Section 204.

Acts ix. 1-19.

- 1 AND Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord,
- 2 went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound
- 3 unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined
- 4 round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying

5 unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest : *it is* hard for thee to kick against the 6 pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou 7 must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but 8 seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw 9 no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought *him* into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord 11 in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord. And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for 12 *one* called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named 13 Ananias coming in, and putting *his* hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done 14 to thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all 15 that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel 16 unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: for I 17 will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that 18 thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, 19 and was baptized. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened.

EVERY great truth which is to win a triumphant way must become incarnate in some one man, and derive from a living, fervent heart that passion and power which constrain and subdue. So long as it remains in the cold region of mere ideas, it exercises no mighty influence over mankind. The truths of religion are not exceptions to this law. God, therefore, prepared a man, who was to represent in the primitive Church the great cause of the emancipation of Christianity, and whose mission it was to free it completely from the bonds of the synagogue. This man was Paul, and never had noble truth a nobler organ. He brought to its service an heroic heart, in which fervent love was joined to indomitable courage, and a mind equally able to rise to the loftiest heights of speculation, and to penetrate into the deepest recesses of the human soul. All these great qualities were enhanced by absolute devotedness to Jesus Christ, and a self-abnegation such as, apart from the sacrifice of the Redeemer, has had no parallel upon earth. His life was one perpetual offering up of himself. His sufferings have contributed no less than his indefatigable activity to the triumph of his principles. *De P.*

By faith, Saul of Tarsus, journeying toward Damascus, exchanged the path of persecution for that of martyrdom. By faith, Saul filled the known world with the name of Jesus Christ, and did a work which no other human work has equalled, either in extent or in depth. By faith, Saul, victorious over a rebellious nature, attained to a height of Christian life which would have been judged above man, if it had not been realized in his history. "Go, and do likewise." It is not a question of strength—it is a question of faith. *Monod.*

TARSUS of Cilicia, where Saul was born, was a city of wealth and culture. The education he received there was perfected at Jerusalem under the instruction of the greatest teacher of his time, the Rabban Gamaliel. What Saul became as a scholar, and with what fine fiber of heart and large capacity of intellect he was naturally gifted, we readily gather from his inspired letters. B.—Saul was born and spent his earliest days in the shelter of a home which was Hebrew, not in name only but in spirit. He grew up an Israelitish boy, nurtured in those histories of the chosen people which he was destined so

often to repeat in the synagogues, with the new and wonderful commentary supplied by the life and resurrection of a crucified Messiah. The histories of Abraham and Isaac, of Jacob and his twelve sons, of Moses, Joshua and Samuel, Elijah, Daniel and the Maccabees, were the stories of his childhood. The destruction of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, the thunders of Mount Sinai, the dreary journeys in the wilderness, the land that flowed with milk and honey—this was the earliest imagery presented to his opening mind. The triumphant songs of Zion, the lamentations by the waters of Babylon, the prophetic

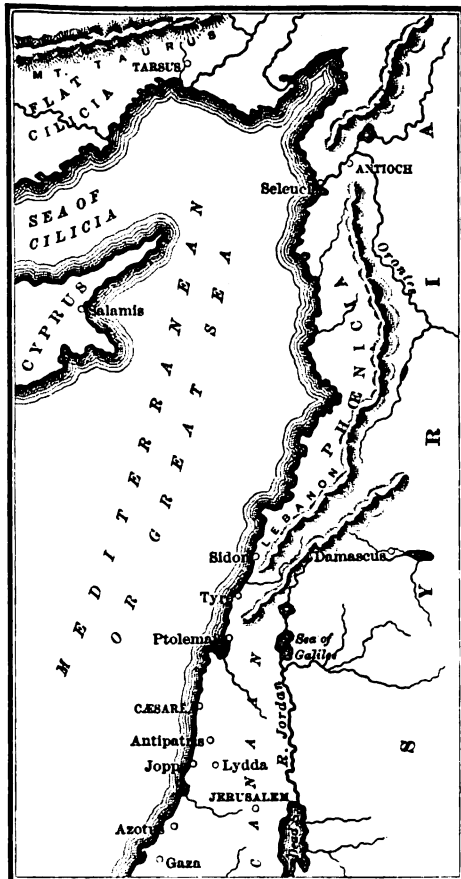
praises of the Messiah, were the songs around his cradle. Above all, he would be familiar with the destinies of his own illustrious tribe. How little was it imagined that, as Benjamin was the youngest and most honored of the patriarchs, so this listening child of Benjamin should be associated with the twelve servants of the Messiah of God, the last and most illustrious of the apostles! H.

1, 2. *Saul's Self-moved Mission to persecute the Christians of Damascus.*—This abrupt introduction of Saul is deeply stirring and suggestive. Here is a man of intense energy with a soul on fire with a purpose of serving God in the only way he knew, by destroying those whom he thought were overthrowing religion. Even then, as a persecutor, Saul boldly acted out his belief. And with what depth of passion is evident from these words, "breathing out slaughter," and from his own after statement, "I was exceedingly mad against them." B.—The position of Saul at the death of Stephen was due, not to natural cruelty, but to a perverted judgment. He thought he did God service by slaying the disciples of Christ. At this time his belief was that Stephen's doctrines were subversive of the true religion; and that the best way of checking a heresy was to put the heretics to death. These principles did not die out with the conversion of Saul. They survived, and deluged Europe with blood down to a very recent period. It is only now, in our own generation, that religious toleration has been established. Arnot.

2. The authority of the Sanhedrim of Jerusalem was very great, so that not only the Jews who inhabited the land of Israel, but the Babylonian and Alexandrian Jews, received its decrees, and obeyed them with reverence. They acknowledged the Sanhedrim as the bulwark of the oral law. They more especially submitted to its authority in accusations of heresy, and trial of false prophets, which the Sanhedrim alone was supposed competent to consider. The Romans, to whose power the whole of Arabia at this time submitted, granted to the Jewish council the power of imprisonment and scourging, not only over the Jews of Palestine, but over other synagogues, which willingly, in religious matters, yielded to the control of the Sanhedrim. G. T.

3-7. The conversion of Saul was like the call of a second Abraham. H.—It was the most striking and important individual conversion between Christ's ascension and his return to judge the world. In its results, direct and indirect, it is the largest single fruit that has yet been gathered from the tree of righteousness that the Lord by his death and resurrection planted in the world. No mere man, before or since, has filled so great a space in the scheme of Providence, or left his mark so wide and deep upon the world. The gospel is the greatest power

that has ever operated on earth, and Paul was its greatest minister. Arnot.



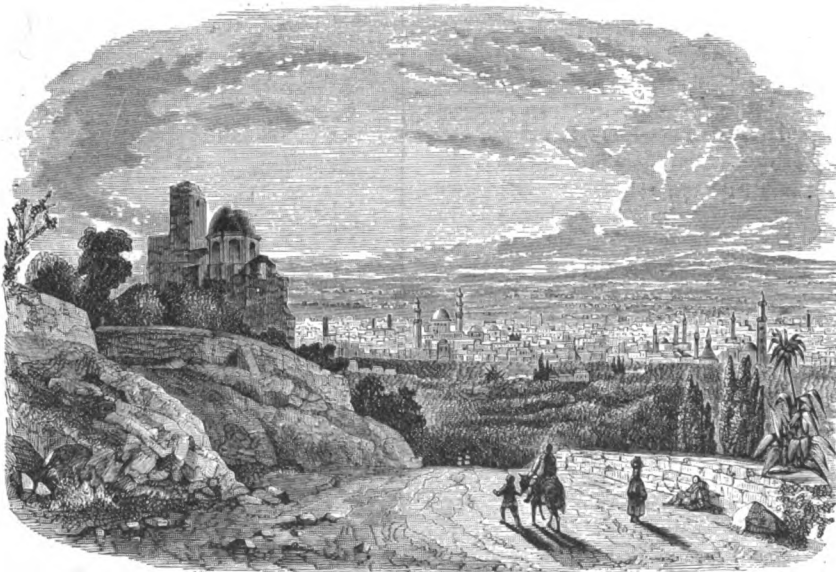
Eastern Seaboard of the Mediterranean. (The position of the several places named should be carefully noted.)

3. Damascus is the oldest city in the world. Its fame begins with the earliest patriarchs, and continues to modern times. It was founded before Baalbec and Palmyra, and it has outlived them both. While Babylon is a heap in the desert, and Tyre a ruin on the shore, it remains what it is called in the prophecies of Isaiah, "the head of Syria." How important a place it was in the flourishing period of the Jewish monarchy, we know from the garrisons which David placed there, and from the opposition it presented to Solomon. And how close its relations continued to be with the Jews, we know from the chronicles of Jeroboam and Ahaz, and the prophecies of Isaiah and Amos. Its mercantile greatness is indicated by Ezekiel in the remarkable words addressed to Tyre—"Damascus was thy merchant in the multitude of the wares of thy making, for the multitude of all riches; in the wine of Hel-

bon, and white wool." Leaving the Jewish annals, we might follow its history through continuous centuries, from the time when Alexander sent Parmenio to take it, while the conqueror himself was marching from Tarsus to Tyre—to its occupation by Pompey—to the letters of Julian the Apostate, who describes it as "the eye of the East"—and onward through its golden days, when it was the residence of the Ommiad caliphs, and the metropolis of the Mohammedan world—and through the period when its fame was mingled with that of Saladin and Tamerlane—to our own days, when the praise of its beauty is celebrated by every traveler from Europe. H.

Saul's journey of five or six days (140 miles) was nearly completed. Damascus, the queen city

of the East, beautifully situated upon a fertile plain, between two broad streams rushing down from the foot of Hermon and the anti-Lebanon mountains, was now close at hand, perhaps visible in the distance. The anticipation of success and triumph in his persecuting work was in his heart as he pressed eagerly on. Suddenly his career was checked by a blinding light from heaven. B.—The light was that which the Jews called the *Shechinah*, or glorious presence of Jehovah, dwelling in the tabernacle—the divine indwelling majesty. It was the very light, the sacred light, which their fathers knew so well. It appeared at sundry times, and in diverse forms, for various purposes; now of mercy, now of judgment. It was this light that blazed out in the flaming sword; that appeared to Abraham in Ur of



Damascus.

the Chaldees; that was seen by Moses in the burning bush; that shone out in the pillar of fire, and compassed the top of Sinai; that dwelt in the tabernacle and in the temple; that showed itself to Gideon's father; that kindled the fire on Solomon's altar; that was seen by Ezekiel departing, and by Daniel in his visions; that for four hundred years left the earth, but reappeared at Bethlehem to the shepherds and to the wise men; at Christ's baptism; at the transfiguration; at Pentecost; at Stephen's martyrdom; and now at Saul's conversion; and afterward at Patmos. Such is the history of this wondrous light—the representation of Him who is light, and in whom is no darkness at all; of Him who is the light of the world; of Him who is the brightness of Jehovah's glory. The history of that light is the Christology of Scripture. Bonar.

As he was stricken to the earth, a voice distinctly articulates the question, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" In the double address, as also used by Christ to Martha and Simon, is designed both accusation and tender remonstrance; first (*always*) a *convincing of sin*, and then a *gracious pity*. Saul's thought was of binding and punishing Christ's disciples, and so doing service to God. Christ calls it *persecution*. And he identifies himself completely with these imperiled persecuted disciples: Why persecutest thou Me? In the *thou*, Christ further emphasizes Saul's *self-prompting* in his cruel work. Then in answer to the question of the prostrate but uplooking man, "*Who art thou Lord?*" comes a *repetition* of the charge: *I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest!* Here, too, again Christ identifies his suffering members

with himself. And in a figure that was proverbial he counsels Saul against a vain and a hurtful resistance.

These first words of Jesus were not merely enough to *convince Saul of sin and draw his faith to Christ*, revealed here as Jehovah through the known Shechinah, a symbol of dazzling light. This we know they did effect, and this was Saul's conversion. It was wrought as all other conversions are wrought, through truth convincing the conscience of sin and through the revelation of Christ as a divine Redeemer. It differed from others in the *personal, visible* manifestation of Christ. The transfigured God-man Saul saw, even as Peter and James and John had seen him "in the holy mount," and as Stephen had seen him through the opened heavens. So Paul distinctly affirms.

But these first words of Christ did more than convert. They were imprinted so deeply upon Saul's very heart that they shaped all his after thought and teaching. A deep intense conviction of sin as *unbelief in and rejection of Christ*; an overwhelming conception of the inconceivable breadth and depth of the grace of Christ in saving and *seeking*; and a realization of Christ's identity with his disciples, especially of his living present sympathy with them in suffering—these great fundamental truths, rooted in the soul of Saul in this personal interview with Christ, form the staple and substance of his preaching and his epistles. Ofttimes he refers to this first experience as the source of his knowledge.

That he is already converted, that his strong will is subdued, voluntarily subjected to the will of Christ, that his heart is humbled, utterly turned from persecution to devotion, that he is henceforth consecrated to Christ and to Christ's service, his answering question assures us: *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* His question is a *new* request for *another* commission, for one directly opposed in its spirit and object to that which had sent him thus far on his journey. And this request is answered with a direction to arise and go into the city (Damascus). There he would receive instruction *what to do*. Thus far no human instrumentality had been employed. Saul had been *apprehended*, as he calls it (Phil. 3), *grasped and taken possession of* by Christ. For this end, too, all that was supernatural was wrought by Christ. *But he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision!* B.

8. Thus entered Saul into Damascus; not, as he had expected, to triumph in an enterprise on which his soul was set, to enter into houses and carry off prisoners to Jerusalem; but he passed himself like a prisoner beneath the gateway and through the street called "Straight," where he was led by the hands of others to the house of Judas, his dark and solitary lodging. H.

9. *The Three Days of Blindness and Fasting.*—A period and an experience of inestimable value. Without sight and food, the world shut out from every sense, that the spirit may have undisturbed communion with itself and with God. Thought upon his own previous life, upon the Old Testament disclosures of Messiah, upon the glowing words, the saintly spirit, and the glad sacrifice of Stephen, and thought upon his own part in that sacrifice. And now the Christ of Nazareth, seen by him as by Stephen, as *the God of glory*, had come into his heart. The Spirit of Christ was opening his understanding and inspiring his soul to fervent trustful communion with God in supplication and praise. So passed those days of thought, of confirmed convictions and purposes, of grateful adoration, of penitent joy, and of earnest yearning and pleading with God—days of special divine inworking and preparation for the work before him.

10-16. *Christ sends Ananias to Saul.*—A human instrumentality is now employed for Saul's further instruction and reception into Christian fellowship and ministry. The agent is an obscure disciple, unknown before and after this transaction. But he is *supernaturally* directed, and Saul *supernaturally* prepared to receive him, showing that *Christ controls all human ministry*. In the vision Christ directs Ananias to go to Saul, plainly intimating the change wrought in this persecutor by the words, "For, behold, he prayeth!" But, with the knowledge of Saul's slaughter of the saints in Jerusalem, and of his purpose in coming to Damascus, and otherwise ignorant of what had occurred to Saul, the faith of Ananias is not equal to so sudden and strong a demand. Frankly he tells his difficulty to the Lord, and without a word of reproach Christ removes it. "A *chosen vessel* is this intensely earnest enemy! He shall *bear my name* before kings and all peoples! For my name's sake he must *suffer great things!*" Yet Christ granted this sufferer, as since *every sufferer* for Him, to *do great things* also. B.

11. *Behold, he prayeth.* As he the Pharisee of Pharisees has never prayed before; he prays with the heart of a publican. Where prayer like this is uttered, *a foe of Christ has been disarmed*. Here is a *light arisen for the blind*, of which he had never dreamed when he sat at Gamaliel's feet; a light on the greatness of his own guilt, by which he, who had dreamed himself to be already on the summit of perfection, awakens on the brink of an abyss. But here, too, a *thirsty soul is brought nigh to the spring of consolation*, where refreshing is never sought in vain. Can we ever doubt again that *in heaven an ear is opened* to the prayer of penitence? Who has not, on the contemplation of the spiritual greatness of this Paul, trembled involuntarily in

silent wonder? But the key to it all lies in the prayer-chamber at Damascus, whence he issued as one awakened to new life. When a sinner prays in this manner, *a future song of praise is made certain*. Happy is he who has learned to pray in such a manner that even in heaven it may be termed prayer, and who can declare, "To me is mercy shown!"
Van O.

15. A chosen vessel. It was a polished and capacious vessel that the Great King wrenched from the hands of the arch-enemy near the gate of Damascus. One of the clearest intellects that ever glowed in a human frame changed hands that day. Saul was a man of rare courage. He was a good soldier of the wicked one before he owned allegiance to Christ. He was Christ's chief enemy then in the world. He breathed forth threatenings and slaughter against the members of the Church, blasphemies against its living Head. God looks down from heaven on this man, not as an adversary whose assaults are formidable, but as an instrument which may be turned to another use. As clay in the hands of the potter this man lies. Saul of Tarsus, called to be an apostle, is a conspicuous example of Divine sovereignty. He did not first choose Christ, but Christ chose him. *Arnot.*

17, 18. The Words of Ananias and the Result Wrought by the Holy Ghost.—Ananias at once obeys the heavenly vision, goes to the "street called Straight," enters the house of Judas and the chamber where Saul is lying, puts his hands upon those sightless eyes, and utters the message of Christ. Two things Ananias announces as the purpose of his mission, and connects with the laying on of his hands. One, the receiving again of bodily sight; the other, the being *filled with the Holy Ghost*. The latter, we have already learned, refers only to his extraordinary and miraculous gifts; for his quickening power had been already exercised at Saul's conversion. At once the darkness was exchanged for clear vision. Accepting the ordination and appointment of *Christ*, as duty and privilege, he formally joined himself to the living body of Christ, and by an ordinary believer was baptized. So the persecutor became a disciple and leader of the persecuted—the inveterate enemy a devoted adherent. And all without human agency. "An apostle," he

said, "by the will of God, sent not from man nor by man, but by Jesus Christ."

The leading points of profitable thought are found mainly in the impressions left upon Paul's heart by this memorable experience of conversion, impressions elaborately inwrought in his inspired letters for the help and comfort of believers. First of all, the facts of *sin* and *grace*, imprinted upon his soul by the question and responses of Christ, *sin*, as *unbelief in Christ*, and *grace*, Christ's *compassionate seeking and saving the guilty*, these are the truths which comprise the substance of the gospel. Next, *Christ's absolute identification of his people with himself*. His constant vision of every believer, and instant sympathy with every need and trial. With inimitable tenderness the words "I am Jesus whom *thou persecutest*" respond to the whole spirit of his last discourse and prayer. They prove, by *fact*, his *oneness with his own* after he had passed into the heavens! Again, *suffering*, in some form, is a vital part of the highest training for effective service. Saul's experience and teaching abundantly declare that the faithful follower must, like the Master, be "made perfect through suffering."

Another expression of Christ concerning Saul, a *chosen vessel*, the apostle dilates upon, in its twofold meaning, as applicable to all believers. *Vessels* for use—of varying capacity—that can only *give* of that which is first *received*; empty and useless unless filled by the grace of God, but, when thus supplied, made sources of blessing to others to the praise of God. And *chosen*—"elect of God and precious." Signally as this truth of God's choice is proven in Saul's conversion, as *certainly* is it proven by the *experience of every true believer*. And the teaching of this sustaining truth Paul expressly and only addresses to the believer, since the believer alone can fully and joyfully accept it. Yet another theme, in its grandeur of reality, was impressed indelibly upon his heart. It was *the glory of the risen Christ*. A living, glorified, Divine Saviour, who was and is *Jesus of Nazareth*! Glorifying in the Cross because of the redemption wrought upon it, he glories, ever in a higher strain of rapture, in Jesus, the man of Nazareth, effulgent with light celestial and majesty Divine! B.

Section 205.

Acts ix. 19-30.

19 THEN was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straight-
20 way he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard
21 him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name

in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.

And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him : but their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket. And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples : but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians : but they went about to slay him. Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

IN the fusing of Christianity and Judaism, what and who is needed ? The man must be a pure Jew by birth, and by education imbued with the fullest and deepest knowledge both of the law itself and of that fabric of human traditional interpretation which the rabbis had built up around it. No less necessary is it that he should have been versed in the Greek tongue, which was then the universal vehicle of thought and argument ; should have been trained in Gentile habits of joining thought to thought ; and should have acquired that degree of acquaintance with heathen literature which might enable him to dispute with effect in Grecian schools and among Grecian audiences. These qualifications were united in Saul of Tarsus. And his personal qualifications were to the full as marvelous. Ardent, sympathetic, universal in his regards, and able to cast himself into every other man's position ; within certain limits becoming all things to all men, but absolutely immovable as to compromise beyond these limits ; carrying all in his heart, and making every man's griefs and joys his own ; with tears for every sorrow, and glowing terms of endearment and congratulation ever on his tongue ; master at the same time of the most melting exhortation and the keenest and most delicate irony ; pouring out his words, which crowded one another to keep pace with the rapidity of his phases of thought, flying from proof to proof, and from one indignant refutation to another ; sometimes seemingly forgetful of his main subject, while he pursues word after word which have sprung up along the path of his disputation, then returning to it again, in like manner again to desert it : till at last all these off-lying ideas and images and allusions are bound up together in the majestic and overwhelming conclusion. Such was the mind and such was the heart of which God made choice, to bring about the greatest revolution ever wrought in the history of man. A.

19-22. *Saul straightway preaches Christ to the Amazed Jews.*—His obedience to the heavenly vision was instant, unquestioning, and whole-hearted. No thought had he of looking back, and none of measuring hindrances or of forecasting difficulties in his forward path. At the outset his conviction was as clear and decisive as it was intense and deep ; and it remained unchanged to the end. And his courage was that of conviction, not of mere nerve or will. This bold fronting of danger for the preaching of Christ was first manifested now, and to his old associates. He had led them in their hatred and persecution of Christ and his disciples—now he would turn them, with himself, to the service of his revealed Lord. The same Saul, with aim and object of life reversed, he throws the same intensity into his new mission of love. As one who has seen the Lord, whose soul is taken captive by the Lord's grace to him, as one who believes, he must speak. He must bear testimony at least, that may help to

counteract the evil he had done. No wonder that his former associates were amazed at the extreme change produced in him. They saw it was real, and felt that an incomprehensible power had wrought it. His honest consecration had a life and energy which contrasted with their formal and lifeless religion. B.

That the bigoted persecutor, at the climax of honor with his own nation, and in the full career of success, should have suddenly cast in his lot with the Christians, and entered on the new course of self-sacrificing labor and suffering which made up the rest of his life, has often been esteemed of itself a complete evidence of the truth of Christianity. S. —Next to the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the descent of the Holy Ghost, the gospel history has no testimony which equals the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. It has been felt in all ages ; and many a reflective mind, hitherto unmoved, has yielded to the power of this page of the gospel. *Monod.*

23. *Interval of Special Preparation in Arabia,*

and Return to Damascus.—His spontaneous testimony borne for Christ, after brief stay—*certain days*, verse 19—he tells us (Gal. 1: 17) that he went into Arabia and returned again to Damascus. The interval spent in Arabia comprised nearly the whole of the three years (Gal. 1: 18) between his conversion and his first visit to Jerusalem. This interval is indicated in verse 23 by *many* or *sufficient days*. B.—As used by Paul (Gal. 1: 17), Arabia does not necessarily mean the wilderness of Arabia, commonly so called. Early Christian writers assign Damascus itself to Arabia; and the region of *Auranitis*, on the south of Damascus, is reckoned by Roman writers as belonging to Arabia. Luke passes over an interval of *three years*. And it is observable that “many days” are equivalent to three years in 1 K. 2: 38. W.



Windows on the Wall—Damascus.

Like Moses and Elijah, he seems to have been led into the quiet of the wilderness for a period of needful thought and prayer. *Thought* upon the Old Testament Scriptures in their new light, upon his own previous career, upon the heavenly vision, the Christ of prophecy now disclosed to him in the person of Jesus of Nazareth; and *prayer* for guidance, for qualification to serve and teach, for needed inward discipline and training of spirit to do and bear. And *gradually*, as others are, was he guided by the Holy Spirit into truth. Not by any direct or independent revelation, but in connection with the studied Scriptures and the known facts of Christ's

incarnate career. Visions indeed he had, at intervals and in emergencies of his after-life. But here he was led to the right apprehension and full meaning of the written word, and of the teachings of Christ. The Spirit took of the things of Christ and showed them unto him. Yet let it be remembered that to the three days of blindness, and the three years of thoughtful study and prayer, five years of practice are added before he is fully charged with his great commission. God takes time to prepare those whom he specially employs.

23–25. Saul's Escape from Damascus.—Returned again, he goes straightway to the synagogue. With even stronger faith and zeal, as his views of truth were wider, his skill in argument and force of statement were such that his old opponents could not meet or refute his teachings. And, since he thoroughly knew them and their views, his refutation of their errors would be especially pointed and effective. Naturally, therefore, Saul's former associates became his most implacable foes. They conspired with the governor of Damascus to kill him (2 Cor. 11: 32, 33). But, from the overhanging window of a house upon an unguarded part of the wall, the disciples let him down into the open country, and he made good his *first* escape from persecuting Jews. The Lord has already begun to show him how great things he must suffer.

26–29. Brief Visit and Ministry at Jerusalem.—Paul's own account of this visit we find in Gal. 1: 11–18. His chief motive was to see Peter and James. But even these leaders of the apostles (and he sought and saw none besides these two) doubted his sincerity. They would not receive him until Barnabas—who was from Cyprus, not far from Tarsus—who had learned the facts of Saul's conversion, probably from himself, took the new convert to the two, and told them his marvelous story. For only fifteen days the three remained together. B.

The first meeting of the fisherman of Galilee and the tent-maker of Tarsus, the chosen companion of Jesus on earth and the chosen Pharisee who saw Jesus in the heavens, the apostle of the circumcision and the apostle of the Gentiles, is passed over in Scripture in a few words. The divine record does not linger in dramatic description on those passages, which a mere human writing would labor to embellish. What took place in the intercourse of these two saints, what was said of Jesus of Nazareth, who suffered, died, and was buried, and of Jesus, the glorified Lord, who had risen and ascended, and become “Head over all things to the Church,” what was felt of Christian love and devotion, what was learned under the Spirit's teaching of Christian truth, has not been revealed and can not be known. H.

Boldly and effectively he proved his divine mission in presence of these veteran apostles. Boldly he entered the very synagogue of the Grecians where Stephen had taught, and effectively preached

the same Jesus of Nazareth, conclusively refuting all opposing argument. And *again*, as their only way of *silencing*, they seek to slay him !

30. *Sent to his Native City.*—Not merely the



Modern Tarsus.

counsel of the two apostles, but a positive command of Christ (Acts 22 : 18-21), led Saul to leave Jerusalem and go to his own home. Another long interval in Saul's history here occurs, during which we only know that he remained in comparative retirement, preaching simply as other disciples did, without special appointment or formal ordination, as occasion called or the leading of the Spirit prompted. B.

The early chapters of the Acts are like the narratives in the Gospels. It is often hardly possible to learn how far the events related were contemporary or consecutive. It is impossible to determine the relations of time which subsist between Paul's retirement into Arabia and Peter's visit to the converted Samaritans, or between the journey of one

apostle from Joppa to Cesarea and the journey of the other from Jerusalem to Tarsus. H.—The interval of uncertain length, which he spent in Cilicia and Syria, after his flight from Jerusalem to Tarsus, is a blank in the story of the *Acts* ; but some refer to this period the chief part at least of the perils and sufferings which he recounts to the Corinthians, including two Roman and five Jewish scourgings and three shipwrecks. At all events, we may safely regard this as the great probationary period of the apostle's ministry, in which, laboring alone and unaided by man, he was specially prepared for the wide field to which he was called when Barnabas came to Tarsus to seek his aid for the work at Antioch. S.

Section 206.

Acts ix. 31-43.

31 THEN had the churches rest throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified ; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

32 And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all *quarters*, he came down also to the
33 saints which dwelt at Lydda. And there he found a certain man named *Æneas*, which had
34 kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy. And Peter said unto him, *Æneas*, Jesus

85 Christ maketh thee whole : arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately. And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord.
 86 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is
 87 called Dorcas : this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died : whom when they had washed, they
 88 laid *her* in an upper chamber. And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring *him* that he
 89 would not delay to come to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber : and all the widows stood by him weeping,
 40 and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed ; and turning *him* to the body said,
 41 Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes : and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her *his* hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows,
 42 presented her alive. And it was known throughout all Joppa ; and many believed in the
 43 Lord. And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.

“TABITHA was not a fashion-plate, but a model for every Christian female.” She “looked *also* on the things of *others*,” helped to bear the burdens of others, and “so fulfilled the law of Christ.” Her methods were appropriate and womanly, as her spirit was Christlike. By this record not only, but by manifold organizations and bands that have wrought a similar work of love in every Christian age and nation, Dorcas being dead hath spoken and yet speaketh. She is one of three women (Mk. 12 : 44 ; 14 : 9) whose self-consecration was shown in their gifts and deeds, and whose memorial and eulogy have gone wheresoever the gospel has been preached. B.

Dorcas died regretted ; she was worth regretting, she was worth being restored, she had not lived in vain because she had not lived for herself. The end of life is not a thought, but an action—action for others. But you, why should you be regretted ? Have you discovered spiritual truth like Paul ? Have you been brave and true in defending it, like Peter ; or cheered desolate hearts, like Ananias ; or visited the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, like Dorcas ? If you have, your life will leave a trace which will not soon be effaced from the earth. But, if not, what is your worthless self-absorbed existence good for but to be swept away and forgotten as soon as possible ? You will leave no record of yourself on earth except a date of birth and a date of death, with an awfully significant blank between. F. W. R.

31. The Upbuilding and Increase of the Church in the Three Provinces.—This verse is a point of transition in the history. After brief statement of Saul's conversion and early ministry, Luke's narrative returns for two or three chapters to further incidents in Peter's career. No points of time are given in either case, as they were not needful to the *purpose of the revelation*. This purpose (and it should be carefully noted) *was to show*, by these few specific incidents, *in what manner, and how rapidly and widely, the gospel was carried through the land, how effectively it was preached, and with what wonderful results in the conversion of men and the formation of churches*. Many “had gone everywhere preaching the word,” and founding communities of believers. So we find *churches* in Judea, Samaria, and even in far Galilee—this in spite of persecution, and as its indirect effect *in scattering abroad disciples filled with the Holy Ghost*.

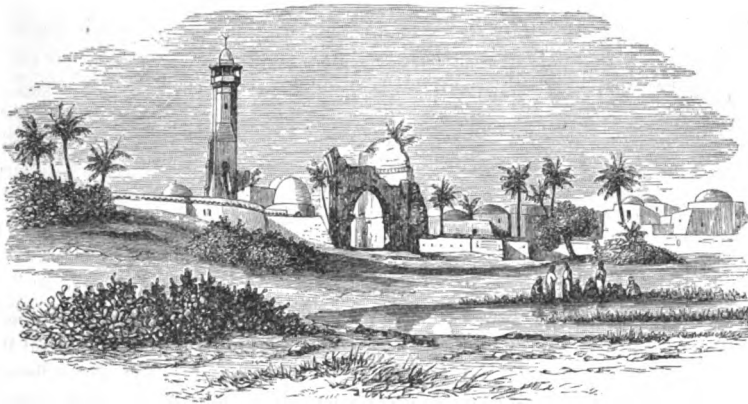
The “rest,” or interval of freedom from persecution, here referred to, grew out of an intense excitement, which for a considerable period ab-

sorbed the whole thought of the Jewish rulers and people. B.—About this time a more urgent and immediate danger than the progress of Christianity occupied the mind of the Jewish people. The very existence of their religion was threatened, for the frantic Caligula had issued orders to place his statue in the Temple at Jerusalem. The historian of the Jews must relate the negotiations, the petitions, the artful and humane delays interposed by the prefect Petronius, and all the incidents which show how deeply and universally the nation was absorbed by this appalling subject. It caused, no doubt, a diversion in favor of the Christians ; and the temporary peace enjoyed by the churches is attributed, with great probability, rather to the fears of the Jews for their own religious independence, than to the relaxation of their hostility against the Christians. This peace was not disturbed for about three years. The apostles pursued their office of disseminating the gospel in every part of Judea until Herod Agrippa took possession of the hereditary dominions. *Milman*.

And so, through the *providence of God, his people* had needed quiet. The result of quiet is twofold. They were edified, or *built up*; referring to the inward life, not the outward organization. Advanced and strengthened *internally*, they made *progress in spiritual life and its fruits*. And they were *multiplied*, increased in the number of the saved. Mark the conditions of this increase! The *walking*, or going on and forward, actively meeting daily duties. Walking in the *fear of the Lord*, with filial reverence and obedience at heart. And walking in the *comfort of the Holy Ghost*, in the soul's *resting* upon the *helpful interposition* of the Holy Spirit at

every needful point—this is the meaning of “comfort,” as it is of “comforter” (the same word), applied by Christ to the Holy Ghost. These conditions fulfilled, inwardly strengthen, advance, and make fruitful the *Church*; they increase the vital force, they expand the graces, and make larger and richer the fruitage of the *believer's* life.

32-35. The Miraculous Healing of Eneas at Lydda, and its Blessed Results.—Peter's visit at Lydda and stay at Joppa (see map, p. 61) probably occurred while Saul was at Tarsus. Nothing like apostolic circuits or visitations seems to be even hinted at in the Acts until we reach Paul's history,



Lydda—the Modern Village.

and that is purely exceptional in this matter, growing out of his *exclusive* appointment and work as the apostle to the Gentiles. As a body the apostles remained at Jerusalem controlling and guiding the general movements of the new Christian body or church. So Christ had ordained. But individual apostles, like other individual disciples, went as they were called by the Holy Ghost, upon specific missions. In such a mission Peter was now engaged, and in his journeying arrives at Lydda, an inland village a few (six) miles from Joppa. There he seeks the *saints*—a Scriptural term, and therefore a proper one if properly employed—signifying the *holy*; and descriptive of believers, *all of whom are called to be saints*.

Among them—the connection implies—he finds a man for eight years crippled with palsy. There is here no testing or prompting of faith, as in the case of unbelievers, by question or address (Acts 3 : 4). But, addressing him as one who already believes, he simply announces a gracious, joyful fact: *Jesus Christ maketh thee whole!* For proof of this, the command is added: “Arise, and make thy bed.” The doing for himself what for eight years had been done for him was conclusive evidence that his infirmity was gone and his strength restored.

The widespread results of this miraculous healing furnish yet further verification of Christ's words (John 14 : 12), that greater works than His should be done in his name. Not only in Lydda, but over the broad, fertile, and beautiful plain of Sharon—reaching from Cesarea to Joppa—the tidings of the cure and the name of Jesus the healer were spread by grateful believing disciples, and many of the multitudes that dwelt in that vast region received Christ and were enrolled as his disciples.

36-42. The Character, Death, and raising to Life of Dorcas, and the Result wrought in Joppa.—Joppa (“beautiful”), on a high hill of the Mediterranean coast, distant forty miles from Jerusalem, was its seaport from the time of Solomon. This disciple of Christlike spirit was called Tabitha in the Aramaic tongue, used by the Jews, and Dorcas by the Greeks. The name signifies “gazelle,” and, as an image of peculiar attractiveness, was often appropriated as a proper name for females.

Though nothing is said of her *faith*, she *had* faith, for she was a *true* disciple. More and better, she *proved* faith's possession by its *works*. Her life was actively employed in helping disciples and others. She wrought with her hands, and gave from

her store for the supply of poor and needy; especially for *widows*, who in that period and country were in peculiar need. That her motive was utterly single and unselfish, we know from the common high sentiment concerning her. When she died, this sentiment was at once manifest. All the Christian fellowship was moved to the deepest grief. In their yearning for comfort, and if possible for help in some unknown way from God, they instantly send

to Peter, six miles off, asking that he hasten to do what he can in their grief and need. As they desired, Peter came at once, arriving before the interment, which ordinarily takes place on the day of death in the East.

The body lay in an upper chamber, and was surrounded by "saints and widows," that is, by fellow disciples and by those she had helped. With a natural and tender touch, Luke tells how these



Jaffa—Ancient Joppa.

grieving but grateful beneficiaries recited her memorial. But Peter puts them all forth. He would be alone with God, especially when he had so great a request to urge, so mighty a boon to obtain. *Kneeling down, he prayed!* The spirit of the prayer, its intense fervor and its energy of faith, and the motive which he urged, the greater glory of Christ, we may know by the assurance given to Peter by the Holy Ghost—that inward assurance by which he was prompted to say, "Tabitha, arise." His faith was in the divine power, and his word was guided by the divine spirit. In response to his faith, immediately upon the utterance of his word, "she opened her eyes," and her spirit came again. To those who mourned her dead, "saints and widows, he presented her alive." And joy takes the place of mourning. In all this, not Peter, but Peter's Lord,

is glorified. Therefore it was that, when the people of Joppa heard of this restored life of Dorcas, many heeded the preaching of Jesus the Restorer, and believed in him unto a higher, even an everlasting life.

43. *Simon Peter tarries in the House of the Tanner Simon.*—"Many days," indicating a sufficient period for the work to be done, in connection with his stay there. The tanner's business—that of preparing skins for different uses—was an unclean one, and therefore dishonorable in Jewish estimation, because it required contact with dead animals. But Peter's Judaism is already so much modified, and his apprehension of Christ's exposures of Pharisaic interpretation so clear, that he is willing to risk the uncleanness and the dishonor, by sharing the home and table of his namesake, the hospitable Christian tanner. B.

Section 207.

ACTS x. 1-23.

1 **THERE** was a certain man in Cæsarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the
2 Italian *band*, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much
3 alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. He saw in a vision evidently about the
ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.
4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto
5 him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send
6 men to Joppa, and call for *one* Simon, whose surname is Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon

7 a tanner, whose house is by the sea side : he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do. And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household
8 servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually ; and when he had declared all *these* things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

9 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went
10 up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour : and he became very hungry, and would
11 have eaten : but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him ; as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners,
12 and let down to the earth : wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and
13 wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him,
14 Rise, Peter ; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord ; for I have never eaten any thing
15 that is common or unclean. And the voice *spake* unto him again the second time, What
16 God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common. This was done thrice : and the vessel was
17 received up again into heaven. Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which
18 he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made en-
19 quiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, and called, and asked whether Simon,
20 which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.

19 While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.
20 Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing : for I have sent
21 them. Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius ; and
22 said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek : what *is* the cause wherefore ye are come ? And they
23 said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report
23 into his house, and to hear words of thee. Then called he them in, and lodged *them*. And
on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied
him.

ALMS and prayers are branches from a common stem, which binds them together. That stem is the moral law of God ; that law to which, though it be not the covenant under which (as Christian men) we live, we must yet be conformed as a rule of life. The law branches out into two great precepts—supreme and unbounded love to God, and love to our neighbor as to ourselves. Now, the man who really and habitually prays, the man who lives in the spirit of prayer, fulfills the first great branch of duty. True spiritual prayer—"the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man," such as was that of Cornelius—is the outcome and expression of a man's duty to God. Such prayer is called in Scripture "incense" ; partly from its reaching the throne of grace, even as incense when kindled soars up to the sky ; partly from its spiritual fragrance and acceptability. "Let my prayer be set forth in thy sight *as the incense*." And the man who gives alms, in the true spirit of almsgiving, is equally fulfilling the second great branch of duty. Devout almsgiving—such as was that of Cornelius, who "gave much alms to the people"—is the outcome and expression of a man's duty to his neighbor. Yet think not that the act passes no further than to our neighbor. It too, no less than prayer, comes up before God as a memorial. It too, no less than prayer, finds in the fragrant, soaring incense its Scriptural emblem and type. E. M. G.

Nor only was God's covenant made with the Jewish nation, not only did he intrust that nation with his word and ordinances of worship, not only was Christ a Jew, and as he affirmed, "salvation was of the Jews," but the *first Christian disciples*, and the entire membership of the *first Christian Church* up to this period, were members of the *Jewish Church*, by descent or adoption. They were all imbued with the prevalent Jewish belief, respecting the essential importance of the leading Mosaic rites. They were filled with the Jewish feeling of their immense superiority as God's people over all other nations. It

seemed natural to them, therefore, when Christianity was to be introduced among the Gentiles (and they knew that all nations were to receive the gospel), that it should be introduced under Jewish auspices and in connection with long venerated Jewish forms. The apostles, with others, were still imbued with these conceits and prejudices.

Before God's work among the Gentiles can be begun, these teachers must be taught ; their narrow, erroneous notions removed. First and emphatically *they must know that in Christ Jesus the Gentile is equal to, is one with the Jew* : "a fellow-heir, of the

same body, and partaker of the same promise by the gospel." And this is the lesson conveyed by the vision to Peter, the man strongest in feeling and prejudice, the foremost, most energetic, whole-souled in active obedience, among the body of apostles. More fully afterward, and frequently, the same needed lesson was taught.

It is conveyed to Peter in the first act of transition in the ministry of the gospel, from the Jew to the Gentile. A period this of marked significance, as a turning-point in the history of the Christian Church. And because so necessary, at this eminent juncture, to prepare the body of apostles and disciples for right ministry among the Gentiles, God added supernatural means to the natural. He connected a miraculous vision with many providences. As respects the latter, it is interesting to note how events are linked in with each other by God's plan and providence. Lydda was nigh to Joppa, so Peter was called from Lydda. Now, Joppa is so nigh to Cesarea that he is called from Joppa. Yet it is the Lord and the Lord's work that call. So God ever marshals providences in the way and for the discharge of our duty.

Another point worthy of note is the analogy between this bringing together of Peter and Cornelius and that of Saul and Ananias. Each was prefaced with a double and responsive vision, and with instruction, from God; and a hindering difficulty removed from the minds of Ananias and Peter.

1, 2. The Position and Character of Cornelius.—Cesarea, on the Mediterranean coast, about thirty miles north of Joppa and sixty northwest from Jerusalem, was lavishly built by Herod the Great, and made his residence and the civil and military capital of Judea. Now, it was the seat of the Roman procurators or governors, as is frequently intimated in the Acts. B.—The gospel made its first conquest over heathenism in this large city, named from the Roman Cæsar, a military stronghold and naval arsenal of the Roman power. And it made that conquest over a *soldier* called *Cornelius*, one of the noblest of Roman names—an officer of the *Italic* band—a cohort of Roman blood. In his conversion we may see a prophetic intimation of the submission of the great Fourth Monarchy to the mild yoke of the gospel. **Devout.** A worshiper of *one* God, in contradistinction to polytheists and idolators. In the providence of God, the military successes of the Macedonian and Roman monarchies had impaired the local reverence for national deities, and had cleared the ground for the planting of a purer faith. The diffusion of the Hebrew Scriptures and the decomposition of paganism had tended to produce a class of persons in all parts of the world who may be said to have been the seminary of the Gentile Church. These were "the devout," or God-fearing,

of the Acts. Tired of polytheism, and yet unwilling to subject themselves to the ceremonial law, these "God-fearing" men received with joy the tidings of the gospel; they recognized in Christianity a religion which satisfied the wants of their nature, the requirements of their reason, and the yearnings of their hearts, without impairing any of the reverence with which they had learned to regard the God of the Old Testament, but rather, and much more, enlarging the ideas they had already conceived of his merciful purposes and glorious attributes. The apostles everywhere in their journeys met with this class of proselytes. W.

Three centurions of the New Testament are referred to as favoring the truth, either in the person of Christ—as the centurion of Capernaum, and the witness of the crucifixion—or, as in this case, under such forms as the truth had been brought to his knowledge. The character here given him is specially attractive when we consider that he was only a truth-loving and -seeking man, looking for and taking it where he could find it, and voluntarily finding and accepting enough from the Jewish Scriptures and worship to make him *devout*—that is, to lead him to the true and filial fear and personal worship of God. Such a man we have here. Like Abraham, he influenced his household by imparting his own convictions of duty and worship. To God's poor or to God's call, he consecrated a portion of God's intrusted gifts. And in all, in the ordering of his own life, in the guidance of his household, and in his helpful alms, he looked upward continually for divine direction, acceptance, and blessing. All this is conveyed by the statement of inspiration. Only partially is he taught, but he heartily receives and faithfully acts out all he had learned of God and his will. And how many the evidences in all missionary history that God prepares heathen hearts for his gospel, and that with but little of truth and without specific human instrumentality he takes possession of many such hearts!

3-6. Cornelius is instructed by an Angel of God, in a Vision.—At the afternoon hour of prayer, or three o'clock, while himself at prayer, there appeared coming in to him a human form, marked in some manner intelligibly to him as a messenger from another world. To the certain sight and to the audible call of this supernatural being, the alarmed centurion uttered the briefest question in response.

Two things are conveyed in the angel's message. Both intimate a superhuman knowledge: one in regard to the internal acting of the mind of God, the other in regard to God's will respecting the two men, Cornelius and Peter. First he says, God has heard thy prayers and beheld thy gifts, and he *remembers* both. This direct assurance, for the encouragement and greater trust of the centurion, none other than

a heavenly messenger could give. Next, he directs Cornelius to send for *Peter as his instructor*, merely using his own superior knowledge to inform the centurion where the apostle was to be found. But, besides the simple encouraging assurance, the angel *teaches him nothing. He is only a celestial guide to a human teacher!* Because the occasion is so great and prophetic, the first opening of the fold-door to the "other sheep" of the great Good Shepherd, or the first breaking down of the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, therefore it is signalized by the sending of this messenger from heaven. But even God's angels, while they joyfully and triumphantly herald the advent, redemption, and glory of the Incarnate Son, have no part in the direct ministry of the gospel. *For this ministry he exclusively uses and honors a human instrumentality.*

7, 8. *Obedient to the Vision, Cornelius sends Three Messengers to Peter.*—Gladly and instantly he obeys the divine direction. He selects and summons two household servants and a soldier of his

band, all in sympathy with his devout feeling and life, to whom he could therefore fully unfold the vision and intelligently commit the peculiar errand and message. And on the same afternoon, the three men start for Joppa, arriving on the next day soon after noon. B.

Cornelius was in Cesarea and Peter in Joppa—the Roman soldier in the modern city, which was built and named in the Emperor's honor—the Jewish apostle in the ancient scaport which associates its name with the early passages of Hebrew history—with the voyage of Jonah, the building of the Temple, the wars of the Maccabees. All the splendor of Cesarea, its buildings and its ships, and the Temple of Rome and the Emperor, which the sailors saw far out at sea, all has long since vanished. Herod's magnificent city is a wreck on the shore. A few ruins are all that remain of the harbor. Joppa lingers on, like the Jewish people, dejected but not destroyed. Cesarea has perished, like the Roman Empire which called it into existence. H.



Ruins of Cesarea. (From the north.)

9-16. *What Peter saw while in a Trance.*—On the next day at noon, within half an hour of the arrival of the centurion's messengers, Peter sought the secluded house-top, to lift his vision and heart heavenward, as he was wont. After his prayer, it would seem, while waiting the call to the noonday meal and craving food, the trance, or supernatural absorption of mind upon themes supernaturally suggested, took place. He saw heaven open—not, as Stephen, *the heavens*—but that bound of the visible upper sky which we call heaven, and above which we place the region of God's dwelling-place. Within the immense folds of a vast seemingly woven fabric, knit together by four suspending cords, and rapidly lowered from the cleft sky to the level of Peter's vision, he saw all manner of clean and unclean animals. And he heard a voice summoning him to kill and eat. To his respectful but distinct demur, that he could not partake that which was ceremonially unclean, the voice sharply

forbade him call that unclean which God had made clean.

No instruction by symbol could possibly be clearer, more decisive than this. The very method of it, the suddenness, swiftness, and repetition in the descent and ascent of this vast sheeted fabric with its strange contents, and the shortness and sharpness of the command and reproof, all were admirably suited to Peter's strong nature. More than the other apostles, and *for* them, he needed just such plain teaching. And he could neither misunderstand nor forget it, when the immediate event made its interpretation clear, and even lent after-force to the vision itself. B.

There was then a distinction between clean and unclean, indicated by the calling of Abraham, but more explicitly by the Levitical rites and laws; yet appointed from the beginning, for we read of it in the time of Noah; a distinction applicable to men, to food, to dwellings, to land, to animals. This dis-

tion was made by God for special ends, but at Christ's death the distinction had served its purpose. God interposed, and threw down the middle wall of partition; not rejecting the Jew, yet accepting the Gentile; not obliterating national distinctions, but making these no longer of any importance, and attaching to them no spiritual or religious privilege. Without lowering the Jew, he lifted up the Gentile; not making the Jew unclean, but the Gentile clean; so that from that time there should be (so far as access to God was concerned) "neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free." In the vision or trance, Peter was taught that the Gentile was now made as clean as the Jew; that God had done it, and that even he, though the apostle of the circumcision, must at once accept the verdict. *Bonar.*

17-20. *The Messengers arrive, and the Spirit instructs Peter.*—While he pondered the vision, the three men from Cornelius stand at Simon's door asking for Peter. This the apostle learns not from any human summons, but from the intimation of the same Divine Spirit who had previously produced the audible voice. The vision is thus linked with the three visitors and their errand. And the connection is confirmed by the positive Divine direction, that Peter should return with these men whither they went, and the conclusive assurance that the Holy Ghost had sent them on this errand. No explanation of the vision has been offered. But Peter is bidden to obey certain directions, *to do something*, and *in the doing* all his questions about the vision were to be resolved. Here is the same principle we meet at every step in the histories of the Old and New Testaments. It is that obedience leads to knowledge. "We shall know if we follow on." If any one *wills to do God's will*, he shall *know*. In what follows we find this principle again verified. Both Peter and Cornelius, in their implicit following of the Spirit's directions, learn that which they desire to know, and with knowledge receive larger grace. *B.*

Points of Useful Thought.—We miss very much devotional joy, by the neglect of *fragmentary* prayer. In the intervals which separate periodical seasons of devotion, we need a habit of offering up brief ejaculatory expressions of devout feeling. The morning and the evening sacrifice depend very much upon these interspersed offerings, as these in return are dependent on those. Communion with God in both is assisted by linking the "set times" together by a chain of heavenward thoughts and aspirations, in the breaks which occur in our labors and amusements. Nothing else can do this so naturally as the habit of ejaculatory prayer. The *spirit* of prayer may run along the line of such a habit through a lifetime. So one may live in a *state* of prayer, "a devout man that prays always." *A. P.*

The eyes which run through the whole earth behold also the searching soul struggling for life and light which it can not procure for itself. To the up-right there ariseth light in the darkness; yet by degrees, through the use of means, only and alone through the preaching of a full and free gospel, of which Christ is the center, peace the basis, and grace the glad tidings. This man who fears God and worketh righteousness is pleasing to him, not in order that he may remain what he is, but that by the way of faith and repentance he may be received into the kingdom of God, without which there is no safety for those who in themselves are lost. *Van O.*

Cornelius was recompensed for his prayers and alms by the visit of an angel, by the visit of an apostle, by the glad tidings of the gospel, and, to crown all, by the gift of the Holy Ghost. How striking an instance of the large and munificent scale on which God responds to the desires and efforts which his own free grace has prompted—of his "giving more" (as is his wont) "than either we desire or deserve"! How wonderful a fulfillment of the promise made by our Lord both to secret alms and secret prayers—"Thy Father, which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly." *E. M. G.*

Beneficence or almsgiving is always remembered of God, and ranks in his estimate with prayer or direct worship. It is counted a vital part of that *obedience* which is *worship in act* or life. It comes from the heart equally with that worship which finds expression in uttered prayer and praise. Prayer and alms equally show the presence of an operative faith and a living active love.

The diversity of God's methods and the special adaptation of each to his particular purpose are illustrated in this case of Cornelius as compared with that of Saul. An obscure disciple baptized and received into the Church the great apostle to the Gentiles; and this because God would have his ministry from the first free from all human dependence. But this first pagan disciple, a purely Gentile member of the Christian Church, was received into Church fellowship, not even by Philip the evangelist who *lived* at Cesarea, but by the foremost of the apostles; and this because God would throw around an event so signal, prophetic, and glorious—the receiving of this first-fruit of a world harvest—all that could give it impressiveness and significance! *B.*

Doubting nothing! That is the secret of liberty, of efficiency, of success in every work which is undertaken by men: a confidence in the practicability, in the value of the work, in the Divine authority which imposes it upon us as an obligatory work, and in the Divine providence and power which will bring it to a successful performance. *R. S. S.*

Section 208.

Acts x. 24-48.

24 AND the morrow after they entered into Cæsarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and
 25 had called together his kinsmen and near friends. And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius
 26 met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped *him*. But Peter took him up, saying,
 27 Stand up; I myself also am a man. And as he talked with him, he went in, and found
 28 many that were come together. And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlaw-
 ful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation;
 29 but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore
 came I *unto you* without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what
 30 intent ye have sent for me? And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this
 hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in
 31 bright clothing, and said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remem-
 32 brance in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose sur-
 name is Peter; he is lodged in the house of *one* Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when
 33 he cometh, shall speak unto thee. Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast
 well done that thou art come. Now therefore, are we all here present before God, to hear
 all things that are commanded thee of God.

34 Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of
 35 persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted
 36 with him. The word which *God* sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus
 37 Christ: (he is Lord of all:) that word ye know, which was published throughout all
 38 Judæa, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed
 Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and
 39 healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses
 of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew
 40 and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; not to
 41 all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink
 42 with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people,
 and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead.
 43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him
 shall receive remission of sins.

44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell an all them which heard the
 45 word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came
 with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.
 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can
 47 any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy
 48 Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.
 Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

TRUTH and mercy and self-devotion in men are greater than all miracles, and have the very essence of God in them. Therefore we are bound to thank him for every disinterested act performed by any man, for every generous and heroic deed, for the search after truth, simply because it is truth, by those great minds that seek her as hid treasure, for unpaid devotion to the cause of suffering and want, for the blessed feet that seek out shame and sin, and the lips that plead with them to bring them home contrite and forgiven. These are all testimonies to the greatness of the soul of man, and therefore to the being of God. Those footsteps are echoes of the feet of him who went about doing good, and help us to believe that he once walked our earth. *Ker.*

In every nation, now that Jesus Christ has come, there is an equal access to the open door for every tongue and tribe and people. Under this new and heavenly reign of light and love which has been set up, all are free citizens. There are no external disqualifications. There are no internal incapacities for

being saved. All this Peter had just found out in a peculiar way, the vision of the four-cornered sheet three times let down from heaven, to show him that the ceremonial distinctions of things to be lawfully eaten, symbols of all other natural disqualifications, were abolished. The Gentile world which God has now liberated from its long neglect, "call not thou common." But go to it, preach to it, respect and love human nature in Cesarea just as much as in Jerusalem or Bethany: there is no difference. The gospel is no respecter of persons. Christ died for all. F. H. D.

24-33. After the narrative of the first Christian Pentecost, the second book of Luke scarcely contains a picture which in beauty and interest can be placed above that of the reception into the Church of Cornelius and his household. It is the history of the Gentile day of Pentecost. Moment worthy of eternal remembrance, when the first Gentile threshold was crossed for the first time by the feet of them who published peace, and the earliest beam of light dawned on the land of the shadow of death! *Van O.*

The three messengers from Cornelius tarried over night in the house of Simon at Joppa. On the next morning Peter departed with them for Cesarea, a distance of thirty Roman miles. Six Jewish Christians of Joppa voluntarily accompanied him. The journey required a day and a half; so that they reached Cesarea the day following, or the fourth day after the vision of Cornelius.

The centurion, anticipating the time of their arrival, had called together a considerable company, from his own and other friendly Gentile households. Whatever blessing is to come, he would extend its effects to as many as he could reach. Regarding Peter as one directly and especially sent of God, his mind ingrained with the Roman notion of deifying such ambassadors from heaven, the centurion would have rendered divine honors to the apostle upon his entrance. But instantly Peter checked his purpose, gave him his hand, and bade him stand; assuring him that he himself was only a man. After a moment's friendly converse, Peter went in to the gathered company. Without further reference to Cornelius, he first accounts for his—to them strange—presence, a Jew among Gentiles, by frankly declaring that God had taken away his Jewish prejudice; had taught him that all nations were equally acceptable to Him. He then asks why they have summoned him. To this question Cornelius replies by reciting his vision of the fourth afternoon before—the direction he had received, and his obedience to it—and then expresses the readiness of *all present to hear all things commanded of God* for Peter's utterance.

34, 35. *Peter's Introduction: all Men and Nations alike before God.*—The singular coincidence of the two miraculous visions, and the manifest spirit and desire of this company of Gentile souls, at once deepened into strong settled assurance the new view God had taught him of the relation of the Gentiles

to the Gospel. And this conviction naturally first finds utterance, "I have *thoroughly learned this*, that God looks favorably upon Gentile and Jew alike, and on the single condition of filial fear in the heart, and integrity in the life." But Peter stops not here. *His new* knowledge of something that had *always been true* could not help Cornelius. If he had no more to say he need not have come. For if alms and prayers, with a devout and beneficent life, were sufficient for a man's justification before God, then this man and his company need no "words" of Peter "telling them how they may be saved." If Cornelius *himself* (not merely his prayers and alms) had been already *accepted by God*, then neither vision nor angel, neither Peter nor his gospel of Christ, neither divine nor human baptism would have been necessary or appropriate. But Peter saw in this "fearing God and working righteousness" only the indications that God had been preparing these devout hearts for the further essential knowledge of Christ, in his sacrificing life and death, his resurrection and exaltation; and for the instant glad acceptance of this justifying Saviour. And this is the "Word" he proceeds to preach.

36, 37. *Substance of the Word preached, and the Sphere of its Proclamation thus far.*—That Word God had sent to the children of Israel, and it had been published from the Baptist's coming in all the country of the Jews. These general facts they knew. But the *substance* of that Word, which they did not know, he here *first sums up*, in a clause and an included parenthesis: *preaching peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)*. No single word expresses so well and winningly the very heart of the gospel, in its design and effect upon human souls, as this word "*peace*." It is God's peace, for there is no other. And the giver is God, in the person of Jesus Christ his Son. There is no other giver, for *He is Lord over all souls*. And this proclamation of peace provided and proffered to men in their disquiet—disquiet because of sin and its consequent misery—fully meets, and it alone meets, the deepest most vital craving of the disturbed heart. How winning, how blessed then this divine gospel, with this its great disclosure—*Christ, God over all, in good-will to men, bringing peace upon earth!*

38-43. *The Particulars of this Published Divine Gospel, the Facts of Christ's Incarnate Career, here testified to by Peter, and referred back to Previous*

Testimony by the Prophets.—The same facts that he has heretofore preached to Jews of every degree, he declares to this *first audience of Gentiles*. While he asserts Christ's Lordship over men, and his ordination as Judge of quick and dead in the great and final assize, he yet declares His *humanity* by the name Jesus of Nazareth, and tells of His *ignominious death* by hanging on a tree.

By His *anointment* "with the Holy Ghost and with power," the apostle intimates Christ's three-fold functions as God's appointed *prophet, priest, and king* for men, for only these three were anointed among men. His beneficent and blessed ministry is summed up in the simple but sublime record: *He went about doing good!* To all his marvels of divine power in healing and in casting out devils, to all his deeds of mercy and help, the apostle here interjects the fact that he himself was witness. Also His death upon the Cross, and His resurrection upon the third day, Peter declares. And here again he refers to his own personal witness and knowledge. He states a fact that thoughtful readers of the Gospel history have noticed, but which is nowhere stated in that history. It is that the risen Saviour showed himself only to *disciples*, never to unbelievers. The single object of the showing was to *secure witnesses* enough and of such a character as *could testify* and as *would be credited*. Such witnesses could not be found among unbelievers. They could only be found among honest disciples, and that after testimony strong and conclusive enough to overbear their previous honest doubt and unbelief.

And the witnesses of Christ's beautiful and blessed life, they who had companied with him during the brief period of his ministry to men, who had known of his condemnation and death by the Cross, who had beheld him arisen and saw him ascend to heaven, these *chosen witnesses* (of whom Peter was one of the foremost) Christ had commissioned to *speaking* unto all people that *which they knew*, and to *testify that they had seen*; and to declare that He, the ascended Redeemer, should finally reappear as the Judge of the quick and dead. Lastly, to complete, confirm, and crown these details of Christ's office-work on earth and in heaven, the apostle declares the *sublime end and object* of all: that *whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins*. This, he affirms, is the witness of the prophets to Christ, thereby asserting that *this is the ultimate supreme fact of the Old and New Testament Gospel*. The same Being who is LORD and JUDGE of all is the SAVIOUR of all that trust in Him. This Lord and Saviour—in his incarnate life of love, his death of shame, and his glorious resurrection and ascension, already often preached to Jewish rulers and people—by express command of God Peter now preached

to this first-gathered company of Gentiles. And similar are the results which ensue.

44-48. *Gentiles receive the Holy Ghost and are baptized, while Believing Jews stand amazed.*—The prayers of Cornelius find now abundant answer. In the preaching of Christ all is revealed that he sought to know and receive. And not the centurion alone, but the whole Gentile company gathered at his call, listened, heeded, believed, and received the offered Saviour. And now, as oftentimes before upon Jewish multitudes, upon these first-fruits of the Gentiles descended the fullness of the power of the Holy Ghost, quickening, converting, and endowing with limited supernatural gifts. *It was the Pentecost of the Gentiles*, and they also spake with tongues, and magnified the grace of God in their salvation.

This outpouring of the Spirit upon pagan hearers is the significant fact emphasized in the whole narrative. All the previous occurrences by miracle and providence had been definitely arranged to give the utmost prominence and significance to the introduction of the Gentiles into the Christian Church. And this mainly to make the deepest impression upon the minds of *all Jewish disciples*, apostles and Church members alike; to produce an unquestioning conviction that from henceforth the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile was, by God's own purpose and hand, for ever broken down. How much needed was this lesson and how hard it was to learn, striking as it did directly at the heart of a prejudice incorporated for ages in the very fabric of the Jewish mind, we may gather from the entire after-history of the Acts, and from large portions of Paul's leading epistles. The lesson was this: *That Judaism was not the way of entrance to Christianity; that the ceremonial rites of the Jewish law were not in any wise conditions of admission to the Christian Church; nay more, that the Mosaic ritual was, in its two chief features, now replaced by two unbloody and simple sacramental symbols, whose significance better suited the new relations of the Church to Christ.*

Peter learned this now as the lesson of his vision at Joppa, and at once acted upon it. Taking advantage of the amazement and conviction of the Jewish disciples from Joppa, he puts to them the conclusive question of verse 47. "Uncircumcised as they are," he says, "they have received the baptism of God. Shall we refuse them the baptism of man, as appointed by Christ?" And, by the ordinance then administered at his command, Peter there declared, and afterward, upon his recital of the facts, the body of the apostles reaffirmed the declaration, that *Gentile believers* henceforth were to be *received through the simple Christian symbol of baptism alone*, and were *entitled to full, equal right and privilege in Christian Church membership*. B.

Suggested Thoughts.—The scale of God's plans is large, and the fulfillment gradual and slow. For fifteen hundred years the Jewish people were the chosen recipients of his special regard and favors. But never for themselves alone. Instruments, favored indeed, but only instruments they were, trained by instruction and discipline, to testify of the one Jehovah, to receive and distribute his Word of Life. Yet, in the later centuries, God had also been training two other nations to take part in the great crisis of human history. Now that the Jewish nation has fulfilled its appointed function, all that is special in God's dealing ceases. Now that Greek and Roman are prepared for God's working in their behalf, above all, now that the time for humanity's divine redemption has fully come, and the work of that redemption is complete, now the promise and the salvation of God takes a breadth and reach that includes all nations. And it is this wide transfer of divine blessings, it is the universal proclamation of the redemption in Christ Jesus, that we read in the occurrence narrated here.

Two expressions, found in this story in different connections, seem to be wonderfully adapted for inscriptions in our churches; one on either side-wall,

where they may be read from pulpit and pew: *We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God!* Every word is emphatic and quickeningly suggestive. And the other is equally profitable: *Who (i. e., God's preacher) shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved!* Words that are *spirit and life*, words from Christ, about Christ, for Christ: words from the Word of Life, accompanied by the living Spirit, which are able to make wise unto salvation. Here we find the design, the sure, the only subject-matter, and right temper of *preaching and hearing!*

Peter's first sermon to Gentiles may be beautifully and effectively summed up in its first and last expressions: Peace by Jesus Christ, Lord of all! Through his name every one who believeth shall receive remission of sins! *Peace by pardon—redemption by faith!*

Now, too, the world, of Jews as well as Gentiles, in heart are craving the message of peace by Jesus Christ, and remission of sins by faith in his name. Now, too, individual souls—and many—like Cornelius are desiring, praying! Shall we not send far and wide the living voice with the living gospel? B.

Section 209.

Acts xi. 1-30.

- 1 AND the apostles and brethren that were in Judæa heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of
- 3 the circumcision contended with him, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and
- 4 didst eat with them. But Peter rehearsed *the matter* from the beginning, and expounded
- 5 *it* by order unto them, saying, I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a
- 6 vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four
- 6 corners; and it came even to me: upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and
- 7 fowls of the air. And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat. But I said,
- 8 Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.
- 9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou
- 10 common. And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven. And,
- 11 behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent
- 12 from Cæsarea unto me. And the spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover
- 13 over these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house: and he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men
- 14 to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; who shall tell thee words, whereby
- 15 thou and all thy house shall be saved. And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on
- 16 them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.
- 17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as *he did* unto us, who believed on the Lord
- 18 Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.
- 19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto
- 20 the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they
- 21 were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

22 Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem :
 23 and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came,
 and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart
 24 they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and
 25 of faith : and much people was added unto the Lord. Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus,
 26 for to seek Saul : and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came
 to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much
 people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.
 27 And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one
 28 of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be great dearth
 29 throughout all the world : which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar. Then the
 disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren
 30 which dwelt in Judæa : which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Bar-
 nabas and Saul.

By *cleaving unto Jesus* is meant that we hold fast to his religion, abhorring the thought of apostasy—that we adhere to him as the Revealer of truth, avoiding every heresy and error—that we rest upon him by faith as our atoning Priest—that we kneel to him as our King—that we cling to his example—that we keep near him as the source of all spiritual, sanctifying influence—and that we abide in him as our everlasting portion and ultimate good. Abiding in Christ is abiding in his service, walking in his will, doing that which shall please him, and living to his glory. And this derives new force from the consideration that holiness, whether of heart or conduct—in other words, cleaving to the Lord in duty—can by no means be secured, except by cleaving to him in acts of personal faith and affection. J. W. A.

Let the central flame of Christian love burn in your hearts with an undying constancy and pureness. Let your sweet charity and patience and peace breathe as a fragrance throughout the society of believers. Let the sustaining and heavenly hope which comes through Christ impart its beauty to your character always, and shine with clear celestial luster throughout your life. Let your self-devoted labors for others reach out to them, and bring both them and us a blessing. Take what of influence from the spheres unseen you here may meet, and make it felt throughout the circles which you affect. Seek first of all in yourselves, at all times, the richest, brightest, most abounding experience of all that which the Spirit of God will work, through the gospel, in the hearts and minds of those who receive him ; of all which study, prayer, and effort, beneficent action and the wisest self-discipline, can bring to the soul through Christ its Lord ; of all which God imparts in his grace to those whom he chooses for his own. And then let this be spontaneously revealed, in endurance and in action, in your life and on your lips, in all the circumstances in which you may be placed. R. S. S.

1-18. This event was the crown and consummation of Peter's ministry. He who had first preached the resurrection to the Jews, baptized the first converts, and confirmed the Samaritans, now, without the advice or coöperation of any of his colleagues, under direct communication from heaven, first established principles which issued in the complete fusion of the Hebrew and Gentile elements in the Church. It was no mere acquiescence in a positive command, but the development of a spirit full of generous impulses, which found utterance in the words spoken by Peter on that occasion, both in presence of Cornelius and afterward at Jerusalem. But the Church at Jerusalem was slow to learn the lesson involved in the tidings that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. When Peter returned to Jerusalem, he was accused by "those of the circumcision" because he had eaten with the uncircumcised. But his plain narrative of the whole transaction, crowned by the argument that, in the out-

pouring of the Holy Ghost, he had recognized that same baptism of the Spirit which Christ had promised as the sign of his presence with the apostles themselves, silenced every objection, and opened every mouth in praise to God for the great revelation which marks this epoch in the history of the Church : "*Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*" S.

We note, here and throughout the Acts, in the record of personal contentions and church divisions, the same ingenuous frankness in telling the story of their own weaknesses and sins, that we read so often and plainly in the gospels. The bearing of this honesty of the sacred writers upon the truth of their writings is obvious.

19-21. *The Gospel widely diffused through Persecution. Its first Great Triumph among Gentiles at Antioch.*—The work of Christ thus far had only reached the limit of Palestine. As bidden at his ascension, the disciples had begun at Jerusalem, and



[Cyrene was the principal city of that district of northern Africa lying between Carthage and Egypt. It lies on a table-land with descending terraces to the sea. It was a Greek city, with a large settlement of Jews. B.]

thence gone into Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. Now a signal step in advance is taken; an earnest vital movement is begun among the Gentiles.

Luke recurs (v. 19) to the fact previously stated (8: 4), only specifying regions where the scattered believers went, and the single class of persons (Jews) to whom they preached the Word. The time is indefinite and considerably prolonged. Phenicia, here referred to, was a province of Syria on the Syro-Palestinian coast of the Mediterranean, extending northward from Mount Carmel one hundred and thirty miles in a strip of land bounded by the Lebanon range. It included Tyre, Sidon, Barytus (Beirut), and other cities. Cyprus is the large island, distant sixty miles from the Phenician coast, noted at that period for its productions and commerce, and for the luxury of its inhabitants. (See map, p. 61.)

After the dispersion of the disciples at Stephen's death these two populous regions were ultimately reached, and the gospel preached to the Jews. But we learn (v. 20) that some of these preaching disciples, natives of Cyprus and of Cyrene in Lybian Africa, were moved by the Spirit to go to Antioch and there to preach to *Greeks*. They were prompted, we can hardly doubt, by tidings of what had occurred in Cesarea; for their movement followed close upon Peter's ministry in the house of Cornelius. The method employed was the preaching of

a personal Saviour, telling the story of Christ. Peter and Stephen to the Jerusalem Jews, Philip to the Samaritans and the Ethiopian, Peter to the Gentile company of Cornelius, and now these unnamed disciples to the Greeks of Antioch, alike dwelt upon the facts of Christ's person and history. They unfolded the truths of salvation incarnated in his serving life, his suffering death, and his triumphant resurrection and ascension. And as before, so now, "the arm of the Lord is revealed" as directing and energizing this ministry of men; so that "a great number believed and turned unto the Lord." Here we see the one only method of bringing truth and salvation effectually to men: man preaches peace by Jesus Christ, but *God* inspires and guides the preaching, and makes the truth preached quickening and sanctifying! B.

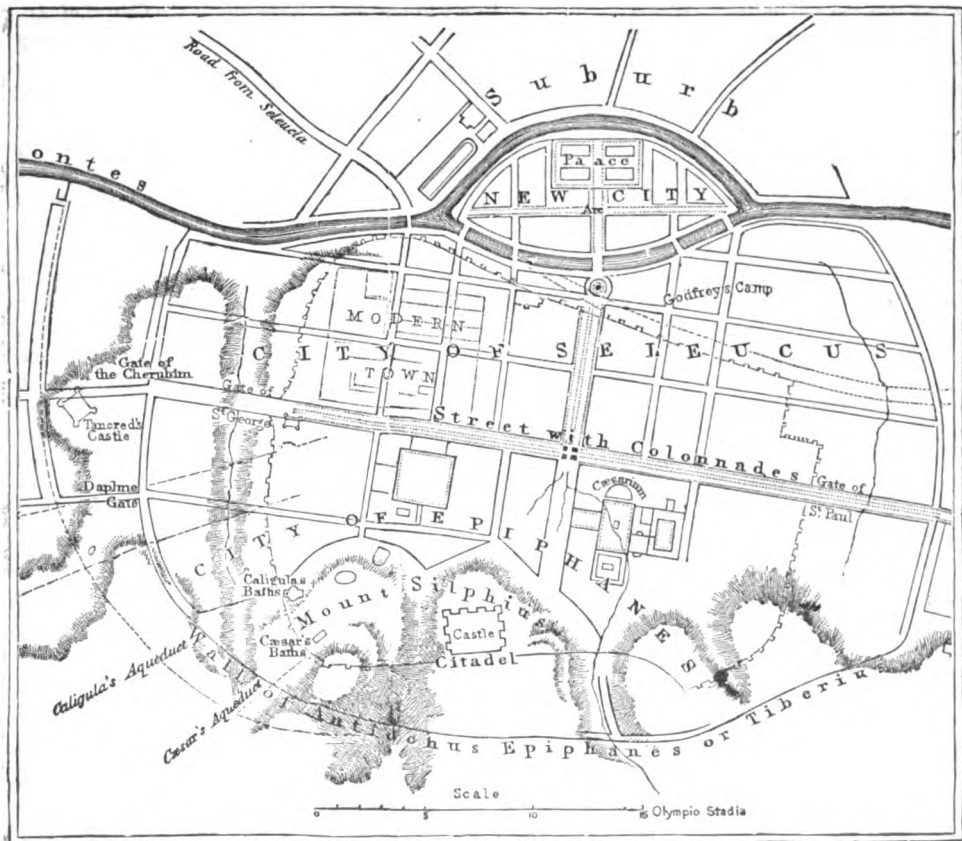
Hence we learn how much was accomplished in the first Christian propagandism by the easy, natural, and spontaneous influence of laymen. The first successes of Christianity in foreign parts were on this wise. Individual believers, dispersed abroad in the providence of God, imparted to others those glad tidings with which their own souls were gladdened. In those passages in the Evangelists and the Acts which relate to the promulgation of the Gospel, we find three several words, all of which are translated into our English word *preach*. The

original word in verse 19 is the very word we should have employed to describe simple conversation. Their hearts were full of Christ, and so they talked everywhere concerning him. It was with them as when the news of some joyful event is abroad in the city; it spreads in advance of all messengers, throbbing along amid high-wrought enthusiasm, reflected from the countenance and repeated from the mouth of all you meet. W. A.

22. Impression made upon the Mother Church in Jerusalem by the Tidings from Antioch.—They had learned that God had also given to the Gentiles repentance unto life. Here God summoned them to behold a great and marvelous work. He put upon them a new and vast responsibility. For Antioch was then one of the three or four greatest cities of the civilized world. Lying on the river Orontes, about twenty miles back from the north-eastern angle of the Mediterranean Sea, inclosed by the Taurus mountain range on the north and Lebanon on the east, by its harbor of Seleucia inviting the trade of the great sea, and through the open country beyond Lebanon accessible to the caravans

of the East, it had every advantage to attract multitudes of all classes from every portion of the world. It was now the residence of the Roman governors, as it had been the capital of the Syrian kings, from whom it had received grandeur and name. Of great size, with immense and costly public and private structures, with temples, groves, and gardens, attractive with statues and works of art, almost rivaling Rome in extent and variety of its population, and surpassing it in the luxurious abandonment and worthless character of the people, Antioch was at once the most brilliant and the most debased, the greatest and the worst of the Oriental Greek cities under the wide Roman rule. Many Jews had originally settled here, because unmolested in their religion.

Under the pressure of their responsibility for helping on the movement of God's Spirit in this great and wicked metropolis, the mother Church at once sent Barnabas thither. We remember him, first as Joses (Acts 4: 36), and next as the endorser of Saul to Peter and James. As a native of Cyprus and familiar with Antioch, himself also of Greek



Plan of Antioch.

origin, with a transparently beautiful character and high natural and spiritual endowments, the selection and trust were eminently wise.

Note here, however, that it is the *Church body* that *sends*, not the apostles; and that an unofficial *Church member*, not an apostle, is sent. From henceforth the apostles act as such only upon certain occasions which call for the exercise of their special commission from Christ. Thus it appears that the offices in the Church by Christ's appointment are limited to specific purposes, and always subordinated to the interests of the body of believers.

23, 24. *What Barnabas saw, felt, and did at Antioch, and what ensued.*—He saw that which he had spiritual vision to discern, and spiritual desire to look upon. He saw the fruits of the grace of God, in a multitude of souls "turned to the Lord," that is, *converted*. And spiritual vision and desire, through sympathy, naturally begat spiritual joy: *He was glad*. Yet further, his quick, glad, deep sympathy seeks and finds its true relief in active helpfulness. He enters at once upon a ministry of *instructive* exhortation. Only the key-note and substance of that exhortation is given us here. But it is very rich and full in its *instruction*.

Earnestly Barnabas counsels those who had *turned* unto the Lord to *cleave* unto Him with full *consecration* (so the word *purpose* implies) of *heart*. Cleaving or holding fast is only a keeping turned unto the Lord. Christ is the vital center of trust and of life; and through the heart's cleaving, or close living union, to Him, the soul's attachment and consecration is made firm and enduring. It is the old and always beautiful figure of the vine and its branches. Faith in the living Christ *turns* the heart to Him; and a grafting of the believer's life into His life holds fast the once-turned heart. But let it be always remembered that, as the graft *continues* to live by the unceasing transmission of sap from the nourishing stem, so the believer's life is *maintained* by *unbroken* communion with Christ. Personal love to a personal Saviour is *made living and fruitful by continuous personal communion with Him!* This is the one essential truth declared by Christ and by all these primitive preachers in *preaching Jesus*.

The Christlike character of this "Son of Consolation" is here happily embodied in three particulars: his goodness of heart and life; the principle from which that goodness proceeded, faith; and the Divine agent who wrought the inward principle and actuated the outward life—who "worked in him to will and to do." Thus earnestly he taught the newly converted, and his inwrought faith and excellence confirmed his teaching. But the good effects were not limited to disciples. The same truths, so enforced by his manifest character through the

Holy Ghost, reached and converted multitudes besides.

25, 26. *A Year of Ministry in Antioch by Barnabas and Saul.*—The hope and prospect of a yet larger ingathering, and the promise of a great and permanent prosperity for the growing Church of Christ, prompted Barnabas to seek help. Naturally he turns to Saul. He had recognized a Divine purpose in Saul's conversion, and he, better than others, appreciated Saul's qualifications for effective ministry. Under divine impulse, therefore, and without conference with the apostles, he sought Saul in his home at Tarsus. Together they return to Antioch, and together minister to the increasing Church for "a whole year."

Thus gradually still, and by no appointment of men, is Saul brought into prominence. For not yet has he been specially commissioned by the Holy Ghost and ordained to his world-wide work. And thus simply, by the labors of two unordained disciples, was the mother Church of the Gentiles founded. Thus quietly, without notice or knowledge of men, was established a new and second center around which the great movements of the Church were to circulate. Thenceforth the Church of Antioch held the same relation to Gentile Christianity as that at Jerusalem held to Jewish Christianity.

Disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.—As a natural consequence, as soon as they were seen to be characterized by something distinctive, as compared with other sects or parties among the Jews, they received a name taken from their peculiar doctrines and practices. And since the faith, the love, and the hope of this body of believers was concentrated upon the person and work of Christ, it was especially appropriate that they should be called *Christians*. The name, doubtless, originated with the Gentiles, and was *distinctive* only, given neither in mockery nor opprobrium. B.—This much at least is evident, that they who called themselves His disciples must in a conspicuous manner have separated themselves from those who did not believe the gospel; that not only their regard for Jesus and their assent to his commands, but their confession of the Christ as their Lord and King, was the cause of their receiving such a name. *Van O.*

So from the world the Church received its best descriptive name; from heathen, in a heathen city, believers received their most appropriate and honorable title. "A Latin derivative from the Greek term for the Messiah, it is connected with the *office*, not the name, of our Lord." The term is derived not from JESUS, the *Saviour*, but from CHRIST, the *anointed* of God, referring to His appointed and accepted *work*. So believers are fellow-workers, not fellow-saviours, with him; *Christians* not *Jesuits*. For *their work* they "have an unction (anointing).



Modern Antioch.

from the Holy One." B.—Derived from the three-fold office of Christ, the Anointed One of God, to be Prophet, Priest, and King of the world, the name intimates the obligation of those who bear it to faith in him, to worship through him, and to obedience to him as the Christ, and it also declares their participation in his unction. The name *Christian* is also a protest against all religious titles derived from human leaders. This name was not given at Jerusalem, but at Antioch, a *Gentile* city—an intimation of the future diffusion of Christianity throughout the heathen world. W.—Before this, they were called by the Jews *Nazarenes*, or *Galileans*; and by each other, *disciples*, *believers*, *brethren*, or *saints*. But they now assumed the name of their great Leader. D.

27-30. *The Predicted Dearth, and the Christian Charity of the First Gentile Church to their Needy Jewish Brethren.*—The prophets here referred to were simply men specially inspired with helpful messages of various kinds. This message was a prediction, but its purpose was obviously helpful. The matter of verses 27 and 28 is introduced here only to set forth the charity of the Gentile Church that followed. In that charity, kindred with previous similar acts of the Jewish believers at Jerusalem, we see the unity of the Christian spirit. And what was in the beginning has been, is now, and shall be until need and relief become obsolete terms. Here, each was willing to give, and gave what he could. Judgment and conscience determined the measure of obligation, and each gave heartily; and the combined gift, the first evidence of their fraternal affection,

was sent by their teachers, Barnabas and Saul, to Jerusalem. B.

One of the two events in the life of Paul which give us sure marks of time, is his journey from Antioch to Jerusalem with Barnabas, on the occasion of the great famine under Claudius, about the time of the death of Herod Agrippa I.—an event which we can fix with certainty to A. D. 44; and the visit itself could not be later than A. D. 45. S.—They carried from Antioch a contribution to sustain the Christians of Jewish origin at Jerusalem through the famine. From Jerusalem, and from Jews, came forth the spiritual things wherewith the Gentiles at Antioch were enriched; they only obey a law of the kingdom when they load the returning train with temporal gifts for Christian Jews in Jerusalem. Such reciprocal charities were eminently fitted to break down the partition walls and blend all believers into one. Arnot.

30. Elders. Hitherto Luke had applied the word to the elders of the Jews; henceforth the Elders are officers recognized in the Church. Thus the Church almost insensibly succeeds to the Synagogue, and supplies its place. W.—The office of presbyter, or elder, was the only permanent essential office of the Jewish church, and as such was retained under the new organization, without any formal institution, and therefore without any distinct mention in the history, such as we find afterward in reference to the organization of the Gentile churches, where the office had no previous existence, and must therefore be created by the act of ordination. J. A. A.

Section 210.

Acts xii. 1-24.

1 Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth *his* hands to vex certain of the
 2 church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw
 3 it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of un-
 4 leavened bread.) And when he had apprehended him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered
 5 *him* to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth
 6 to the people. Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing
 7 of the church unto God for him. And when Herod would have brought him forth, the
 8 same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keep-
 9 ers before the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon *him*,
 10 and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying,
 11 Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from *his* hands. And the angel said unto him,
 12 Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy
 13 garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out, and followed him; and wist not
 14 that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. When they
 15 were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the
 16 city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through
 17 one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him. And when Peter was come to
 18 himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath de-
 19 livered me out of the hand of Herod, and *from* all the expectation of the people of the
 20 Jews. And when he had considered *the thing*, he came to the house of Mary the mother
 21 of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying. And
 22 as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. And
 23 when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told
 24 how Peter stood before the gate. And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she con-
 25 stantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel. But Peter continued
 26 knocking: and when they had opened *the door*, and saw him, they were astonished. But
 27 he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the
 28 Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James,
 29 and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.
 30 Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become
 31 of Peter. And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the
 32 keepers, and commanded that *they* should be put to death. And he went down from Judæa
 33 to Cæsarea, and *there* abode. And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and
 34 Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's cham-
 35 berlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's
 36 *country*. And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and
 37 made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, *saying*, It is the voice of a god,
 38 and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave
 39 not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.
 40 But the word of God grew and multiplied.

THE kingdom of God on earth is in real, vital connection with his kingdom in heaven; so that there is—shall we say?—a sympathy between them; so that when a saint is smitten on earth, there is a sensation conveyed to the upper sky. The Lord of saints and angels says, "*Saul, why persecutest thou me?*" a strange expression of the union of the "*King of Glory*" and his humble mortal friends! The mighty spirits that he has on high in his service take their share of interest in his kingdom below. Throughout the Scriptures we see them prompt to come down, in aid and in avengement of his oppressed saints.

There will be a time when *we* shall have to go out from the prison-house of mortality, and from the world itself. And let us seriously think what previous course, what habits, what spirit prevailing through our life, will be likely to terminate in our finding such a messenger appointed to be with us at that hour—appointed to be with us, and *not* to leave us—to accompany us in an immense and amazing journey; that,

whereas Peter came to be delightedly and collectedly sensible of the grand intervention when he found himself alone in the street, *we* may become sensible of the wondrous reality of it, by finding ourselves in the presence of saints, and angels, and their supreme Lord ! J. F.

1, 2. *The Murder of James by Herod Agrippa I.*—The three striking incidents of this chapter break for a moment the thread of the history. The connection is restored in the last verse. The killing of James and the taking of Peter occurred in Jerusalem *about the time* of the journey thither of Barnabas and Saul from Antioch. The closing verse records their return from Jerusalem to Antioch, after fulfilling their ministry as bearers of the first Gentile benefactions.

James, the older brother of John and son of Zebedee, was one of the three admitted into the closest intimacy with Christ. Yet concerning him we have scarcely anything distinctive ; no record whatever except in connection with his younger brother. And as his life, so his death is entirely unmarked by special record. Like John the Baptist, he was suddenly beheaded by an arbitrary king's will, to gratify others. In each case the royal murderer was a Herod, son and grandson of the great Herod who slaughtered many children in a vain effort to destroy Christ. James was the first martyr among the apostles. He drank of the Master's cup, and was baptized with his baptism of blood, as Christ had declared ; and was the first restored to Christ's abiding fellowship. B.

Herod Agrippa I. (here only referred to) was the son of Aristobulus and Berenice, and grandson of Herod the Great. He was sent to Rome on his father's execution, and was brought up with Drusus the son of Tiberius. On the death of Drusus, he found himself excluded from the emperor's presence, and was besides overwhelmed with debt. Returning to Palestine, he obtained through his sister Herodias the protection of Herod Antipas, who made him governor of Tiberias. But a quarrel soon took place, and, after strange vicissitudes and adventures, Agrippa returned to Italy. He attached himself to the young Caius (Caligula), and having been overheard to express a hope for his friend's speedy succession, he was thrown into prison by Tiberius, where he remained till the accession of Caligula, A. D. 37. The new emperor gave him the governments formerly held by the tetrarchs Philip and Lysanias, and bestowed on him the ensigns of royalty and other marks of favor, and he arrived in Palestine in the following year, after visiting Alexandria. The jealousy of Herod Antipas and his wife Herodias was excited by these distinctions, and they sailed to Rome in the hope of supplanting Agrippa in the emperor's favor. Agrippa was aware of their design, and anticipated it by a countercharge against An-

tipas of treasonable correspondence with the Parthians. Antipas failed to answer the accusation, and was banished to Gaul (A. D. 39), and his dominions were added to those already held by Agrippa. During the brief wild reign of Caligula, Agrippa continued his faithful friend, and used his influence on behalf of the Jews. Having paid the last honors to his patron's remains, he smoothed the path of his successor to the throne by his activity and discretion in carrying messages between the senate and the prætorian camp. Claudius rewarded him with the kingdom of Judea and Samaria, in addition to his tetrarchy, and thus the dominions of Herod the Great were reunited under his grandson (A. D. 41). S.

Herod Agrippa had courted the favor of the Jews. He had done much for them, and was preparing to do more. Josephus tells us that "he had begun to encompass Jerusalem with a wall, which, had it been brought to perfection, would have made it impracticable for the Romans to take it by siege ; but his death, which happened at Cesarea, before he had raised the walls to their due height, prevented him." That part of the city, which this boundary was intended to inclose, was a suburb when Paul was converted. The work was not completed till the Jews were preparing for their final struggle with the Romans. H.

He was the *only king* after the Great Herod, and the last one that *reigned in Jerusalem*. His son Agrippa received only a limited and qualified sovereignty. In this persecution of the Church at Jerusalem, Herod simply sought popularity as a means of power. To please the Jews, and aid his own plans, he directed the murder of James. And for the same reason he proceeded to take Peter also. B.—In his recollection of James, no such idea obtruded itself in his mind, as that the martyred apostle had ascended as a "*swift witness*" against him to the throne of Heaven. Whether he might suppose the departed saint did go, we can not conjecture ; but he thought he might send another the same road without danger of ever hearing of it again, except in the demoniac applauses of his mob. Peter would be easily found, and taken. He had not absconded from affright at the fate of his fellow apostle. Cowardice in behalf of his Lord had been shown *once before* ; but that was the *last time*. The death of his great Master, and the love manifested toward Peter after he rose again, had devoted Peter to die for him, whenever fidelity to his cause should require the sacrifice. J. F.

3-5. *Imprisonment of Peter and Prayer of*

the Church.—The arrest occurred early in the week following the paschal supper, during which only unleavened bread was eaten. By Jewish rules criminals could not be executed upon days of festival. Therefore Herod, intending a *public* execution, kept him until after the Passover feast was concluded. A quaternion was a detachment of four soldiers, constituting a watch. As there were four night-watches of three hours each, four quaternions were required. In the actual guard two were stationed at the gates, and two in the apartment with the prisoner. In Peter's case, a chain from either arm was linked to a soldier on either side. So securely "Peter was kept in prison."

"*But prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him.*" This fact is thus prominently set over against the other. Peter's rescue was humanly impossible, as the disciples knew. But they also knew that nothing was impossible with God, and that Peter's danger grew out of his faithful ministry for God. And they believed therefore that God would somehow answer the prayer he had bidden them to offer. So they prayed, earnestly, importunately; desisting not day by day through those remaining days of the trying of their faith. And God, who had delayed both the extreme peril and deliverance of Peter, thus gave the Church opportunity to intercede, and, in the result, occasion to know the efficacy of prayer. The sudden killing of James prevented such intercession for him. The deferring of Peter's death was taken full advantage of, and in the only method of help or hope available to them.

6-11. Peter's Miraculous Release, and his Correct Judgment concerning it.—The time of this release is to be carefully noted. It was not only the night before Herod's proposed public murder, but it was in the fourth watch or during the *last three hours* of that night. This we know from the fact that the escape was not discovered until the morning, when the fourth watch was relieved. But *last night*, as it was known to be by Peter, with no outlook of human hope for the morrow, he had laid him down between the two soldiers, and was enjoying the peaceful sleep of God's beloved. Once he had heard the word: "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." With Christ's doing, whatever it should be, he was content.

While thus quietly sleeping the sleep of faith, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared beside him, and a supernatural light shone within the room. With strong grasp Peter is awaked and lifted to his feet, while his chains fall silently to the ground. Then, as bidden, he fastens his girdle, binds on his sandals, puts on his cloak or outer garment, and in half stupor follows the angel out. Between the first guard (of sleeping soldiers) and the second, and then through the outer iron gate, without human touch

noiselessly opening before them, they pass. Onward through one street the silent angel accompanies the bewildered apostle, then suddenly disappears.

By the fresh night air aroused from his bewilderment, Peter at once discerns the divine hand and purpose in his deliverance. His trusted Lord had sent a releasing angel, and thus foiled the purpose of Herod and disappointed the murderous spirit of the Jews. For reasons which we may conjecture, he determines, before concealing himself from Herod's pursuit, to acquaint the disciples with the fact of his miraculous rescue. With this purpose he seeks the house of Mary, Mark's mother, one of the homes where Christian believers were wont to assemble for private worship. The Mark here referred to is the author of the second gospel, and son in the faith to Peter.

12-17. How Peter was received by the Gathered Disciples.—Far as it was into the night, these wrestling seekers were praying still. It was the *last* night and their last opportunity to pray. For many days and nights their pleas had been ascending, and no answer had come. But not content with *asking* and *seeking*, they continued, almost against hope, in *knocking* at the door of divine mercy, with their urgent entreaty for help. And now while they are still speaking, God's answer, in the person of the released apostle, stands knocking at their house door. Yet, strange to say, when first they are told this by the maid who had responded to the summons and heard Peter's voice, they did not, could not believe. It seemed to them too *marvelous* to be true. They knew not of the miracle, and expected none; but they knew that nothing save miracle could avail. In their amazement they fell back upon an old popular notion, and said it must be Peter's guardian angel assuming his guise.

But God's answer, Peter himself, *continued knocking*. So in a body, passing through the court to the gate, they open the small door and are amazed to behold the apostle. But he, instantly quieting their outburst of gladness, simply tells the story of his deliverance by *the Lord*, and they learn how their fervent intercessions *have been answered*. Their hearts are comforted, and their faith and patience strengthened. Thenceforth more earnestly they can pray; more faithfully labor or trustingly endure for a Lord so mighty and gracious.

With a message to James, our Lord's own brother, acquainting him with what occurred, Peter takes leave of these disciples, and, because he knows it is God's will, goes to some place of concealment. And it may be added that Peter now retires finally from whatever prominence he had previously had, while this James presides over the councils of the remaining apostles. B.

Peter's work is not ended. He will still labor

much, till his last and fruitful labor of martyrdom ; but since he has given to the evangelization of the world an impulse which will never be arrested, his part is no longer the same. If henceforth anything distinguishes him, if any preëminence can be claimed for him, it is that of humility. Who can read, who has ever read the letters of this holy apostle, without being struck with this character above all others ? Where is the impetuous Simon who strikes the high priest's servant ? Where the presumptuous Simon who dares to say to his Lord, "Though all should deny thee, yet will not I deny thee" ? Where also is the Simon who denied his Master and his Friend ? I now find only a man emptied of himself, and wholly full of his Saviour ; a grave, meek, pious, modest servant of God and man ; an admirable model of humility and candor. A. V.—He has achieved much—exactly that for which he was fitted. He has stood bravely in the front, and has both led and inspired the band of disciples in their aggressive work for the Master. But now his special mission is done. Another, more broadly qualified by nature and training, Christ will now take up, to do for Him another larger and as brave a work. B.

20-23. In the fourth year of his reign over the whole of Judea (A. D. 44) Agrippa celebrated some games at Cesarea in honor of the emperor. When he appeared in the theatre on the second day in a royal robe made entirely of silver stuff, which shone in the morning light, his flatterers saluted him as a god ; and suddenly he was seized with terrible pains, and being carried from the theatre to the palace, died after five days' agony a loathsome death, like those of the great persecutors Antiochus Epiphanes and his own grandfather. The miraculous and judicial character of his death is distinctly affirmed by the sacred historian : "Immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory." The Greeks of Sebaste and Cesarea, with his own soldiers, showed brutal exultation at his death, and the censure which the riot brought down from Claudius upon the Roman soldiers embittered their feelings toward the Jews to such a degree, that Josephus regards this as one of the chief causes of the Jewish war. S.—After his sudden and miserable death, his whole kingdom was again made a Roman province, ruled by procurators, two of whom, Claudius Felix and Porcius Festus, figure in the Acts of the Apostles. The last procurator was Gessius Florus, under whom the tragical fate of the Jewish nation, so long in preparation, was finally decided. P. S.

23. The angel of the Lord led forth Peter ; the angel of the Lord struck Herod. That both acts were done by angels, mortals saw not ; it was known only to the saints. Beng.—Luke, as a physician, was qualified to scrutinize natural causes, and was not at all likely to be credulous. He among the

evangelists who was least likely to be carried away by a superstitious belief in supernatural agency, has been employed more than any other sacred writer to reveal to us the operations of invisible beings in the history of the Church. W.

24. The death of Herod relieved the Christians from persecution. But in their turn the Jews were troubled. The brief conciliatory rule of Herod was then finally exchanged for the rigorous tyranny of Roman governors. And the Jewish historian notes *this providence in Herod's sudden death* : that the third wall, which as planned by him would have made Jerusalem almost impregnable to the Roman assault, was left incomplete. So God rules ! Peter lives and Herod dies. And the persecuted Church, delivered from the persecutor, again finds rest and prosperity. *The Word of God grew and multiplied !*

Suggested Thoughts.—Christ directs all events in the interest of his people. Neither human nor satanic scheme or endeavor can avail to thwart his purpose or shake his "all power in earth." So all things *must* work together for good both to the trusting believer and the praying Church. Yet he has *his own way* in actually bringing good to pass, and uses *various ways*. Not always *one way*, or the way that seems to us the wise and suitable way. For he suffers a John Baptist, a Stephen, and a James to be murdered that human malice may be gratified, while he interposes to rescue a Peter and Paul. Yet how clearly do we see that his high and only blessed purpose is equally accomplished by the martyrdom of those and the deliverance of these ! And throughout the history of the Christian believer and Church, we read the single sure lesson : that his non-interference or his interference with human schemes is controlled by an unerring wisdom and an unflinching love.

An effective practical exposition have we here of Christ's teaching, *that men should pray and not faint*. Only one other prayer-meeting like this, in the importunity and persistence of the pleaders, do we find in this whole history. That one preceded and helped to bring the Pentecostal baptism. This one secured the very blessing they so fervently and continuously besought. And can any doubt that God hears and answers such prayer from every *seeking and knocking two or three gathered in his name* ?

An assuring truth is beautifully suggested in this prison-visit of the angel to the sleeping apostle. Not indeed by conscious spirit-ministers, but by providential interpositions and spiritual suggestions, does every child of God partake his personal watch and guard, and experience *many wonderful deliverances*. At the end, rather in the *beginning* of the true life, we shall read his doings now unknown, and adoringly praise his always rescuing and finally delivering grace ! B.

Section 211.

Acts xii. 25 ; xiii. 1-18.

25 AND Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled *their* ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark.

1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers ; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which
2 had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I
3 have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia ; and from thence
5 they sailed to Cyprus. And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God
6 in the synagogues of the Jews : and they had also John to *their* minister. And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew,
7 whose name *was* Bar-jesus : which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man ; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.
8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to
9 turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, (who also *is called* Paul,) filled with the
10 Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, and said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, *thou* child of the devil, *thou* enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways
11 of the Lord ? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord *is* upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a
12 darkness ; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy,
13 when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord. Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia : and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.

WE enter upon the *second* great division of the Acts. The *first* (chs. 1-12) described the advent of the Holy Ghost ; and, under his inspiration, the founding of the Christian Church *among the Jews* of Jerusalem and Judea, and the extension of Christianity into Samaria and among the nearer Gentiles. The chief result among the heathen was the founding of a second prominent Christian Church *among the Gentiles* of Antioch in Syria. This had been mainly the work of Barnabas and Saul.

The *second* division of the Acts recounts the chief features of the fuller, more distinctive introduction of the gospel among the Gentiles of Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome. It follows, therefore, mainly the career of Paul, Christ's special messenger to these Gentile nations. By comparing with this history of Luke Paul's own statements in his epistles, that incomparably signal career may be fully understood. This second half of the book also divides itself naturally into the *twelve years of Paul's active missionary work*, and his *five years of labor in captivity*. The twelve years of liberty include his *Three Missionary Journeys*. *Times and periods should be definitely marked* as a basis for an intelligent study of these Journeys. The periods and in-

tervals referred to cover a duration of *years*, where the brief fragmentary accounts seem to indicate *months*. The *First Journey* (chs. 12 and 14) probably extended over a period of *two years*. Then succeeded an interval of *two years* or longer, spent mainly with the mother Church of the Gentiles at Antioch. Toward the end of this interval occurred the council at Jerusalem, where the great question of the relation of Gentile Christianity to Judaism was decided (ch. 15). The *Second Journey* (chs. 16-18) occupied about *three years* ; and the *Third* (chs. 19, 20) almost *four years*. These are the most probable periods.

But it should be remembered that the Book of Acts furnishes no basis for a detailed chronology. The principal dates are largely hypothetical. Paul's conversion is set down by scholars all the way from 33 to 41 A. D. The dates 35 or 37 A. D. are most largely accepted. The interval between his conversion and his setting apart for labor among the Gentiles is also variously estimated. Assuming 46 A. D. as the latter date, this interval, spent in preparation for his great life-work, extended nearly or beyond ten years. B.—Not Jerusalem, but Antioch, not the Holy City of God's ancient people, but the pro-

fane city of the Greeks and Romans, is the place to which the student of sacred history is now directed. During the remainder of the Acts of the Apostles our attention is at least divided between Jerusalem and Antioch, until at last, after following Paul's many journeys, we come with him to Rome. H.

The relation of Paul to the two great Churches, the Jewish Christian of Jerusalem and the Gentile Christian of Antioch, should be carefully borne in mind. While his personal connection and his labors are exclusively with the Gentile Church, while Antioch is his point of departure and return, yet after every journey he goes also to Jerusalem, and recounts to the mother Church and its leaders the progress of the Divine work. Thus keeping up a close intercourse between the two great centers, he was himself a bond of union to the entire Christian Church.

1-3. *The Call and Send.*

ing of the First Foreign Missionaries.—Antioch (in Syria), situated at the northeastern angle of the Mediterranean shore, long a flourishing city with a large mixed population, was now the eastern head-

Antioch. There was everything in the situation and circumstances of this city to make it a place of concourse for all classes and kinds of people. By its harbor of Seleucia it was in communication with all the trade of the Mediterranean; and, through the open country behind the Lebanon, it



Paul's Gate, from the Interior. (The road from Antioch to Aleppo passes through the ancient gate now called Bab Paulos, or Paul's Gate.)

was conveniently approached by the caravans from Mesopotamia and Arabia. It was almost an Oriental Rome, in which all the forms of the civilized life of the empire found some representative. Through the first two centuries of the Christian era, it was what Constantinople became afterward, "the Gate of the East." H.

As we have already learned, this great mart of the nations had readily received the gospel, and organized a strong, distinctively Gentile Church; the only one that compared in vigor and efficiency with the mother (Jewish) Church at Jerusalem. Naturally this Gentile Church at Antioch became the starting-point of missionary effort among the Gentiles. The *self-development* (of course under Divine influence) of this new movement appears in the simple account.

B.—We now hear, not of the



Distant View of Antioch, from the Aleppo Road.

quarters of Imperial Rome. B.—Antioch was founded by Seleucus, and called after his father's name. He is said to have built in all nine Seleucias, sixteen Antiochs, and six Laodiceas. But by far the most famous of these cities was the Syrian

mother Church only, but of churches in other parts. And in this multiplication of churches, let us not fail to observe how the Spirit, in his manifold gifts and strength, asserts his independence of mere official coöperation of men. The founding and

ruling of the Church, the orderly assembly of believers, is bound to the appointed offices and officers in the Church ; but the spread of the gospel from heart to heart, from the living voice to the pricking conscience, is not thus bound. Every Christian is not a church officer ; but every Christian is a witness of Christ, and, if need so be, a missionary of Christ to his brethren. A.

It is while the Church and its leaders are engaged in worship and fasting for *some special object*, that the direction of the Holy Ghost comes to them. Christ's great commission they must often have pondered. The missionary spirit of the gospel, exemplified by the Church at Jerusalem, must have been begotten among them. Their new name of *Christians* must have impressed a new sense of responsibility for extending the truth and power of Christ among their own peoples. In a word, they must have reached a pondering, questioning state respecting their duty in this matter ; and this great question *may* have been that which engaged them now in special worship and fasting, when the summons of the Holy Ghost was received. *How* the will of the divine Spirit was made known, does not appear. But it *was* distinctly communicated. A specific work is referred to, and definite persons are designated as divinely appointed agents in this work. Obedient to the direction, the Church at Antioch, in connection with another service of prayer and fasting, laid their hands on Barnabas and Saul, and sent them forth upon the first divinely organized mission to the Gentiles.

Of the five persons mentioned in the first verse, one, Manaen, is noted by Luke as having been in childhood the foster-brother of Herod Antipas, the murderer of the Baptist, and the mocker at the arraigned and bound Christ. Herod was now a de-throned, wretched exile upon the banks of the Rhone. The note is appended seemingly to emphasize the contrast in character, life, and destiny between the two foster-fellows—one a despiser, the other a disciple, of Christ.

In reference to the transaction narrated in the second and third verses, two things are to be carefully observed :

1. This *was not* Paul's call to the *apostleship*, but his summons by the Holy Ghost to the *exercise* of the gifts and functions of that office. The Scriptural facts pertaining to the apostolate of Paul and of the Twelve are strikingly similar. Christ personally called the Twelve, as by miraculous personal manifestation he called Paul. He trained and exercised the Twelve in a preliminary period of instruction and of itinerant practice in preaching, as he similarly trained and practiced Paul. Not until the Twelve were specially endowed with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and were called by Him, did they

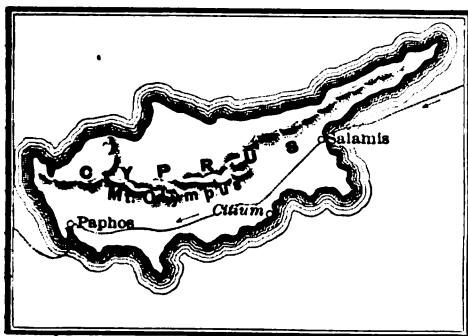
enter upon the exercise of apostolic functions. And not until Paul was now similarly endowed and called by the Holy Ghost did his work as an apostle begin. Thus Paul's experience corresponds precisely with that of the Twelve. Only his natural gifts and acquired culture were superior, and his special training during his retirement and early ministry occupied a longer period. So that his whole preparation was more thorough and complete, as demanded by the higher, broader work with which he was intrusted by the Master.

2. In this transaction we see also the *agency of the Church at Antioch joined with that of the Holy Ghost*. This double agency, the human with the Divine, is employed simply and only in connection with a *work*. This action of the Church had reference to a *work* to be done by those previously appointed of God to the office. The act of laying on of hands was designed not to confer the Spirit nor to impart authority, but was a *sign in recognition* of the Spirit's appointment and of his designation to this mission. And for the wisest reasons, the same combined agencies are always demanded in the actual sending forth to the ministry of the gospel. A brotherhood of believers, either directly or through their official leaders and representatives, must have reasonable assurance of a Divine call to the office, before they can properly set apart and send forth any to actual service in the ministry of Christ. And none may rightly go forth to such ministry except through the warrant of such *double* sending of the Spirit and the Church. So it is said here, that the Church sent them away ; yet it is immediately added, "they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed."

4, 5. *Their Missionary Ministry is begun at Salamis in the Island of Cyprus*.—From Seleucia, fifteen miles distant from Antioch, Barnabas and Saul sailed to Cyprus, landing at Salamis, a chief city on the eastern side. B.—As Antioch had been chosen as the second resting-place of the Church because of its Gentile character, it was natural that the missionaries should be guided by the Holy Ghost, not eastward, to the land of primitive history and of the springs of Judaism, but to the west, where lay the Gentile world with its intellect, and its arts, and its arms, to be won for the gospel of Christ. Westward—but whither ? As they stood on the coast looking seaward, the native island of Barnabas lifted its blue hills in the horizon. The guidance of the Spirit fell in with the yearnings of the apostle's heart, and Salamis in Cyprus witnessed the opening of the first missionary teaching. A.

Cyprus lay in a through route to Asia Minor, which was the nearest unvisited sphere of missionary labor, and therefore the next in order according

to Christ's command. Cyprus itself had long before, probably soon after Pentecost, received the gospel; and Christian disciples were there. Hence no note occurs of any stay or success there on the part of the two missionaries. Of necessity they passed through the island on their way to the mainland, and they labored as they went. They preached exclusively in the synagogues on this island. And everywhere it was Paul's custom to go *first* to these Jewish centers, and to *stay there* until his message was *openly rejected*. Two reasons he had for this course. There were the *Jews*, ever the objects of



Island of Cyprus. (About 140 miles long, with a breadth of 40 miles for its greater portion.)

God's first choice and care, and still, by Christ's command, the first recipients of the *glad* tidings. And in the synagogues were the *Gentile proselytes*: men who had renounced heathen notions and practices, and were seeking a knowledge of the true God. These proselytes formed a needed link for a ready transmission of the gospel to the Gentiles. For these reasons, the synagogues afforded the most suitable places and the best opportunities for their Christian ministry.

6-12. *The Judgment upon Elymas the Sorcerer, and its Effect upon the Roman Deputy.*—Paphos, on the western end of Cyprus, the city where Venus is fabled to have risen from the sea, and noted throughout Greek history as the temple center of her infamous worship, was now the residence of the Roman deputy, or *proconsul*. Here, and through this chief man, was opened the first door of access to the Gentile world.

Luke's accuracy in the use of the differing titles of the Roman provincial governors is instructive. In consolidating his imperial rule, Augustus, that he might leave some semblance of the old republican authority and yet retain exclusive control of the *army*, divided the numerous provinces into two classes. The government of one class—the provinces where a peaceful administration could be secured without soldiery—he relinquished to the Senate and people. In the *title* of the governors of these *Senatorial*

provinces, *Proconsul*, was reproduced the name of Consul, which had long represented the Senate's administrative power. The second class of provinces was known as the *Imperial*, and of these Cesar retained absolute control. In these were quartered bodies of military under the command of Cesar's governor. As the Emperor's representative, this governor was called *Proprator*, from a name (*Prætor*) long the symbol of supreme personal authority and of military command. He was also called in the larger provinces (as in Syria) the *Legate*, or commissioner of the Emperor; and in subordinate districts (as in Judea) the *Procurator*, or high steward. All these distinctions are accurately noted by Luke in both "treatises." Here the term used indicates a proconsul of a senatorial province. And we learn that in 27 B. C. Cyprus had been relinquished by Augustus to the control of the Senate.

This Sergius Paulus is characterized as a man of intelligence. Yet, like many of the Roman patricians of his time, he was credulous because bred in superstition. Reaching out on every side for a larger knowledge of hidden things, he encouraged pretenders to occult learning and professors of the magic arts. Such a one is introduced to us here, a renegade Jew and an impostor, falsely claiming superhuman inspiration and the power of magical working. From him the deputy turns away to these new teachers, in his unsatisfied thirst for a fuller disclosure of truth. Seeing how strongly the proconsul is impressed by the words of the apostles, this Bar-jesus (in the Arabic form, Elymas), the *magian* or wise man (rather than *sorcerer*), interposed with sophistries and denials to counteract the effect of truth from heaven. But this form of opposition, like that of violent persecution, is also overruled by God as a means of greater good. Where truth and falsehood are in open conflict, as here, the result is never doubtful; for truth is God's, and He will maintain its supremacy.

An issue so sharply made, between the two respective agents of the Evil Spirit and of the Holy Ghost, needs at this important juncture an instant and decisive settlement. Therefore, by inspiration, Paul in the presence of the governor at once denounces this Bar-jesus, or *son of the Saviour*, as the *child of the devil*. This apostate Jew, who was accounted by cultured yet deceived Romans as a revealing seer and sage, the apostle charges with an excess of deceit and mischief; declaring that he is an enemy and perverter of all truth and righteousness. And he pronounces God's instant judgment upon his daring impiety in withstanding the truth. The fulfillment of this judgment of temporary blindness followed. So the evil spirit in the person of Elymas was vanquished by the good through the agency of Paul. And the punishment so suited to

the offense—the seeking to blind others—suited too to the reformation of the offender, was also adapted to impress and convince the lookers-on. It so affected the governor that he received the word of Paul as the word of life. Whether he became a personal convert and Christian disciple, we are not informed; but the inference that he did so acknowledge Christ is a reasonable one.

The *fact*, merely, of the apostle's change of name, from Saul to Paul, is here stated. So long as restricted to labor among the Jews, he retained the Hebrew name, *Saul*. Throughout his apostolic ministry to the Gentiles, he was known under the Latin and Hellenistic equivalent name of *Paul*. The change is noted here at the turning-point of his life and work, in direct connection with the first prominent Gentile convert. As double names are common in the New Testament among Jewish disciples, both names may have been his from infancy. But from thenceforth onward, upon the name and ministry of PAUL is concentrated the deepest thought, the highest, most grateful appreciation of Christian believers in every age.

13. From Cyprus to Perga. Return of John Mark.—From the island home of Barnabas they sailed northward to the mainland of Asia Minor; up the river Cestrus seven miles to Perga, in the district or province of Pamphylia. This region adjoined Cilicia, in whose chief city Paul was born; and in the principal portions of which he had previously labored among the Jews. It is no longer Barnabas and Saul, but *Paul and his company*, or *those around him*; intimating his new central position and prominence, which continued to the end of his career.

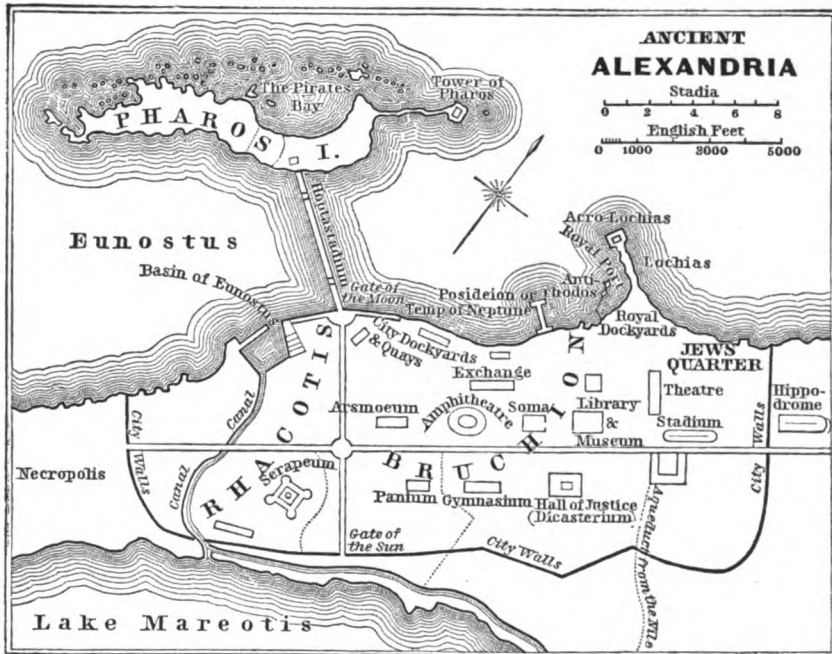
John, whose surname was Mark (the author of the gospel), had accompanied Barnabas and Saul on their return from Jerusalem to Antioch. As their assistant he had gone with them through Cyprus and as far as Perga. Now he leaves them for his mother's home at Jerusalem. Whether discouraged at the prospect of privation and peril, or dissatisfied with the transfer of leadership from his uncle, Barnabas, to the younger Paul, or whether the double attraction of an older and stronger attachment, to his mother and to Peter his *father in the faith*, drew him back to Jerusalem, can not be determined. That Barnabas justified his departure, while Paul regarded it as unjustifiable, we learn from the subsequent quarrel and separation of these two missionaries, occasioned by Mark's withdrawal. The incident with its sequel illustrates the old lesson of human infirmity as characterizing the best of Christian men. It is pleasant to know that afterward Mark worked so heartily with Paul that, at the close of his ministry, this apostle expressed his highest esteem for the evangelist, and the warmest appreciation of his helpfulness. B.

SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL FACTS BEARING UPON THE MISSIONARY CAREER OF PAUL.

1. Greek Element in the Providential Preparation.—Two of the monarchical lines, descended from Alexander's generals, were the Ptolemies, or the Greek kings of Egypt, and the Seleucids, or the Greek kings of Syria. Their respective capitals, *Alexandria* and *Antioch*, became the metropolitan centers of commercial and civilized life in the East. Both became the residences of Roman governors, and both were patriarchates of the primitive Church. But before they had received either the Roman discipline or the Christian doctrine, they had served their appointed purpose of spreading the Greek language and habits, of creating new lines of commercial intercourse by land and sea, and of centralizing in themselves the mercantile life of the Levant. The Acts of the Apostles remind us of the traffic of Antioch with Cyprus and the neighboring coasts, and of the sailing of Alexandrian corn-ships to the more distant harbors of Malta and Puteoli.

Of all the Greek elements which the cities of Antioch and Alexandria were the means of circulating, the spread of the language is the most important. That language, which is the richest and most delicate that the world has seen, became the language of theology. The Greek tongue became to the Christian more than it had been to the Roman or the Jew. H.—Those remains which have come down to us are especially rich in the expressions of spiritual truth, and in terms which are adapted to illustrate the Bible, so that, though the doctrines of the gospel are new and divine, hardly a term required to be modified in order to adapt this language to the purpose of expressing them. In the time of Christ whatever was written in Greek became accessible to all who, by their religion (as the Jews), or their intelligence (as the Greeks), or their power (as the Romans), gave character to their age, or conferred distinction on their nation. J. A.

2. The Roman Element.—Rome's dominion was not a pervading influence exerted by a restless and intellectual people, but it was the grasping power of an external government. The idea of law had grown up with the growth of the Romans; and wherever they went they carried it with them. Wherever their armies were marching or encamping, there always attended them, like a mysterious presence, the spirit of the city of Rome. Universal conquest and permanent occupation were the ends at which they aimed. Strength and organization were the characteristics of their sway. Greek science and commerce were wafted by irregular winds from coast to coast; but Roman legions, governors, and judges advanced along Roman roads, which pursued their undeviating course over plains and mountains, and bound the city to the farthest extremities of the provinces. When all parts of the civilized world were bound together in one empire—when one common organization pervaded the whole—when channels of communication were everywhere opened—when new facilities of traveling were provided—then the Messiah came. The Greek language had already been prepared as a medium for preserving and transmitting the doctrine; the Roman Government was now prepared to help the progress even of that religion which it persecuted. The manner in which it spread through the provinces is well exemplified in the life of Paul: his right of citizenship rescued him in Judea and in Macedonia; he converted one governor in Cyprus,



was protected by another in Achaia, and was sent from Jerusalem to Rome by a third.

3. *The Jewish Element: The Dispersion.*—As the intellectual civilization of the Greeks and the organizing civilization of the Romans had, through a long series of remarkable events, been brought in contact with the religious civilization of the Hebrews, so the dispersion of the Jewish people made this contact almost universal in every part of the empire. Their dispersion began early, though early and late their attachment to Judea has always been the same. The first scattering of the Jews was compulsory, and began with the Assyrian exile, when, about the time of the building of Rome, natives of Galilee and Samaria were carried away by the Eastern monarchs; and this was followed by the Babylonian exile, when the tribes of Judah and Benjamin were removed at different epochs. H.—In Babylon and the neighboring region a multitude of them had remained after the close of the captivity. A colony of them had been planted at Alexandria by its founder, and there they became so numerous as to occupy two out of the five sections of the city, but were not confined to these quarters. In Egypt, in the first century of our era, there were not less than a million of Jews, constituting an eighth part of the population of the country. In the flourishing city of Cyrene they formed a large portion of the inhabitants. Nowhere, outside of Palestine, was the Jewish population more numerous than in Syria and Asia Minor. At Antioch they constituted a powerful body, and enjoyed there privileges analogous to

those of their brethren at Alexandria. From Syria they passed over into Asia Minor, forming settlements in all the principal towns. Besides the natural emigration from Syria, Antiochus the Great had transplanted to that region two thousand Jewish families from Mesopotamia. Among other places, Ephesus and Tarsus were noted seats of Jewish communities. In Crete, Cyprus, and other islands, there were synagogues crowded with worshipers. From Asia the Jews had found their way into the cities of Macedonia and Greece. Athens, Corinth, Thessalonica, Philippi, are among the places where were Jewish settlements. Jews were found in Illyricum, and early penetrated to the northern coasts of the Black Sea. The Jewish prisoners brought by Pompey to Rome afterward received their freedom. The district across the Tiber was principally occupied by them. An embassy of Herod to Augustus is said to have been accompanied by eight thousand Jewish residents of Rome. Among other towns of Italy, Caprea, and especially Puteoli, are known to have had a Jewish population. Apart from permanent residents of Hebrew extraction, Jewish merchants made their way to every place in the Roman Empire where there was any hope of profit from trade. Thus the Palestinian community, though still the religious center of all the Jews, comprised within its limits only a portion of this ubiquitous nation. Capable of making a home for himself anywhere, the Jew was specially adapted to the state "which was to be built on the ruins of a hundred living polities." G. P. F.



Provinces of Asia Minor.

(There are twelve divisions of Asia Minor commonly recognized. Three were on its southern coast, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Lycia; three on its western, Caria, Lydia, Mysia; three on its northern, Bithynia, Paphlagonia, Pontus; and three in the interior, Cappadocia, Galatia, Phrygia. Caria, Lydia, and Mysia constituted the Roman province of Asia, and it is in this limited sense that the word Asia is used in the New Testament—e. g., Acts 2 : 9; 16 : 6, 7. The seven churches in Asia (Rev. 1 : 4) accordingly were in this region, viz. : Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, though the last named was in Phrygia, and therefore farther inland than the rest. W. H. G.—After the Roman provincial system was established in Asia Minor, the boundaries of the provinces were variable. The two districts, Pisidia and Lycaonia, mentioned Acts 13 and 14, were politically attached to one or other of the contiguous provinces. Yet each had its chief town, which had been its capital: Antioch in Pisidia, and Iconium in Lycaonia. B.)

Section 212.

ACTS xiii. 14-52.

14 But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the
 15 synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the
 prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men *and* brethren, if ye
 16 have any word of exhortation for the people, say on. Then Paul stood up, and beckoning
 17 with *his* hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience. The God of this
 people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in
 18 the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out of it. And about the time of
 19 forty years suffered he their manners in the wilderness. And when he had destroyed seven
 20 nations in the land of Chanaan, he divided their land to them by lot. And after that he
 gave *unto them* judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the
 21 prophet. And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of
 22 Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years. And when he had re-

moved him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the *son* of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will. Of this man's seed hath God according to *his* promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus :

When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not *he*. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of *his* feet I am not worthy to loose. Men *and* brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled *them* in condemning *him*. And though they found no cause of death *in him*, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took *him* down from the tree, and laid *him* in a sepulchre. But God raised him from the dead : and he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again ; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, *now* no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he saith also in another *psalm*, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption : but he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.

Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins : and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets ; behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish : for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you. And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas : who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you : but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord : and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.

THE promise goes beyond "pardon," and proclaims "justification" as the portion of every man who believes. When "justified" as well as "pardoned," we are taken up to the level of the unfallen and sinless ; nay, we are treated according to the character and deservings of Him through whom the justification comes. We are made to stand where he stands, and to receive the righteous favor which he receives. Yes ; we are *justified from all things*. Our whole person is accepted ; and everything, great or small, that was against us is taken out of the way. All this simply in believing ! Not working, nor feeling, nor striving, nor wrestling, but simple believing. It is our believing that introduces us into the condition of justified men ; it is this believing that God acknowledges ; it is this believing that the conscience responds to ; for that which we believe is the one justifying thing, the one thing which is well-pleasing to God, and which pacifies the conscience. We have to do with a propitiation completed on the Cross. In *crediting God's testimony* to that propitiation, we *have* pardon ; and in *accepting the promise* annexed to the testimony, we *know* that we *have* it ; because God is true. *Bonar.*

14. The Pisidian Antioch lay a hundred miles north of Perga, on the central table-land. Like the Syrian Antioch, it was founded by Seleucus Nicator, one of the four successors to Alexander's divided kingdom, and named after his father, Antiochus. It was a considerable city, and had been made by Augustus a Roman colony. Its previous history, and the added distinction conferred upon it by the emperor, together with its connections with the east and west, rendered it a point of great importance in the extension and establishment of the Christian Church. Here, as in every considerable place in the Roman Empire, Jews formed part of the population, with Greeks, Romans, and natives. And, though few (as indicated by their *single* synagogue), they possessed great influence, and had made many proselytes, especially among Gentile women. This marked influence of the Jews appears in all the events of Paul's missionary career. On the first Sabbath in Antioch the Christian missionaries, as usual, first sought the synagogue. B.

15, 16. There are certain traditional peculiarities which have doubtless united together by a common resemblance the Jewish synagogues of all ages and countries. The arrangement for the women's places in a separate gallery, or behind a partition of lattice-work; the desk in the center, where the reader, like Ezra, may "open the book in the sight of all the people"; the carefully closed Ark (on the side of the building nearest to Jerusalem) for the preservation of the rolls or manuscripts of the law; the seats all round the building, whence "the eyes of all them that are in the synagogue" may be "fastened" on him who speaks; the "chief seats," which were appropriated to the "ruler" or "rulers" of the synagogue, according as its organization might be more or less complete—these are some of the features of a synagogue, which agree at once with the notices of Scripture, the descriptions in the Talmud, and the practice of modern Judaism. On their entrance into the building, the four-cornered Tallith was first placed like a veil over the head, or like a scarf over the shoulders. The prayers were then recited by an officer called the "Angel" or "Apostle" of the assembly. The sacred roll of manuscript was handed from the Ark to the Reader by the Chazan, or "minister," and then certain portions were read according to a fixed cycle, first from the Law and then from the Prophets. The Reader stood while thus employed, and all the congregation sat around. The manuscript was rolled up and returned to the Chazan. Then followed a pause, during which strangers or learned men who had "any word of consolation" or exhortation rose and addressed the meeting. And thus, after a pathetic enumeration of the sufferings of the chosen people or an allegorical exposition of some dark passage of Holy Writ, the worship was closed with a benediction and a solemn "Amen."

To such a worship in such a building a congregation came together at Antioch in Pisidia on the Sabbath which immediately succeeded the arrival of Paul and Barnabas. Proselytes came and seated themselves with the Jews; and among the Jewesses behind the lattice were "honorable women" of the colony. The two strangers entered the synagogue,

and, wearing the Tallith, which was the badge of an Israelite, "sat down" with the rest. The prayers were recited, the extracts from "the Law and the Prophets" were read, the "Book" returned to the "Minister," and then we are told that "the rulers of the synagogue" sent to the new-comers, on whom many eyes had already been fixed, and invited them to address the assembly, if they had words of comfort or instruction to speak to their fellow Israelites. The very attitude of Paul, as he answered the invitation, is described to us. He "rose" from his seat, and, with the animated and emphatic gesture which he used on other occasions, "beckoned with his hand." II.

17-39. In its method, this first recorded discourse of Paul resembled that of Peter at Pentecost, and the defense of Stephen. Each of the three speaks as a Jew to Jews; takes the Jewish history and Scriptures as the basis of the doctrines advanced; specially refers to God's choice and conduct and care of Israel, and to the prophetic revelation of a Messiah to come and to suffer; and each declares that the Messiah has come, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth; that he has suffered death and has risen again through the power of God. Paul here outlines the history until David's reign; then abruptly turns from it because *he has reached his theme*, God's crowning mercy and promise to David, *the actual advent of Messiah*. He cites the Baptist's testimony (as one well known and accredited by all Jews as a prophet) to Christ's true and sole Messiahship. Then he preaches *Jesus and the resurrection*, and adds a clear announcement of the central doctrine of Christianity, *justification by faith*. More sharply than either Peter or Stephen, he contrasts the latter with justification by law.

26-37. "*The Word of Salvation*" includes the *Crucifixion and Resurrection of the Messiah, Jesus*.—To you the saving word is sent, he says emphatically, for your sacred prophecies, being exactly fulfilled in his death and resurrection, demonstrate that Jesus is indeed the long-desired Messiah and Redeemer. Yet, he adds with reference to both the crucifiers and the friendly buriers of Christ, *unwittingly* they fulfilled all that was written of him; and this although the words of the prophets were heard by them every Sabbath. He does not excuse the rulers' guilt, neither does he sharply denounce it. His aim seems to be to press upon his hearers *their deeper responsibility in now receiving this knowledge* which Christ's crucifiers did not so clearly possess.

With the statement of the two facts (of crucifixion and the resurrection as disclosed in their Scriptures), he proceeds with a broader sweep of thought and in warmer tones of personal feeling to press *this word of salvation*, or these *glad tidings*, upon them. Not only was this the tenor of prophetic disclosure, but the sacrificial death and the resurrection, the eternal life and reign of Jesus

comprised the *very substance and complete fulfillment* of God's *original and oft-repeated promise* to the fathers. This grand point Peter and Stephen had made. From first to last Paul insists upon it. By sacrifice and ceremonial, by prophecy and promise, in history and psalm, through symbol and fact, through dark saying and plain, the entire Old Testament revelation comprises, as its one only theme, Messiah, the Son of God and Son of man, the self-moved offerer, the divinely appointed and accepted offering for the sin of man. His voluntary death, His self-resurrection, His quickening power and eternal sovereignty—these are included in the promise of mercy first to Adam, afterward to Abraham and his descendants, emphatically to David; these comprise the substance of all ancient revelation. They are the facts upon which we rest, and which make the Old Testament *one promise of glad tidings*, still of *vital force and value* to all who receive the Christ of God. So Paul teaches here, and so we must believe.

In verses 33 to 37, referring to prophetic promises in the psalms seemingly made to David and concerning him, he shows their higher reference to the resurrection of David's *Lord and Son*. As matching his own purpose here, in citing from the second psalm (v. 33), we may take Paul's assertion that Christ was "declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection of the dead." He shows from further passages that after resurrection Christ shall never die again (as David died and saw corruption), but will live and reign eternally. And in the light of this Messiah's unchangeableness of being, he illustrates the *certainty* of the *mercies* promised through him. In all these citations and statements, Paul is only adding to and enforcing the Scriptural proofs of Christ's resurrection and abiding life, because this was the main fact to be substantiated; first, as having been foretold, and next, as having been fulfilled. Upon this, as Paul elsewhere plainly asserts, hangs the entire truth of Christianity, and the sole hope of guilty man.

38, 39. *Remission of Sins and Complete Justification from the Condemning Hold of Law, the Sure Result of Faith in this Crucified, Risen, and Reigning Redeemer.*—In these and the previous verses we find the germ thoughts of the Epistles to the Romans and the Galatians. The manner in which Paul introduces this root doctrine of justification by faith is in keeping with its vital character. He uses a form of *bold and earnest proclamation*. He assumes the fact of their sinfulness. He says nothing *directly* of the way of forgiveness and justification. This he has distinctly hinted at in announcing Christ's death and resurrection as glad tidings, and as the fulfillment of God's great promise of mercy. But he emphasizes the fact that there is re-

mission of sin, and deliverance from the law's condemnation, in Christ, through His achieved redemption.

Forgiveness and remission of sins "through this one" (not this man) had been already preached by Peter and others. But they had said nothing about being *justified*, about a *sinner's being accounted righteous, or treated by God as though he were righteous*. Righteousness was the great text and theme of the Pharisees. But until this convert from their ranks uttered these words (v. 39), the true relation of a sinner to the law of perfect righteousness had not been expressly stated by any Christian teacher.

Scholars are agreed in changing a translation (v. 39) which *seems* to teach that the law does justify from some things, and Christ makes up the deficiency. Contrary to this, Paul says: "From *all* [sins], from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses, *by Him every one who believes is justified.*" The law justifies from *none*! Christ justifies the *believer from all*! Therefore *all effort* to keep the law *as a means of divine acceptance* is both useless and evil. *Faith*, which Christ calls a *work*, "the work of God" (or that God commands), a simple utter reliance upon His mercy in Christ, this is our part and our only part in the supreme matter of being accounted righteous and so treated by Him.

And this grand vital principle of justification by the heart's faith, now first clearly proclaimed, really gave to the sacrificial system of Moses all its meaning and utility. The sin-offering, prescribed and presented under the law to expiate even the smaller offenses, implied as the condition of its efficacy an underlying sorrow for the offense, and a *reliance* upon the *mercy* that accepted a *substitute*-sufferer in the offender's place. So, strictly speaking and most truly, the *law* of itself could *do nothing* for forgiveness or justification. The *lawgiver's* act alone accepted a substitute for the offender. Thus the Old Testament and the New are in accord upon this vital matter. The Jew, standing upon the ceremonial law of Moses, finds there the New Testament principle of forgiveness through a substituted sacrifice. Only in the ancient offering the victim was a typical one, and a true *spiritual* deliverance lay in the *offerer's faith* that God would provide a real and sufficient sacrifice.

Thus far in this first discourse (of which we have at least a complete outline) Paul proves the facts of the gospel from their familiar Scriptures. Earnestly he proclaims Christ's sacrificial death, resurrection, and eternal life, as God's *fulfilled promise* of grace, and therefore as glad tidings. And he urges their acceptance of this word of salvation, their personal trust in Christ, in order that they may be delivered from the law's condemning power. Jesus Christ, he says, is the Messiah of ancient promise.

In exact fulfillment of your inspired prophecies, He lived and died, He rose and lives for ever! Then, *believe in Him!* Or, if you will not *believe*, then *beware!* His closing word of warning, which, like Peter, he foreknows will be needful, is taken from Hab. 1: 5. The original prediction had been fulfilled by the Chaldees upon their fathers. He uses it again, thus strongly enforced by one fulfillment, to impress the tremendous peril impending over them. In little more than twenty years its second fulfillment came upon the whole Jewish people, for they renewed their rejection of God's mercy in the person and saving work of His own incarnate, risen, and reigning Son.

42, 43. *The Earnest Request and the Private Conference that followed Paul's First Discourse.*—According to the better reading, *all who had heard* (as they were leaving the synagogue) besought him to repeat his teaching on the next Sabbath. This request showed an intense interest on the part of the body of Jews and Gentile proselytes in the new doctrine of Paul. In many of both classes, so strong was their instantaneous faith, that they followed Paul and Barnabas to their tarrying-place, in order to receive further instruction. At once recognizing the grace of God that had wrought the faith, the missionaries simply but fervently exhorted these infant converts to continue trusting in and looking for the same Divine grace. This phrase, "grace of God," is here *first* presented in the large sense of reconciliation and redemption by Christ's saving work. In connection with a reliance upon this grace, the converts were also counseled to distrust and avoid self-righteous attempts at legal obedience. And the whole exhortation was in accordance with the great truths of Paul's discourse.

44, 45. *The Immense Gathering of Pagan Gentiles, and the Consequent Envy and Malice of the Jews.*—The intervening week had been one of general discussion of the strange doctrine, by all classes in the city. So, when the next Sabbath came, the apostles were greeted with an immense multitude of pagans anxious simply to hear the *wonderful words* which had been reported. They hungered for *truth*—"to hear the word of God"; for no mention is made of a single miracle, by which they might have been attracted. And this moving of almost a whole city was the effect of a single sermon, and of its widespread report by Gentile proselytes. Was not this ample assurance that God's time had come, and His purpose in the conversion of the Gentiles was now to be fulfilled?

But the Gentile multitudes, whose presence rejoiced the hearts of the missionaries and their true disciples, only stirred the Jews to envy. B.—Their spiritual pride and exclusive bigotry was immediately roused. They could not endure the notion

of others being freely admitted to the same religious privileges with themselves. This was always the sin of the Jewish people. Instead of realizing their position in the world as the prophetic nation for the good of the whole earth, they indulged the self-exalting opinion, that God's highest blessings were only for themselves. H.—And yet their own prophets had declared that the Messiah, "the glory of his people Israel," was also "a light to lighten the Gentiles." Now, inflamed by jealous envy and arrogance, with passionate violence of speech, they railed at and so blasphemed "the word of God spoken by Paul."

46, 47. *The First Plain Announcement of God's New "Election" of the Gentiles.*—The apostles meet the calumnies and blasphemies of the fanatical Jews with bold and sharp reply. "This Messiah whom you reject," say they, "bade us first utter the word of salvation to you. But since you will not receive it, since by your own act in deliberately rejecting it, you count yourselves unworthy of eternal life, He bids us turn to those who are now heeding his call." The words of self-pronounced verdict have only the simple but terrible severity of truth. They do but anticipate the self-conviction of all once enlightened but finally lost souls in the day of final judgment. They have *judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life!*

Paul and Barnabas turned from the Jews to the Gentiles in Antioch. And in many other places, this turning was subsequently repeated, and similar scenes were enacted. And now, for more than eighteen hundred years, God's covenant people have turned from their own Messiah, and "through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles." Yet we know that God hath not utterly "cast away his people" (Rom. 11). They shall be restored to the faith and joy of God, and be incorporated into the grand spiritual kingdom of Messiah on the earth. And, as in the earlier ages they were chosen as the medium of conveying God's light and promises to the world, so in the later ages their conversion shall furnish a sure testimony to the consummation of all prophecy and promise, in the latter-day glory of Messiah as King over all peoples.

48, 49. *This Antioch, also, became the center of a widespread and mighty Christian movement under the joint labors of the two apostles and their new disciples. "Throughout all that region the word of the Lord was published."* By so extended and successful a work among the Gentiles, first in the city, and afterward in the country around Antioch, did the Holy Ghost honor the very outset of their mission.

As many as were ordained to eternal life believed. The word here employed signifies more than mere disposition or preference. It in-

cludes the idea of determination. And the passive form of the word shows that this determination is exercised *upon* the subject by another. That other can only be, clearly is, God, who "worketh in" the believer "to will and to do." The fact here asserted is the *divine disposing* of these Gentile believers to eternal life. In this, as in other fuller and more explicit teachings, the intimation is conveyed that all things pertaining to salvation, like all providences bearing upon the earthly life, are ordered and arranged according to the purpose and by the power of God. *Believing*, then, is the effect of no accident or whim of man, of no purpose originating with man, unmoved from without. "No man can come to me," said Christ, "except the Father draw him." Rightly apprehended and gratefully received, this is a most inspiring and comforting truth.

But the connected truth, indicated in the injunction "Work out your own salvation," though not referred to here by Luke, always finds place in the exposition of God's working in us. For it intimates that the divine ordering neither annuls nor directly counteracts man's own agency in the matter of salvation, any more than in providences affecting the outward life. Every believer knows that he was *won*, not arbitrarily forced, to submission to the wiser, better will of God. Except the power of divine grace had first persuasively drawn his heart, he never would have submitted; so that gratitude was blended with gladness in his blessed experience of being "made willing." Both truths—God's determining or working in us, and our yielding yet working out our own salvation—are clearly revealed; the one to impress the supremacy of divine grace, the other to enforce the sense of human responsibility. And the opposite *results*, of faith and unbelief, may be thus summed up: God's determination, with which man's will is in unison, admits to the everlasting kingdom; while man's own sole inclination and decision excludes from the kingdom. And the personal consideration may be added, that though we can not harmonize the two revealed facts, of God's ordination to life and man's uncontrolled choice of life or death, yet any and every one may practically reconcile them by *believing*!

50-52. *Persecution, instigated by the Jews of Antioch, led the Two Missionaries to Iconium.*—This first great success aroused great opposition. So it

was ever afterward. "A wide door and many adversaries," is Paul's terse statement of a uniform fact in his entire experience.

The *chief* cause of offense, in this and subsequent persecutions, was not the preaching of the Cross and the Resurrection. It was *the extension, directly and without any condition, to the Gentiles* of the divine privileges and promises exclusively claimed by the Jews. This enraged both Jews and



Antioch in Pisidia.

proselytes, when they saw the Christian movement spreading widely and the Christian doctrine taking root among the people. It was easy to stir up the female proselytes, and natural to incite them to employ their great influence with the leading men to oppose this new and hated religion. And this fact, often repeated in Paul's history, finds singular corroboration in the statement of a writer (Strabo) familiar with the region of western Asia. He expressly states that in religious opinions the influence of the women was controlling with the men.

From the systematic persecution thus brought against the apostles, they retired to Iconium, on the western border of Lyconia, and on the confines of Pisidia, Galatia, and Phrygia. Not through fear, but in accordance with the express instructions of Christ, they withdrew, in companionship with their invisible Lord. But the persecution that compelled them to flee did not harm the Church they had planted. The same Lord who went with the rejoicing apostles to Iconium, remained with the new disciples at Antioch; so that they, too, were filled with joy in the Holy Ghost.

Persecution can not injure the cause or set back the course of truth. The periods of sorest trial have often been those of greatest progress to the Church. Opposition stimulates true Christian principle; it nerves courage and strengthens faith by evoking the prayer that brings the power of the Holy Ghost. B.

Section 213.

Acts xiv. 1-28.

1 AND it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the
 2 Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks be-
 3 lieved. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected
 4 against the brethren. Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which
 5 gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by
 6 their hands. But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and
 7 part with the apostles. And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also
 8 of the Jews with their rulers, to use *them* despitefully, and to stone them, they were ware
 9 of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the reigion that lieth
 10 round about: and there they preached the gospel.

11 And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his
 12 mother's womb, who never had walked: the same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beheld-
 13 ing him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, Stand upright
 14 on thy feet. And he leaped and walked. And when the people saw what Paul had done,
 15 they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to
 16 us in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, be-
 17 cause he was the chief speaker. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city,
 18 brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people.
 19 Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in
 20 among the people, crying out, and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are
 21 men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities
 22 unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are
 23 therein: who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he
 24 left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and
 25 fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. And with these sayings scarce re-
 26 strained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.

27 And there came thither *certain* Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the peo-
 28 ple, and, having stoned Paul, drew *him* out of the city, supposing he had been dead. How-
 29 beit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the
 30 next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had preached the gospel
 31 to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and
 32 Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the
 33 faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. And
 34 when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they
 35 commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. And after they had passed through-
 36 out Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. And when they had preached the word in Perga,
 37 they went down into Attalia: and thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been
 38 recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. And when they were
 39 come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with
 40 them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles. And there they abode
 41 long time with the disciples.

STILL, as at first, through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. To that end even our glorious Leader, the Captain of our salvation, is "made perfect," not in the infinite and eternal perfection of his nature, but in the perfectness of his condescending incarnation and mediatorial sympathy—made perfect "through suffering." Sublime mystery of God! Gracious wonder of our redemption! Why should we complain of the sorrow that we ourselves, by our disobedience, have created? of the sorrow that ends, not begins, our real misery? the sorrow that is as much the needed pathway and natural preparation of the joy of immortality with our Lord—joy that no eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived—as the night is the needed preparation of the morning, or hardship the natural path from the wilderness of the far country to the peace of the Father's house? F. D. H.

1-4. The district of *Lycaonia* extends from the ridges of Mount Taurus and the borders of Cilicia on the south to the Cappadocian hills on the north. It is a bare and dreary region. Of the whole district, Iconium was properly the capital; and the plain round Iconium may be reckoned as its great central space, situated midway between Cilicia and Cappadocia. This plain is spoken of as the largest in Asia Minor. H.—*Iconium* was a populous city on the western border of Lycaonia, on a main line of

communication between east and west. It has had a signal history since, and still exists as *Konieh*. Its extended connections and intrinsic importance led the apostles to remain for some months, until driven away by the persecuting Jews. (See map, p. 94.)

As at Antioch, the missionaries preached for a "long time" in the synagogue at Iconium. By the grace of *Christ* (here and throughout the Acts referred to as *the Lord*), they were enabled *so to speak* that a *great multitude believed*. More than this, the



Konieh—Ancient Iconium.

same Lord, in testimony of his presence, confirmed their words by miracles "done by their hands." Only here, and some years after at Ephesus, was this special confirmation of *many* miracles granted to Paul's ministry. In each of these cases, as in every *single* miracle, there was special call and fitness.

5-7. The wide division of sentiment among the entire population, which followed the long-continued faithful preaching of the apostles, shows what great results that preaching had wrought. Here the Jews succeeded in engaging the rulers and influential Gentiles in the persecution of Paul and Barnabas. Warned of the purpose to assault and stone them, the apostles fled to Lystra, in the interior wilds of Lycaonia. They fled, not from fear, but in obedience to their Lord's direction to continue their work elsewhere. But the seed was largely sown in Iconium. In some hearts it was left to grow; in others, the very persecution that drove the apostles away led to questionings and stirrings of conscience. So opposition helps, as well as hinders, a good cause. At Lystra, and afterward in Derbe, where were no Jews (therefore no synagogue), and but few of the more cultivated Greeks, "they preached the Gospel" for another considerable period. (See map, p. 94.)

8-10. *Healing of the Life-long Cripple at Lystra*.—Like the man at the Temple gate, similarly

healed by Peter, this one had never walked. Aside upon some thoroughfare, he was sitting—not begging, for he asked no alms. At that point, among others, Paul chanced to preach. The man not only heard, but his heart was opened, like Lydia's, to receive the words spoken by Paul. This the apostle saw, when his attention was drawn by the man's intent gaze. And it was in response to the *faith in Christ* which he discerned in the man's soul, that Paul, *in the very spirit and manner of the Master, and under His inspiration*, bade him test his faith by the attempt to stand upright. The test was sustained, and the man not only stood, but leaped and walked. The miracle was twofold: The withered members were made perfect, and without any previous practice he instantly put them to their highest exercise and use. So the man's faith led to the healing of the body, in addition to the saving of the soul. It was one of Christ's own familiar works, only done invisibly, through the instrumentality of his honored apostle.

11-13. *Worship offered to Paul and Barnabas*.—Besides the beneficent effects of the miracle upon the man himself, and in the assurance afforded to the new disciples, it greatly excited the rude superstitious people. Their gods were only deified men; and Jupiter, the mightiest among them, was the tutelary or protecting deity of their city. As was

customary, they had honored him by erecting either temple or statue, or both, outside but near the main gate. Mercury was the frequent companion of Jupiter in his expeditions to the earth. According to a then current legend (given at length by Ovid), these two divinities had visited in disguise Lycaon, from whom the name of the district was derived. It was natural, therefore, that this people should think that Jupiter and Mercury had come again to them in the likeness, or disguised forms, of Barnabas and Paul.

14-18. *The Missionaries' Intense Repulsion of such Worship, and Paul's Fervid Address.*—Rending their garments, as the strongest, most convincing expression of grief and horror, they ran in among priests and people. Then, as soon as attention was gained, Paul first earnestly expostulates, and then preaches such a gospel as they could understand. "We, too, are but men like yourselves, subject to all manner of suffering and disease, and to death! We come not here to receive divine honor, but to tell you of the true God!" From their unreal gods—"their vanities"—he turns their thoughts to the one Jehovah. To these ignorant, uncultured heathen, who deified certain forces of nature, or counted as gods imperfect men, he declares a personal God. This God he reveals as living and life-giving—the architect and builder of the visible universe, the patient ruler and wise disposer of nations, the gracious author of providence, the giver of every good gift. Nature and providence "witness" to the being, the working, and the bounty of such a personal, creative God. This, as Paul afterward wrote (Rom. 1 : 18-21), left them without excuse for their atheism. To no further statement or appeal were they susceptible. No knowledge had they of the Jewish Scriptures. Nor with these rude people could Paul's reasoning upon the facts of natural religion take even that broader grasp with which afterward he sought to reach the more cultured Athenians. Yet, with all that the apostles did and said, they with difficulty checked the proposed offering of sacrifice.

19, 20. *The Stoning of Paul and the Departure from Lystra.*—The same Jews who had driven the missionaries out of Antioch and Iconium, hearing of their successes, followed them to Lystra. Here they accomplished what they had failed in doing before. Easily persuading these credulous and fickle Lycaonians that the apostles were deceivers, and thus securing their participation, these Jewish emissaries stoned Paul in the streets of Lystra, dragged his supposed lifeless body through the city gate, and cast it forth without the walls. At Iconium, where many miracles were wrought in confirmation of their teaching, they were protected from stoning. Here the one miracle, which had occasioned the paying of divine honors, was followed by

this dishonoring treatment, as if to stamp a deeper conviction of the mere humanity of the man they would have worshiped.

They stoned Paul—not Barnabas. Signally is the controlling spirit and fervid zeal of the great Apostle manifest in this exclusive direction of the Jews' fury against Paul. In that affecting summary of his experiences (2 Cor. 11 : 25) he includes this: *Once was I stoned!* B.—Once he stoned another, and once he was stoned himself. What a crowd of memories must have rushed up when he felt his spirit swooning away under the stone shower! This would seem the echo of his own dread act. Stephen's heroic death must have left its mark deep on the heart of the converted Paul. *Arnot.*—As the disciples gathered, in grief and doubt, about his ruthlessly handled body, Paul rose up; and, for their confirmation in faith and courage, went with them again into the midst of his foes. That this was a merely natural recovery from so severe a stoning, is scarcely credible. Only God's special shielding protected that frail body from many a vital stroke. And only a supernatural restoration could instantly give back their use to the fearfully bruised members.

In this word, *disciples*, we have the first mention of converts in Lystra. Among these disciples, and probably one of Paul's converts at this visit, was Timothy. This we learn by comparing Acts 16 : 1 with 2 Tim. 3 : 10, 11, and 1 Tim. 1 : 2.

21-24. *Conclusion of the First Missionary Journey.*—Derbe, whither they went from Lystra, was the farthest eastern point they visited. Here they rested long, and preached in peace. And Paul's reference in 2 Tim. 3 agrees with the absence of any note by Luke of persecution in Derbe. After making many disciples, they returned homeward on the identical route of their previous journey as far as Perga. They could have taken the direct and much shorter route into the low plain of Cilicia, descending through the pass known as the "Cilician Gates," and have sailed from Tarsus to the Syrian Antioch. But the new disciples needed instruction, comfort, encouragement, and especially organization. Therefore they retrace their steps, and go again to the scenes of their persecution, to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch (in Pisidia). B.—Their specific task this time was different. They set themselves on this occasion to confirm the souls of the converts, and exhort them as to their subsequent course. The Christians in those places were already born, but they needed to be nourished into strength. The first necessity is to see that they are in Christ, and the next to see that they grow strong in the Lord. Corresponding with their specific object, the burden of the missionaries' preaching this time is, "*Continue in the faith.*" And for the rest,



ANCIENT LYSTRA.

(Lystra is identified with the ruins *Bis-bir-Kiliseh*, at the base of a conical mountain of volcanic structure, named the *Karadagh*. S.—The present ruins extend over a space of a mile in length and about three quarters of a mile in breadth. Besides a countless number of ruined houses, the ruins of more than twenty large buildings may be counted. Some of these are not seriously injured. It is plainly evident that all these buildings were constructed from the materials of a still more ancient city, and one of great splendor. This home of Timothy is unique for situation, as it must have been beautiful. The view across the plain to the walls of Iconium is extremely picturesque, and the disciple of Paul had but to climb the cliffs above his own house, to enjoy a splendid view of Lycaonia and parts of Cappadocia. L. H. Adams, 1871.)

the warning word rings clearly out, "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." *Arnot*.

This return journey through Pisidia and Pamphylia is memorable for the first record of the appointment of permanent officers, here called *Elders*, for the teaching and guidance, the comfort and gov-

ernment, of the churches. We have already had an incidental mention of such officers, even in the churches of Judea. Much more did the newly planted churches which Paul and Barnabas were leaving to themselves need to have the means of edification and order complete within themselves; and so they *ordained them ELDERS in every church*. S.

—Thus the young disciples were not left long without institutions and order. For edification, discipline, and defense, each community was constituted a corporation, and in each corporation elders were ordained. It was on the second visit of the missionaries that this was done. An interval was permitted to elapse that the fittest men might emerge; and already the rule, "Lay hands suddenly on no man," was practiced before it was prescribed. *Arnot.*

25-27. After tarrying also at Perga, to "preach the word," they sailed from the seaport Attalia, at the mouth of the Cestrus, direct for Antioch, their point of departure. Between two and three years had been occupied in this first missionary tour. Only some of the prominent events, enough to show the character and details of the entire work, are recorded in these two brief chapters. The breadth and depth of the sowing, and the reach and force of the results directly and ultimately achieved, can not be gathered from this mere outline.

The mother Gentile Church, now comprising sev-

eral churches, was convened to hear "all that God had done with 'its missionaries,' and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles." This was the first missionary meeting. And the whole Church had concern enough to come together and hear the new and marvelous story. Their interest was intensified by the fact that it was their own venture, as well as the first that had been undertaken among the Gentiles, and that it was a saving effort in behalf of their own peoples. Both the commission of Christ and the call of the Holy Ghost still make the missionary enterprise the cause of the Church, and still put its efficient support upon the conscience and heart of all Christian disciples. The rehearsal of the missionary's work has lost none of its interest to a true-hearted believer or Church. As the Divine agent who supervises and gives success to missions, the Holy Spirit still opens the door of faith unto all peoples to whom *He* sends preachers of the truth.

28. In Antioch, Paul and Barnabas returned to their old ministry, and remained quietly at their toil for about two years. B.

Section 214.

Acts xv. 1-29.

- 1 And certain men which came down from Judæa taught the brethren, *and said*, Except ye
- 2 be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and
- 3 Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and
- 4 elders about this question. And being brought on their way by the church, they passed
- 5 through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused
- 6 great joy unto all the brethren.
- 7 And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the
- 8 apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. But there
- 9 rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to
- 10 circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses. And the apostles and
- 11 elders came together for to consider of this matter. And when there had been much dis-
- 12 puting, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men *and* brethren, ye know how that a good
- 13 while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word
- 14 of the gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving
- 15 them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us; and put no difference between us and them,
- 16 purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the
- 17 neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But ~~we~~ believe
- 18 that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they. Then all
- 19 the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what mira-
- 20 cles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.
- 21 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men *and* brethren, hearken
- 22 unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of
- 23 them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,
- 24 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down;
- 25 and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might
- 26 seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord,
- 27 who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the
- 28 world. Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gen-

20 tiles are turned to God: but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of
 21 idols, and *from* fornication, and *from* things strangled, and *from* blood. For Moses of old
 time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath
 day.

22 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of
 their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; *namely*, Judas surnamed Barsabas,
 23 and Silas, chief men among the brethren: and they wrote *letters* by them after this man-
 ner; The apostles and elders and brethren *send* greeting unto the brethren which are of the
 24 Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: forasmuch as we have heard, that certain
 which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye*
 25 *must* be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no *such* commandment: it
 seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with
 26 our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our
 27 Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell *you* the same
 28 things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no
 29 greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and
 from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep your-
 selves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

1, 2. The issue raised, first at Antioch (v. 1) and afterward at Jerusalem (v. 5), was vital to Christian faith and experience. Its correct decision involved the very continuance of Christianity in the world. The conflict here begun has never ceased through the ages. Whether salvation is *of grace alone*, or *of grace and human works combined*, was, has always been, still is, the question at issue. The result in the one case is spiritual liberty and peace; in the other, bondage to a formal lifeless ritual, and disquiet in self-righteous working. The issue was rightly decided here; but sixteen centuries later it had to be decided again, through the apostolic Reformers.

Antioch was the center and life-spring of the evangelical movement among the Gentiles. The *form* of the question, here first raised, pertained to the relation of these Gentiles to the ancient Jewish ritual. Especially it turned upon the necessity of their circumcision, as the initial rite of admission into the kingdom of God. The parties, who at Antioch made the broad and positive assertion that this rite was an essential condition of salvation, were *false brethren*; so Paul declares (Gal. 2). Professed members of the Christian flock, they were yet actuated by nothing higher or other than the baleful spirit of Jewish proselytism. All the way from Jerusalem to Antioch they had come on a self-prompted mission, not to preach the gospel to those who had it not, nor to rejoice with those already rejoicing in the Christian hope, but to counteract the effects of a gospel faithfully preached.

Instantly and sharply Paul (Gal. 2) resisted the intrusion and antagonized the efforts of these false brethren. As fearlessly as before he had encountered the assaults of Jews without, he now meets this new

attack from Jews within the fold. He knew that the Jewish believers might properly continue for a time to honor the rite of circumcision as a long familiar obligation; but that it *never had been* designed for and could not now be imposed upon Gentile believers. He knew, moreover, that this *particular demand* was a mere introduction to a larger claim—even the whole cumbrous ceremonial of the law of Moses. To accept this ritual law would be to perpetuate the old covenant upon the ruin of the new. Christ, he knew, had declared the old to be outworn and useless, not to be patched upon with the new and living. The old yoke and burden of ceremonial, Christ had replaced with *fresh, glad, living truth*, to be *learned of Him*. By this truth, He had said, the receiving soul would be made *free* and find *rest* in Him! These Judaizing proselyters would take away this freedom and rest. They would despoil the gospel of Christ of all that made it a gospel—a proclamation of glad tidings. They would subvert the foundation of the Christian scheme, by denying the sufficiency of faith in Christ as the sole complete condition of salvation. And Paul further knew that the perpetuation of the Jewish spirit of exclusivism, by making Gentile believers into Jews, would continue to foster among all, Jews and Gentiles, the pride and arrogance which had for centuries cursed and destroyed God's ancient people.

So much at least, as to the first raising of this question at Antioch, we may gather from Paul's own narrative to the Galatians. He sought no counsel, for he needed none to instruct him, and took small part in the after conference. But the question had a vital concern to all believers, then and thenceforth. Many of the Syrian Christians were troubled and unsettled by these persistent Judaizing

teachers. For their comfort, nay more, for the future *being*, not merely the well-being and peace, of the Church in that and in every age, a wise and authoritative decision was essential. So the Church at Antioch and its two great leaders obeyed a special Divine direction to seek such decision from the apostles and the mother Church of the Jews at Jerusalem.

3, 4. A deputation, including Paul and Barnabas, was cordially received at Jerusalem, and the story of the two missionaries rehearsed. This was the first personal interview of the apostles (except Peter and James, Gal. 1 : 18, 19) with Paul, although fourteen years or more had elapsed since his conversion. He speaks (Gal. 2 : 9) of a private interview, in which the great leaders, Peter, John, and James, gave to Barnabas and himself the right hand of fellowship. At this interview, doubtless, Paul narrated for their information the efforts of the Judaizers at Antioch, and how he had successfully opposed them.

5, 6. Very soon the same question was formally presented to the apostolic body. This second time it was brought forward and more broadly stated by comparatively honest Pharisaic believers. "It was essential," they claimed, "that the obligation to observe all the ceremonial law of Moses should be enforced upon all Christian believers, Gentile and Jew." At once the apostles met the issue as one demanding careful and solemn consideration. They assumed no reliance upon their infallibility as apostles, but invited the whole body of Jewish believers to confer with them upon the matter. Only thus could the deliberation be thorough, the decision unanimous and effective.

7-9. Much discussion followed the statement of the question. The sincere Jewish objectors to Paul's free reception of the Gentiles could make this strong case: "God had appointed the ceremonial institutes of Moses, especially circumcision, as a sign of covenant with himself and a seal of admission into his kingdom. He had never repealed these ordinances. Nor had Christ formally abrogated them. Nay, in his person and his teaching he had recognized and honored them." To these points, mainly true, the sufficient answer would be this: "God's appointment of the Mosaic ritual was exclusively for the nation he had chosen, not for the Gentiles. The ceremonial observances were designed exclusively to teach and influence that people, to make Himself known and his saving purpose in Christ, to lead them to obedience and worship, and so fit them for earth and heaven. This he would do by these special symbols, for introductory and temporary use. But, through the misleading blindness and long disobedience of that people, that which he had devised for good they had perverted to evil. *All*

this Christ had abundantly affirmed, and so emphatically implied the repeal of these misused, now actually useless, ceremonies. More than this, He had declared that the truth should make them free from the yoke of ordinances; that true worship was heart worship, without reference to the Temple. And, as a final chief point, the whole law of sacrifice was abrogated by its fulfillment in the death of Christ."

Such might have been the main points of argument presented on either side in the protracted discussion which preceded the address of Peter. Without any assumption of superiority, *Peter clearly presents three facts* as the unanswerable grounds of a right decision in the matter. The *first* was that God himself had "a good while ago" introduced the innovation complained of. Fourteen years before, in connection with Peter's special ministry to Cornelius and his company, God, who knew the hearts of those Roman Gentiles, in response to the *simple faith he saw in their hearts*, had given them the Holy Ghost, his very Pentecostal gift to Jewish believers. He had thus disregarded and so broken down the dividing wall of long effete and meaningless ordinances. Nay, more, to show that God himself had substituted faith for circumcision, Peter affirms that God had *purified their hearts by faith*; had taken away (without circumcision and by faith) that uncleanness whose taking away had been before only symbolized by circumcision.

10. The *second* fact (based upon the first), Peter asserts under the form of a direct charge against the Jewish objectors. "You are tempting God, in seeking to put this yoke, which neither you nor your fathers could bear, upon these Gentile disciples, to whom it has *never* been commanded. Not merely undirected and useless work is this, but by it you are hindering and imperiling, instead of aiding, their salvation." They and their fathers had long felt the law of Moses to be an intolerable burden. Its ceremonials were wearisome and meaningless, and in its moral precepts broken and sanctions incurred they could find no relief for a guilty conscience, no hope of eternal life. The law—they knew by experience—could give *the knowledge of sin*, but *not the knowledge of salvation*.

11. With the *third* fact, he completes their overthrow. Simply, faithfully, as taught by the Spirit of Christ, he declares that *for them as Jews*, as well as for the Gentiles, *the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ* is the *only* thing sufficient, and it *alone is sufficient* for salvation and eternal life. Thus Peter reaches Paul's conclusion. He too affirms that the Jewish rites, though appointed and long honored of God, are now not essential, not longer binding even upon the Jew. Nay, they are hindering and hurtful; impediments in the way of the gospel.

12. The simple narration of Barnabas and Paul follows the unanswerable facts and appeal of Peter. Paul entered into no argument, nor did he directly touch the question at issue. He only told what wonders of grace God had wrought among the Gentiles, at their hands—how his Spirit had been poured forth—what multitudes had believed, and proved their faith to be divine. And this *statement of the effects* following upon the simple testimony to the crucified, risen, and reigning Jesus, without word of Temple or sacrifice, of ablution or circumcision, or of any outward ordinance of the Hebrew economy, this was all the part that Paul took in the great Conference at Jerusalem. But his fervent words were intently heeded, and wrought a deep impression upon “the multitude.”

13-21. James, “the Lord’s brother” (Gal. 1 : 19), to whom Christ specially disclosed himself after his resurrection, closed the discussion. B.—From this time he appears as the head of the Church at Jerusalem, having virtually the character and standing of an apostle. G. P. F.—His high repute for wisdom and excellence had long given him a foremost place in the Church of Jerusalem; while the austere tone of his piety and his strong sympathy with Jewish legalism and prejudice gave him the greatest weight with the Christian Pharisees. His address accorded with these peculiarities of character. He refers to Peter by his Hebrew name, and to the testimony of the Old Testament prophets upon the question before them. Appealing particularly to the prophecy of Amos, he confirms by the *word of God* the facts of God’s *working*, narrated by Peter and Paul. The passage cited speaks of the typical kingdom of David, and the once stately temple structure as now fallen; and of the spiritual kingdom and Church of the “greater David” that shall rise upon the ruins. It declares that a world-wide, all-inclusive, permanent Christianity shall succeed to the narrow, temporary Jewish system; and so implies that the Jewish is only the preparation for the Christian. And God, the foreknowing and foreplanning, had ordained this from the beginning. His ultimate plan included a Church in which Gentile as well as Jew should receive salvation by faith in the name of his Christ. So, infers James, it is in accordance with this purpose declared by the prophets, that God is now “taking out of the Gentiles a people for his name.” Therefore, he concludes, we may not interfere with His work among the Gentiles, by troubling them with ceremonials that He has laid aside.

Thus, in harmony with Peter, James conclusively advocates the exemption of the Gentile Christians from the ritual burdens of the Mosaic law. Only upon certain matters bearing upon educated prejudices and unrecognized sin, he recommends a frank

expression of opinion; and this in aid both of Jewish and Gentile believers. The result, embodied in the letter, was the fruit of honest and thorough consideration of the working and the word of God, by good and inspired men. The conference was conducted in the fear of God, without bigotry or assumption on the part of any, but with the simple desire of all to ascertain and declare the mind of God.

22-29. *Points in the Letter to the Gentile Churches.*—This first written document of the New Testament was necessary, in order that the judgment of the Apostolic Church upon so vital a matter might be accurately conveyed to the entire Gentile world. It was borne by trustworthy messengers—Silas (called Silvanus by Paul) and Judas Barsabas. It was addressed to the Gentile Christians of Syria and Cilicia.

The introduction—much the longest portion—expresses a strong judgment respecting the original *parties* to the issue now decided by the apostles and brethren. The Pharisaic opponents of Paul and Barnabas are characterized as *troublers and subverters of souls*—thus sustaining all that Paul says of them to the Galatians. Their demand of circumcision and other legal observances as essential to salvation is declared to be *soul-destructive*, and their mission wholly unauthorized. For Barnabas and Paul the letter expresses only warm affection, and a deep appreciation of the suffering and self-sacrifice in which they were the pioneers of the great missionary host of Christ. The 28th and 29th verses contain the formal decision of the question submitted. B.

The *decision of the Holy Spirit*, given them as leaders of the Church, is laid down as the *primary and decisive determination* on the matter; and *their own formal decision* follows, as giving utterance and scope to his will and command. A.—The apostles, and those joining with them in this act, claim for their own decision a divine authority, as having been suggested or inspired by the Holy Ghost. J. A. A.—By this decision, the apostles and Church at Jerusalem—the natural guardians of whatever it might have been right to preserve in the ancient dispensation—gave their solemn and final approval to that version of the gospel which Paul had preached by the revelation given to him. The emancipation of the Gentile converts from Jewish rites involved far more than their personal liberty. It abolished that separation of the race of Israel from the other nations, of which circumcision was the sign and seal; and, in place of the divine favor of which they boasted as the sons of Abraham, acceptance with God was offered to Jew and Gentile in common through the new spiritual bond of faith in Christ. And, as the speech of Peter declares,

this view of the gospel was of no less vital moment to the Jew than to the Gentile. If the Jewish believers were thrown back on the Jewish law, and gave up the free and absolute grace of God, the Law became a mere burden, just as heavy to the Jew as it would be to the Gentile. The only hope for the Jew was in a Saviour who must be the Saviour of mankind. S.

Four things they recommend the Gentile Christians to abstain from. Three of these touched merely the law of charity and kindness as between Gentile and Jew. They were: the use of meats that had been offered in sacrifice to idols; the blood of slaughtered animals, often used at idol feasts; and things strangled, or cattle that had not been slaughtered but suffocated in their blood. There were two reasons for the prohibition of these things, which in themselves were not sinful. First and chiefly, out of proper regard to the educated prejudices of the Jews, who detested and were scandalized by these idol sacrifices and methods of preparing them. Secondly, the restrictions were greatly helpful to the Gentiles also. They aided in

disentangling them from the old connections of heathenism, and in breaking the force of life-long idolatrous customs. The fourth prohibition respects a positive sin, yet is here classed with things indifferent. No more striking proof than this do we find of the utter lapse of morality itself out of the heathen systems of religion. For no form of personal impurity was in these systems counted a sin. Obviously upon this point there was necessity for the instruction of Gentile believers, and the awakening of a conscience of sin respecting this matter of "fornication." And proper deference to the Jews also required this restriction, for they were scrupulously sensitive to the crime of unchastity. B.

This letter is a model of Christian toleration. It is not weighted with anathemas: it does not even use the tone of command: it is not the promulgation of a decree. After explaining the cause of the disputation, it goes no further than to tell the churches they would do well to conform to the resolutions passed at Jerusalem. The letter recognizes the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as shared by all who took part in the council. De P.

Section 215.

ACTS xv. 30-41 ; xvi. 1-12

30 So when they were dismissed, they came to Antioch: and when they had gathered the
31 multitude together, they delivered the epistle: *which* when they had read, they rejoiced for
32 the consolation. And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren
33 with many words, and confirmed *them*. And after they had tarried *there* a space, they
34 were let go in peace from the brethren unto the apostles. Notwithstanding it pleased Silas
35 to abide there still. Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching
the word of the Lord, with many others also.

36 And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in
37 every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see* how they do. And
38 Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. But Paul thought
not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not
39 with them to the work. And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed
asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus;
40 and Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of
41 God. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named
Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father
2 was a Greek: which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.
3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the
4 Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. And
as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were
5 ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches
established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

6 Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden
7 of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, after they were come to Mysia, they
8 assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. And they passing by Mysia
9 came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of

10 Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering
 11 that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them. Therefore loosing from
 12 Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next *day* to Neapolis; and from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, *and* a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.

THE collision of natural affection in Barnabas with the somewhat unchastened, untempered zeal of Paul produced a contention between them. Sharp words passed and mutual recriminations, and the feelings of both parties were exasperated—alas! so much so that they found it impossible to work together; they must henceforth choose different spheres of duty. How? Are these apostles? Are these two of God's most eminent saints? Are these two eminent pillars of the Church of Christ? Yes, apostles, and saints, and pillars, not as our fancy portrays them, nor as they are now, in the calm and deep repose of Paradise, but as they were in the struggles and collisions of daily life. E. M. G.—Since this incident did occur, it is *good* that it is *recorded*; since, if it gives us much to lament, it gives us not a little to learn. It *humbles* us to perceive the relatively small, but not the less disfiguring, blemish on such revered countenances. Frequently the best men are sadly inconsistent; and, even in the most eminent Christian, nature at times is stronger than education! And this first dispute of which we read in the annals of God's kingdom, by what a countless number of others has it been followed in later ages, frequently from causes yet more trifling. *Van O.*

30, 31. The Reading of the Letter, and its Happy Effects upon the Gentile Christians.—It was not the requisitions of the apostolical epistle that excited joy at Antioch, but the comforting assurance that their faith was not vain, or their souls in jeopardy. J. A. A.—The Gentiles were confirmed in their freedom from the ceremonial law; and the yoke of that law was broken for the Jewish believers. Unity and peace were established between Jew and Gentile; and both were indoctrinated anew, with fresh authority from the Holy Ghost, in the blessed simplicity and pure spirituality of the Gospel of Christ.

Thus, once and for all time, was decided the question of spiritual liberty or bondage, of grace or works. The full points and reasonings of the decision are found in Paul's matchless Epistles to the Romans, the Corinthians, and the Galatians. And the world has needed them. For centuries without them, it relapsed into a civilized idolatry and barbarism. Brought again into the light at the Reformation, they have proved their power afresh for these three hundred years. And they are needed, above all needs of humanity beside, in all their blessed power to-day!

35. Returning from Jerusalem with Silas and Judas, Paul and Barnabas resumed for a short period their customary labors in Antioch and the adjacent region of Syria.

Gal. 2 : 11-21. Peter's Temporary Weakness and Defection at Antioch.—During this interval, according to the order of Paul's narrative, occurred that strange conduct of Peter, for which Paul felt constrained publicly to rebuke the older apostle. With the thrice-uttered monitory question and sol-

emn charge of his risen Lord graven on his soul, with all the special help and continuous inworking of the Holy Ghost, and even after many years of unflinching boldness under the severest tests of fidelity, yet here, for a very brief period, we find Peter enacting over again the old cowardice and dissimulation. This he did by disowning his own recent intense protest in the Council; by trampling under foot the Gospel principles respecting social intercourse with Gentiles, which he had so long and so signally illustrated in his practice. On his first arrival at Antioch he fellowshipped freely with Gentile believers. But to gratify certain brethren by complying with their strong Jewish prejudices—and this out of mere deference to their high position in the Church at Jerusalem—Peter withdrew from the society of the Gentiles. There was here no question of a wise expediency, or of proper consideration for tender consciences, respecting things non-essential. As it had been long years before, his yielding was prompted solely by a weak fear of man. And not only did he withdraw, but he led others, including even Barnabas, to withdraw with him; and Paul charges them all with "playing the hypocrite" in the matter. Such conduct was peculiarly reprehensible, as promoting a divisive influence at this most critical period in the introduction of Christianity. It was a positive sanction, by one who had long been the foremost of the Apostles, of the very heresy that the Jewish council had just condemned; viz.: that circumcision, and *not* faith, was essential to salvation. And this heresy was *now, in every place, assaulting and endangering the life of the infant Church.*

While Paul's rebuke was personal, it went argu-

mentatively to the very heart of the question at issue. In its complete statement of the essential principles of the Gospel as compared with the Law, it presents a grand epitome of his chief Epistles. That the rebuke was rightly received, and was effectual in reinforcing Peter's courage and faith, and so restoring him to fidelity, is evident. For in one of his own letters he refers to "the Epistles of our beloved brother Paul," "Epistles in one page of which his own censure is recorded." But, temporary as was this defection of one so thoroughly taught and tried, it is a strange sad story. It impresses a fact and points a warning that may well be pondered by the best, the strongest, and most active Christian soul!

36-39. *The Quarrel between Paul and Barnabas.*—This second painful occurrence followed not long after. It was a sharp personal discussion, in which each had some reason on his side, yet both were faulty. They only proved that they were, as they had said to the Lystrans, men of like passions as others. The plain story of imperfection indicates an authentic and honest record. It suggests a strong presumption of the truth of the narrative, as well as the genuine earnestness and positive convictions of the men. *Good men they were; both set apart by the Holy Ghost; old friends and long work-fellows in eminent service, signally honored and prospered of God.* Yet, in connection with the proposed renewal of this very work for God and man, they quarreled—nay, more, they finally parted asunder.

It was a matter bearing upon personal peculiarities that led to the quarrel. Paul's ever unyielding principle could make no allowance for what seemed to be, and probably was, weakness in John Mark. Barnabas, who had just before himself yielded to Peter's wrong example, could more readily overlook Mark's weakness. His love, too, to his young kinsman, who had now returned from Jerusalem ready for toil, and his strong desire to have Mark permanently engaged in Christian work, joined possibly with some remaining vigor of the *old nature*, led him to persist to the point of entire separation from Paul.

But God overruled the result to double the work and the workmen. Instead of *two* went forth *four*; and into two fields of labor, instead of one. And no bitterness was left behind, for we find Paul afterward speaking of Barnabas as his equal in active and successful toil; and of Mark as his "fellow-laborer," "profitable to the ministry," and a "comfort" to himself. We may add, that good men as well as earnest missionaries have differed ever since. And, as here, God has forborne with their imperfections, and in many cases He has wrought a greater good out of their personal differences.

While we have no record of the labors of Barnabas and Mark in Cyprus (as we have none of the many other laborers—apostles and disciples), the ultimate marked success of the gospel in Cyprus may justly be attributed in great part to their faithful and efficient ministry.

40, 41. *The Second Missionary Journey of Paul.*—More than two years had elapsed since his return from the First Journey. The Second was begun A. D. 51, and occupied between three and four years, including eighteen months at Corinth, until A. D. 54. The account is included in chapters 15 : 40, 41 to 18 : 22. The 41st verse, with the first twelve verses of chapter 16, merely outline a very long course of travel and labor, covering many months. With Silas, he goes through the provinces of Syria (in part) and Cilicia, Phrygia and Galatia, visiting their chief cities, and tarrying again in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and the neighboring Antioch. At length, from Troas, on the coast, he crosses to Europe, and preaches first at Philippi in Macedonia. A fact of special interest, to be noted here, is that Paul had no further thought in starting out than to visit the churches already established, in the field previously visited by Barnabas and himself. From place to place, and definitely from Asia to Europe, he was led by the Holy Spirit; and, as he was directed, he went. B.

41. *Syria and Cilicia.* In consequence of the range of Mount Taurus, the Eastern (or "Flat") Cilicia has a greater geographical affinity with Syria than with Asia Minor. Hence "*Syria and Cilicia*" appears in history almost as a generic geographical term, the more important district being mentioned first. Within the limits of this region Saul's activities were first exercised in studying and in teaching at Tarsus, and in founding those Churches which were afterward greeted in the Apostolic letter from Jerusalem as the brethren "in Antioch, and Syria, and Cilicia," and which Paul himself confirmed after his separation from Barnabas, traveling through "*Syria and Cilicia.*" H. (See map, p. 94.)

1-5. *Timothy ordained and joined to Paul's Missionary Company.*—Paul had reached the familiar region of Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium, ascending into Lycaonia from Cilicia through the pass known as the Cilician Gates, a great fissure in the Taurus Range, extending eighty miles north and south. Living in Lystra, Timothy had probably been converted under the ministry of Paul, four or five years before. From his mother and grandmother he had received impressions of truth in earliest childhood. And since his conversion to Christ he had specially commended himself to the brethren in the three cities of Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch (2 Tim. 2 : 10, 11). This "good report from those without" (1 Tim. 3 : 7), together with Paul's own

impression of his Christian character, and of his fitness for ministry in the Gospel, led the apostle, under divine guidance, to impress him into Christ's service. Gladly and gratefully Timothy gave himself to missionary toil, and, "after he had made a good confession before many witnesses," was solemnly set apart by the laying on of the hands of Paul and of the elders in those churches. And from thenceforth the relation between the apostle and this youthful disciple was most intimate and tender. A son, indeed, in the depth and constancy of Paul's affection, as well as "in the faith," was this earnest, single-hearted Timothy accounted by the apostle; as many touching passages in his two Letters amply prove.

Paul had two sufficient reasons for circumcising Timothy, before inducting him into the ministry: the chief one was that as *an uncircumcised Jew* Timothy could not be admitted into the synagogues, nor listened to with respect by the unconverted Jews. Besides this positive necessity, no principle was compromised in the case of Timothy. Further, Paul was willing to avail himself of this opportunity (as he did of one other, Acts 21) practically to correct certain misrepresentations that his enemies had made against him—the same that had been made against the Master: that he had despised and blasphemed the law of Moses. And it is to be noted that Paul's refusal to circumcise Titus, while at Jerusalem (Gal. 2 : 3-5), was perfectly consistent with his action here. For Titus was a Greek—a heathen, born; with no claim to the Jewish rite or privilege. Those who demanded his circumcision did it upon the express grounds that the Gentiles must become Jews before they could become Christians; that the burden of ceremonials must be assumed, and especially circumcision, as an essential condition of salvation. All this was in direct contradiction of the principles affirmed by the Council: that the Gentiles were free from the yoke of the Mosaic Law; and that *faith*, not circumcision, was the *only essential* to salvation. In the case of Titus, Paul was intolerant in defense of vital principles. In the case of Timothy, he was tolerant of mere prejudices, that he might help the more effectually to remove them; that unconverted Jews might not be repelled from the Christian teacher and the Christian truth. In this case, he "became unto the Jews as a Jew, that he might gain the Jews." And that no inconsistency was thought of or recognized in this action we know by the statement immediately following, respecting the decrees of the Council.

6-8. *After preaching throughout the Region of Phrygia and Galatia, they pass over Asia to Troas.*—Under the names of Phrygia and Galatia, whose boundaries are entirely indefinite, the central table-

land region of Asia Minor is here referred to. At this time Paul must have planted the churches of Galatia, though Luke makes no record here. For these churches are referred to as confirmed by Paul in his next succeeding journey (Acts 18 : 23). B.

Luke makes no mention of any of Paul's Epistles, or even of the fact that he wrote a single Epistle; and yet, in dictating the Acts by the agency of Luke, the Holy Spirit appears to have his divine eye on what had been already given, or would be hereafter given, by himself to the world in those Epistles by the hand of Paul. Here is the ground of the argument handled by Dr. Paiey in his "*Horæ Paulinæ*." The Acts and the Epistles are from one Spirit. No wonder that there is a beautiful harmony among them, more deeply felt because not the result of effort and art, but of oneness of origin from the Spirit of truth. W.

How they were forbidden by the Spirit of Christ to preach in Asia—the Roman province bordering upon the *Ægean Sea*—and how *hindered* from going northeastward into the larger province of Bithynia, we are not informed. The curiosity that desires to investigate such a question is wholly ungratified by the Scripture. Paul was made to understand the mind of the Spirit, and—the only real point of rational interest—*he obeyed it!* And, to every one cherishing the same obedient spirit, the mind of God will in some assured way be made known. *Why* their proposed movements were thus divinely hedged round on every side save that of the sea, is clearly intimated in the summons that so soon followed: *to cross the sea, and enter Europe!* So plainly it appears that the Gospel's first marked entrance into Europe was definitely directed by the Lord Christ.

9, 10. *Paul's Vision at Troas.*—*Alexandria Troas*, this seaport and free city, upon or near the site of ancient Troy, had been named. B.—Nearly four centuries had passed since the Macedonian conqueror crossed the narrow strait of the Hellespont, to overthrow the great despotism that enthralled Asia; and now, near that plain of Troy, on which Alexander stayed to indulge the dream of rivaling the fame of his ancestor, Achilles, at the very city named in the conqueror's honor, Paul beheld in vision another "man of Macedonia," uttering the cry of the western world suffering beneath the despotism of sin, and calling to the soldiers of the Cross, "Come over and help us." The power which had led Europe to the armed conquest of Asia was the first to invite conquest from the spiritual force of which Asia had been the primeval cradle. S.—This vision is still perpetuated. The cry of humanity in its sense of need—its guilt and wretchedness, its helpless, hopeless despair—is still sounding now from East to West, as then from West to East. It comes from every heathen continent, and from the many islands,



Northern Shores of the Aegean Sea. (Note Troas, in the province of Asia; the seaport Neapolis, at the head of the Strymonic Gulf; Philippi, on the Via Egnatia; Thessalonica, at the head of the Thermaic Gulf; and Berea.)

to the Church of every region, and to the Christian of every name. B.—And it has been abundantly shown that it is death to a Church or a Christian either not to hear this cry, or, having heard it, not to heed it. *Riddle.*

Luke, "the beloved physician" and "the brother whose praise is in all the Churches," who, in his native place, Antioch, had labored with Paul, joined the three missionaries at Troas. Although the historian of all these events, and the companion of Paul in a large part of his journeying, he nowhere alludes to his presence otherwise than by the words "we" and "us" in the narrative.

11, 12. *From Troas across the Aegean to Neapolis and Philippi.*—Paul's "immediate endeavor to go into Macedonia" was succeeded by finding a vessel about to sail for Neapolis. B.—And these four men go on board the vessel—Paul, with his fervent soul and his strong intellect; Silas, with his zeal and his prophetic gifts; Luke, with his scholarly culture and professional accomplishments; and Timothy, with his youthful earnestness and as yet undeveloped powers for work. *These four men, guided by the Divine Spirit, come to Europe!* And that ship has in it the seeds of all that is to be developed in the religion and learning, the philosophy, legislation, art, science, and everything else that has made European nations the acknowledged regal masters of the world. T. B.—The very elements prospered this outward voyage; so that their course

was direct, by Tenedos, Imbros, and Samothracia; and the eighty miles was accomplished in two days.

Macedonia was previously a prominent kingdom of ancient Greece, now a Roman province. It had been a military kingdom, and its cities had not received the culture of Athens, nor shared the commercial prosperity of Corinth. The truth, therefore, had a readier reception, and found fewer obstacles than afterward in those cities.

From Neapolis, a Macedonian harbor on the Strymonic Gulf, they followed for ten miles one of the great Roman roads, over a lofty ridge extending from Mount Pangæum, and then descending into the plain of Philippi. Upon this plain, B. C. 42, Anthony and Augustus (afterward emperor), in a final, decisive battle, had defeated Brutus and Cassius. As a monument of that signal victory, Augustus had planted a Roman colony upon, or near, the site of the older Macedonian city. Of the border-tract of Eastern Macedonia, which formed the barrier against Thrace with its barbarous hordes, Philippi was the chief city. As a colony, settled with freedmen and veteran soldiers, organized as to its government, laws and social customs on the model of imperial Rome, and as a frontier defensive post, its privileges and its distinction were great. B.—And now a Jewish apostle came to the same place, to win a greater victory than that of Philippi, and to found a more durable empire than that of Augustus. H.

Section 216.

Acts xvi. 13-40.

- 13 AND on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to
 14 be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted *thither*. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were
 15 spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us.
- 16 And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of
 17 divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: the same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which
 18 shew unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of
 19 her. And he came out the same hour. And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew *them* into the marketplace unto the
 20 rulers, and brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly
 21 trouble our city, and teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat *them*. And when they had laid many
 22 stripes upon them, they cast *them* into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.
- 23 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners
 24 heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands
 25 were loosed. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners
 26 had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we
 27 are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?
 28 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.
 29 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and
 30 all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.
- 31 And when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go. And
 32 the keeper of the prison told this saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore depart, and go in peace. But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast *us* into prison; and now do they thrust
 33 us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out. And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they
 34 were Romans. And they came and besought them, and brought *them* out, and desired *them* to depart out of the city. And they went out of the prison, and entered into *the house of* Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

On the same page of Scripture there is the record of two most remarkable conversions, as different from each other as any two processes of mind, leading to the same result, can by possibility be. Lydia, the purple-seller of Thyatira, became a Christian through the gentle opening of the heart, as by the quiet river-side she attended to the things which were spoken of Paul. The Philippian jailer is converted, on the other hand, in a manner such as might be expected from the previous habits of ignorance and vice in which, we may reasonably suppose, he had been sunk. The critical, all-important question for all of us

is, whether we be indeed Christ's at present, and are following the lead of his Spirit; if so, how we were brought to Him, whether by the quiet drawings of gratitude and love, or by the gradual growth of reflectiveness and our experience of life's hollowness, or by the trepidations of alarm, is but of little moment. E. M. G.

Strike from the world's history what has been done for Jesus' sake—go back along the track of time, and erase the deeds that have been wrought, the self-denials undergone, the books written, the lives lived, the martyrdoms endured, the stern missions begun and prosecuted, and how poor would the world be! Strike out the love to Jesus that human souls have felt, and all that it has prompted them to do, and what a waste would the past eighteen centuries present! The blackest pages of human history have been illumined by some deeds of true glory that love to Jesus has begotten. When wickedness has been most rampant, there have ever been some who have sung their songs in the night, irradiated the moral gloom with their light, and been ready to seal their affection by their blood. J. D.

13. In Europe, as in Asia, Paul preaches chiefly in the cities and large towns, that a deeper and broader impression may be made at the first, and the truth scattered more widely afterward. For, in ancient as in modern times, the populous centers exercised a controlling influence over social and religious customs. But the first announcement of the gospel in Europe—in Philippi—was remarkable both as to the place and the hearers. Nothing could have been more simple and unassuming. In the city was no synagogue. Nor did Paul find an opening for highway preaching. But out of the city, by a still river-side, in a spot where a few godly women, Jewish proselytes, were accustomed to meet and pray together on the Sabbath, the apostle began his work in Europe. It was only a quiet talk about Christ, while speaker and hearers sat together in a little group. But, like the Master at Jacob's well, Paul throws into this simple ministry as much earnestness of purpose and thoroughness of instruction as afterward he employed in addressing the vast multitude of cultured Athenians. And this unreported conversation produced a rich harvest, while the grand discourse at Athens was almost barren of fruit.

14. A woman was Paul's first European convert; from Thyatira, a city in the province of "Asia." So that the first convert in Greece is from the very province in Asia Minor where the Spirit had forbidden them to preach. And the Lord opened her heart; the same Lord that had sent his ambassadors from Asia into Europe. The process of her conversion seems also very natural and simple. Her heart, once closed, is now opened; not by force, but in a way suited to a free intelligent nature. For it was opened to *truth*, which contained only high, pure, divine, blessed *motive*. It was opened to hear, to heed, to receive gladly with all the grasp of intellect and heart, with all the energy of will in self-consecration, the truths of life, "the things spoken of Paul." B.—The Lord had laid words on Paul's lips suited to find entrance to her heart; He has bestowed on her the listening ear to

receive the voice of truth, the opened eye to see its light. And where now the last doubt gives way, and it is given her by grace to believe in Christ, how completely is sketched forth the blessed change which has had place first in her mind, but thereafter in her whole life and destiny! Van O.

15. Then followed the confession of her new faith, her baptism, and her grateful offer of hospitality and Christian service. Altogether the story is an attractive and instructive Christian idyl. B.—With the baptism of Lydia that of her "household" was associated. Whether we are to understand by this term her children, her slaves, or workpeople, or all these collectively, can not easily be decided. But we have here an example of that *family religion* to which Paul often alludes in his Epistles. The "connections of Chloë," the "household of Stephanas," the "church in the house" of Aquila and Priscilla, are parallel cases. H.

Christianity adopted and shared the distinguishing characteristic of Judaism as a *family religion*. The children of Jews were accounted heirs of the covenant. And it would seem that, if Jewish Christians had been denied this same relation, they would have demanded it, and a great controversy must then have arisen. Whether there were or not *infants* in any of the several baptized households can not certainly be determined. But the *unexplained* and *unqualified* mention of *households* surely implies that infants were included. B.—Who can believe that not one infant was found in all these families, and that Jews, accustomed to the circumcision, and Gentiles, accustomed to the lustration of infants, should not have also brought *them* to baptism? Beng.—The practice of infant baptism does not rest on *inference* but on the *continuity and identity of the covenant of grace to Jew and Christian*, the *sign only* of admission being altered. A.

And we have here the first example of that *Christian hospitality* which was so emphatically enjoined, and so lovingly practiced, in the Apostolic Church. The scenes by the river-side, and in the house of Lydia, are beautiful prophecies of the holy influence

which women, elevated by Christianity to their true position, and enabled by divine grace to wear "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit," have now for centuries exerted over domestic happiness and the growth of piety and peace. H.

16-21. For the first time in Paul's experience opposition and persecution came directly and exclusively from the Gentiles. The motive, too, was entirely disconnected with his religious teaching. It came from human hate produced by disappointed selfishness; and this was occasioned by a humane action. B.—A poor bond-girl, possessed with a spirit which was supposed to inspire oracles like those uttered by the Pythoness at Delphi, drove a gainful trade for her masters in the oracles which she vended, probably to the wild natives who frequented the market outside the city walls. As Paul and his companions went out to the place of prayer, she followed them with the continued cry, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation." S.—Repeating this for many days, her words must have become known throughout the city. At length Paul, in the very spirit of the Master (of compassion for the possessed and of indignation toward the satanic possessor) and after His manner, under His inspiration and in His name, commanded the evil spirit to come out of her. The whole account—Paul's spirit and words, and Luke's statement of the consequent fact (that "he came out the same hour")—shows that she was a demoniac, or "one possessed with a devil." Though the evil spirit in her, whether by constraint or with malicious purpose, gave true testimony to the missionaries, yet the source whence it came would taint the testimony itself. Therefore Paul, like his Master, would none of it. B.

The whole history of the Acts shows that the direct agency of the Evil Spirit is made subservient to the cause of Christ. In the case of Ananias (5: 3-5) he is made to preach to the world a perpetual warning against the sin of sacrilege; in the case of Simon Magus (8: 20), against the sin of simony. In the case of Elymas at Paphos (13: 10-12), Satan is defeated and Christ is glorified. Satan meets the apostle in *Philippi*, and flatters him by the mouth of her whom he had possessed. But his adulterations are rejected, and he is cast out, and the Gentile world is taught that the spirit in their divination and oracles is a spirit of darkness.

19. The hope of their gains was gone. A clew to the powerful motive of persecutions against Christianity. Both the persecutions from Heathenism, mentioned in the Acts, are from this source. In the account of both, the word craft occurs; here, and in 19: 24, 25. As Blunt remarks: "The Priesthood, in all its branches, contemplated the advance of Christianity with dismay.

It emptied their temples, curtailed their sacrifices, reduced their profits, exposed their frauds." **20. Being Jews.** Christianity was hated as Judaism by the heathens, and as worse than heathenism by the Jews. It had to contend against Judaism and Heathenism, and it triumphed over both. W.

The owners' investment had lost its value, and the law had no remedy to meet the case. Caring nothing for their own souls, they cared not for this one now released from such terrible thralldom. Their gains were their supreme thought and care. Since these were hopelessly gone, in their rage they sought revenge by stirring up the ignorant populace, who had a superstitious interest in the girl's sooth-saying, to assault the strangers and drag them into the forum. There, before the magistrates (the *Duumviri*, or *prætors*), concealing the facts, they cunningly resort to another charge. Referring to Paul and Silas only as *Jews*, they accuse them of introducing customs not lawful for *Romans* to receive. Their charge had a color of reason in the laws which prohibited Romans from forsaking their religion. But its chief force and its success with the magistrates lay in the facts: that the *Jews* had been just then expelled from *Rome*, and that *Philippi*, a Roman colony—i. e., a *Rome* in miniature—may and ought to imitate the metropolis. This race-prejudice, and just enacted example of intolerance, instantly won the magistrates to an illegal and iniquitous compliance with the will of the mob.

22-24. The Scourging and Imprisonment of Paul and Silas.—By command of the two magistrates, the lictors rent off with violence the garments so that the flesh was bare, and laid many stripes upon them. B.—It is difficult for us to estimate the severity of this punishment. The victim was beaten on the naked flesh with thick rods by trained professional executioners. The insignia of a Roman ruler consisted of a bunch of rods tied together like a sheaf, and an axe protruding from the end of the bundle. The rods symbolized secondary, and the axe capital, punishment. *Arnot.*

No inquiry was instituted, no time or means of defense afforded; not even the opportunity to plead their Roman citizenship. This fact Paul would not now thrust upon them for many good reasons; all of them for the furtherance of the gospel, as we hereafter see. One may be referred to here. Paul, like his Lord, opened not his mouth before these persecutors. "As seeing Him who is invisible," he endured that severe Roman scourging that he might illustrate to those believers, and to all thereafter, the spirit of self-sacrifice and the force of trust under the fire of suffering. At Corinth, not long after, writing to the Thessalonians, he recalls this cruel experience, "how we were shamefully entreated at *Philippi*."

. Then, with their backs lacerated, they are thrown into prison ; and, as if more dangerous and guilty than other criminals, their feet are painfully distended and shut up immovably in "the stocks." By this unrelieved position of constraint and distention the pain of their bruised bodies is intensified. Yet through the afternoon, and up to the midnight hour, their faith and fortitude held firm.

25, 26. *Their Praying Song in the Night, and the Consequent Earthquake.*—They prayed in song to God. Their song was prayer, their prayer was song. *What* they sang we may infer. For David's trustful utterances would well suit their needs and their hearts. Yet not these alone ; for theirs was a larger knowledge, a richer experience of a realized Lord and Comforter. And out of that revealed experience, how readily their souls could pour themselves out in trustful rejoicing and fervent intercession ! Their praising prayer was a sermon, too, to a strange congregation ; for *the prisoners heard*. What was its ultimate effect, we know not. But none of those listeners used the opportunity for escape, when unnaturally the earth was shaken, and supernaturally the doors were opened and their chains loosed. They must have *felt what we know* : that there was a connection between these marvels and the sublime utterances of praise and supplication that preceded them. Right well are *we*, here and in this, assured that God is the hearer and answerer of prayer.

27, 28. *The Prison-Keeper's Suicide hindered by Paul.*—By the stern Roman law, death was the penalty of a jailer's unwatchfulness and the escape of his prisoners. Finding the doors wide open and inferring that the prisoners had fled, in his proud Roman despair he was about to take his own life, as the only honorable alternative for retrieving the disgrace. Suicide, among the Romans, was accounted not only lawful, but under irremediable misfortune was regarded as a virtue. B.—And this very city, Philippi, had been famous in the annals of suicide. Here Cassius, unable to survive defeat, covered his face in the empty tent, and ordered his freedmen to strike the blow. Here Brutus bade adieu to his friends, exclaiming, "Certainly we must fly, yet not with the feet, but with the hands." And many of their adherents ended their last struggle for the republic by self-inflicted death. H.

The same prison lamps that revealed to the keeper the open doors would, through those doors, reveal the jailer to Paul, and his purpose would be conjectured by the drawing of his sword. And now the eager sympathy of the apostle's heart on the instant coöperated with God's purpose in the earthquake and the supernaturally opened doors. That purpose was not the release of the prisoners, but the

awakening of the jailer's conscience so that a saving impression might be made upon his hardened heart. Paul's loud, impassioned cry was but the seconding of God's saving purpose toward the man. And with what sublime emphasis did that cry, forced out of Paul's Christlike, loving heart, *Do thyself no harm !* sum up the supreme design of Christ's infinite love, as expressed in his redemption and revealed through his gospel.

29-32. *The Keeper's Question and Paul's Answer. The Word pressed home upon Opened Hearts.*—The instant revulsion of feeling consequent upon such an appeal, enforced by the assurance that none had fled, joined with the earthquake shock and the evidences of miraculous visitation—all combined to arouse in his conscience a new and overwhelming fear. It was not a dread of temporal danger ; for all was quiet now, and his armed assistants were at his side. It was the kindling of sensibility, through a fear wrought in his callous spiritual nature by these startling tokens of a Divine presence and an unseen world. Impelled by this fear, out of the depths of his aroused soul, as he cast himself at the feet of Paul and Silas, came the intense yearning cry, "*What must I do to be saved ?*" Those oft-repeated and widely-reported words of the frenzied girl must have left an impression upon his ignorant, superstitious nature. He now felt, in his confused, amazed terror, "These men must be servants of the most high God, to *show the way of salvation.*" And so the question forms itself to the inward craving of his *consciously lost* soul : "*To be saved, what must I do ?*"

That this was his condition and this his meaning, the answer of the faithful men of God clearly shows. *Sirs, or Lords*, he had called them, as in his heathen thought he prostrated himself in almost worship before them. *Believe*, is their answer, not in us, but in the one only Lord, *Jesus Christ ! and thou shalt be saved !* They saw, in his trembling and in his despairing cry, his strong conviction of sin, his craving for deliverance, his yearning to know and willingness to do what was demanded of him ; and they said all that could be said to any wretched, sinful soul of man. They put into their answer the whole gospel. They declared all that is essential to human salvation. They demand no "doing" of the man save *faith*, or *trust* : *faith in the Person of Christ—trust in His redeeming work*. And who this Christ was, what saving work He had done, what it was to trust this Saviour and to receive Him, Paul instantly went on to tell this eagerly listening man, and the members of his household who were now gathered around them. There was no magical suddenness in these conversions. From this summary text, the Word of the Lord—*about the Lord*—was clearly spoken to all ; and they, like

Lydia, with hearts now opened by the Lord, heard and heeded, believed and rejoiced.

33, 34. *The Good Works that follow the Transformed Keeper's Faith.*—The rude, harsh, almost brutal nature becomes at once tender and sympathetic. Before they apply the baptismal water, to seal by outward sign his *sacramentum* or oath of allegiance to his new spiritual Lord, he washes their wounds left by the scourge. Then in humble, thankful gladness of spirit he makes them welcome guests at his table and in his home. And this change from previous reckless inhumanity to kind treatment and generous hospitality gave full assurance of the inward change wrought in his heart. These first-offering duties fulfilled, were the fruit and proof of that faith which worketh by love.

35-40. *The Release of the Missionaries, and their Departure from Philippi.*—Early the next morning the magistrates—as the result either of reflection upon their hasty and illegal procedure or of relapse into indifference about the matter—sent a message, in careless or contemptuous tone, dismissing the prisoners. This message was joyfully communicated by the keeper to Paul. But now the Christian principle, properly *self-respecting* and mindful of the ends of human justice, stands manfully for the vindication of outraged personal rights. Yet not merely for their own sake. For Christ's sake they had silently borne the suffering; but for Christianity's sake they make the protest against the infraction of law by its appointed administrators. Paul's main object was to honor and help Christianity; to secure respect and protection for the Christian believers in Philippi. These believers he would encourage and embolden to fidelity. Upon the magistrates and people he would impress a higher estimate and respect for the Christian movement. All this he effectually accomplished by proclaiming their Roman citizenship; by denouncing the injustice of a punishment without trial and condemnation; and by demanding an acknowledgment of the inflicted wrong as open, and a release as public, as had been their arrest and imprisonment.

Very willing were these now alarmed magistrates to humble themselves by coming to the prison; and publicly to confess their own injustice by personally entreating these Roman citizens to come forth to

liberty. For Roman law, so harsh to others, was very partial to the interests and jealous for the rights of Roman citizens. And that law, under penalty of death to the magistrate infringing it absolutely forbade the application of the scourge to the person of a Roman, and that a Roman should be punished without trial and judgment.

Thus the Christian leaders were justified before all; and in their persons Christianity was honored. Through these occurrences and the apostle's generous forbearance in declining all appeal to Rome against the magistrates, the infant Church at Philippi started upon high vantage-ground in the compelled respect of the rulers and people. Beginning with these two households—of Lydia and the nameless prison-keeper—it seems to have well maintained the spirit and teaching of the great Apostle.

Going from the prison as innocent men, for their own dignity's sake as well as to leave parting words of instruction and comfort with the new disciples, they tarried awhile at the house of Lydia. Then, leaving these first Macedonian converts to the care of Luke (and, perhaps, Timothy), Paul and Silas set forth on their journey. B.—We do not see Luke again in the Apostle's company till the third missionary journey and the second visit to Macedonia. At this exact point of separation, we observe that he drops the style of an eye-witness and resumes that of a historian, until the second time of meeting, after which he writes as an eye-witness till the arrival at Rome and the very close of the Acts. He appears again on a voyage from Philippi to Troas (Acts 20 : 56), as now he has appeared on a voyage from Troas to Philippi. H.

Of all the churches which Paul founded, the Philippians seem to have been the most free from fault, and the most attached to himself. In the Epistle which he wrote to them we find no censure and much praise; and so zealous was their love for Paul, that they alone (of all the churches which he founded) forced him from the very beginning to accept their contributions for his support. We might suppose from this that they were a wealthy church; yet Paul tells us that “in the heavy trial which had proved their steadfastness, the fullness of their joy had overflowed *out of the depth of their poverty*, in the richness of their liberality.” C.

Section 217.

ACTS xvii. 1-15.

1 Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonia, where was a synagogue of the Jews: and Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, 2 and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging,

that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead ; and that this Jesus, 4 whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas ; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. 5 But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted 6 the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These 7 that have turned the world upside down are come hither also : whom Jason hath received : and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one 8 Jesus. And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these 9 things. And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go. 10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea : who coming 11 thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the 12 scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed ; also of 13 honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few. But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they 14 came thither also, and stirred up the people. And then immediately the brethren sent 15 away Paul to go as it were to the sea : but Silas and Timotheus abode there still. And they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens : and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timotheus for to come to him with all speed, they departed.

WHAT true nobleness is and how it manifests itself, according to God's estimate, is here disclosed by the Holy Ghost. It is that *open-heartedness that searches, and ponders, and receives God's own word of instruction and direction*. It is that *childlike receptiveness of heart* that not only believes and trusts in God, but *habitually delights in his truth and tests his promises*. The truth of God is adapted to the whole spiritual being, and is the only thing that meets and satisfies all its needs. As its reception is necessary to the knowledge of God, so the heart-appropriation of its promises is essential to their actual experience. Therefore, of all searching and study, this in itself best rewards the soul ; while it alone, through an inwrought faith and hope, insures the rich return of God's continual blessing. B.

I believe that the Bible is to be understood and received in the plain and obvious meaning of its passages ; since I can not persuade myself that a book intended for the instruction and conversion of the whole world should cover its true meaning in such mystery and doubt that none but critics and philosophers can discover it ; and that he is the most accomplished Christian scholar who hath been educated at the feet of Jesus. *Daniel Webster*.

THE vast territory subject to Rome was covered with a network of magnificent roads, which moved in straight lines, crossing mountains and bridging rivers, binding together the most remote cities, and connecting them all with the capital. The deep ruts, worn in the hard, basaltic pavement, and still visible even in places far from the metropolis, show to what extent they were used. Five main lines went out from Rome to the extremities of the empire. These, with their branches running in whatever direction public convenience required, were connected at the seaports with the routes of maritime travel. A journey might have been made upon Roman highways, interrupted only by brief trips upon the sea, from Alexandria to Carthage, thence through Spain and France, and northward to the Scottish border ; then back through Leyden, Cologne, Milan, eastward by land to Constantinople and Antioch, and thence to Alexandria ; and the dis-

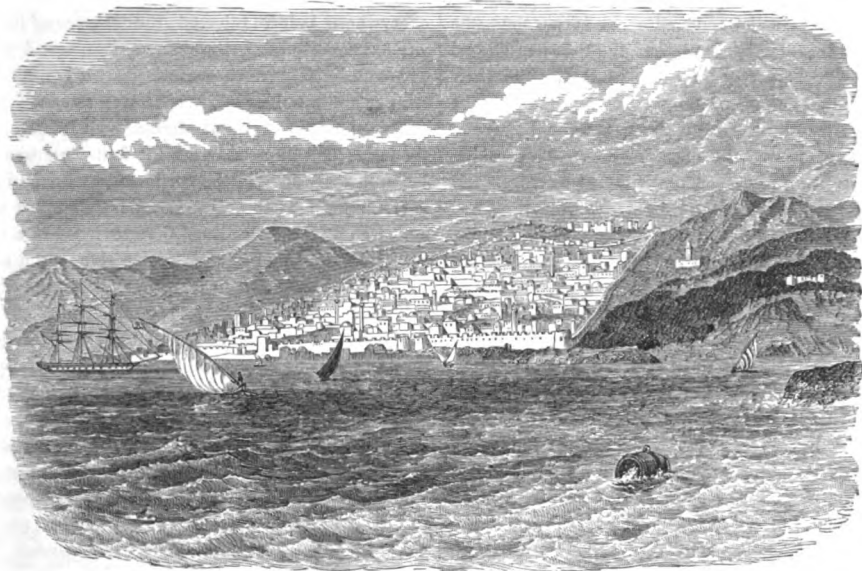
tance traversed would have exceeded seven thousand miles. The traveler could measure his progress by the mile-stones along all these roads. G. P. F.

1-4. *At Thessalonica Paul preaches Christ and founds a Church.*—From Philippi to Thessalonica—one hundred miles a little south of west—Paul traversed one of the great Roman roads. The *Via Egnatia* extended across Macedonia nearly east and west, five hundred miles, from the Adriatic to the river Hebrus in Thrace. Thessalonica was about midway between these points. Amphipolis, an historic city, thirty-three miles from Philippi and Apollonia, a further thirty miles, were convenient tarrying places on the three days' journey ; the third bringing them thirty-seven miles to Thessalonica. (See map, p. 112.)

Thessalonica, at the head of the Thermaic Gulf, was then the capital and chief city of the Roman province of Macedonia. Originally called *Thermae*,

it was renamed by Cassander, who rebuilt it in honor of his wife Thessalonica, the sister of Alexander the Great. This name had been given her by Philip as a memorial of a signal victory in Thessaly. Fronting the sea, built in successive tiers upon a steep, rocky ascent, it was a beautiful city; and, under the Romans, a populous and wealthy com-

mercial center. B.—Before the founding of Constantinople, it shared the trade of the Ægean with Ephesus and Corinth. Through the middle ages, it never ceased to be important; and it is at the present day, under the name Salonica, the second city in European Turkey. The reason of this continued preëminence is, found in its geographical position:



Salonica—Ancient Thessalonica. (See map, p. 112.)

on the inner bend of the Thermaic Gulf; on the sea-margin of a vast plain watered by several rivers; and at the entrance of the pass which commands the approach to the other great Macedonian level. We see at once how appropriate a place it was for one of the starting-points of the Gospel in Europe; and we can appreciate the force of Paul's expression a few months later, when he says that from them "the word of the Lord had sounded forth like a trumpet, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place." H.—Attracted by the great advantages for trade, the number of Jews was large; and it has remained so until the present day, when it is estimated at nearly one third in a population of seventy thousand.

Into their synagogue, "as his manner, or custom, was," Paul went upon the first Sabbath after his arrival. His theme was Christ—a suffering Messiah—and one risen from the dead. His sole authority, his only ground both of argument and appeal, was the Jewish Scriptures. As at Antioch (ch. 13) so here—and everywhere—always "out of the Scriptures," he "opens" or explains, and "alleges" or proclaims, "Christ crucified, the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." His basis of statement, like

his Master's, is, "*It is written.*" And responsive to the risen Master's expression to the two disciples on the road, "*Ought not Christ to have suffered?*" is this of Paul, "that Christ *must needs* have suffered!" Doubtless, too, responsive to the Master's proof from "Moses and the Prophets" was Paul's unfolding of the Christ; in the types, the sacrifices, the promises and the prophecies of the old covenant. The meaning of the *ought* and the *must needs*, as applied to Christ's suffering, was explained, as he has reasoned it in his Epistles: *that God might be just and yet the justifier of the sinner, penitent and believing in Jesus.*

Three weeks he continued his ministry in the synagogue. Then, although a few of the Jews believed, the greater number arrayed themselves against Paul. Compelled to desist from preaching in their synagogue, he remained for a considerable period—at least three or four months—laboring among the Gentiles, and with great success. Besides the few Jews, "a great multitude" of Greek proselytes, and many of the "chief women," believed, and were divinely led to cast in their lot with Paul and Silas. In so comparatively brief a period was created and organized that Church of the Thessalonians to whom not long after Paul addressed his two Epistles. As we learn from these Epistles, a chief topic of his

preaching at this time had been the second coming of Christ in regal majesty. It is not, therefore, surprising that the unbelieving Jews (who had listened to purpose) should instigate the mob to accuse these Christians of setting up *another king, one Jesus*.

5-9. *Jason and Other Disciples dragged before the Rulers and accused, but released on Bail.*—The Jews were again the persecutors, and from the same cause as at Antioch—envy that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs to the promises of God. Yet their pride neither disdained nor scrupled to employ the worst elements of the populace, the vagabond and vile idlers around the market-place. This rabble they stirred up to gather at the house of Jason and demand the surrender of Paul and Silas. When these could not be discovered, they seized the disciples found in the house and dragged them before the rulers. Their exaggerated statement respecting Paul and Silas, in the introduction to their charge against Jason and the rest, affords striking evidence of the widespread and deep impression made by the Gospel in the few years of Paul's ministry. "These men have turned the world upside down!" is the testimony by which, while designing to calumniate and injure these preachers of Jesus, they only prove their fidelity and success. The *charge* is the old one against Christ—of disloyalty to Cæsar. Yet the loyalty of these accusing Jews, like those before Pilate, was only a cloak and pretense.

The charge had a peculiar significance in Thessalonica. For it was, by special favor of the Roman emperors, a free city, with elective magistrates and a representative legislature. And these high privileges of self-government were conditioned upon strict fidelity to Rome. Hence the charge of committing or inciting treason would be jealously heeded by magistrates and people. But unlike the magistrates (prætors) of Philippi, who yielded to the mob's demands, these rulers, or *politarchs* (a term meaning "governors of the citizens," also accurately used by Luke, and a title still existing in an inscription upon an entrance archway), acted as became their judicial character. Either they received the explanation that Christ had given Pilate of His kingship over the empire of truth with the heart as the sphere of his rule, or they were satisfied that no treason was intended. For they released Jason and his companions, after receiving security for their pledge that no more trouble should ensue. Partly in compliance with this pledge, but chiefly for the safety of Paul and Silas, and the prosperity of the infant Church, "the brethren immediately sent them away by night to Berea."

10-12. *The Berean Jews compare the Apostle's Preaching with the Word of God. Their Consequent Faith.*—In Berea Paul keeps up "his manner" of

going first to the synagogue, notwithstanding his discouraging reception by the Thessalonian Jews. This city, forty-five miles southwest of Thessalonica, still remains under the name of Verria, with a population of eighteen or twenty thousand.

The record of the Jews of Berea—a considerable body—is most honorable. The mass of the nation, especially the highest in office and culture, had everywhere before rejected the claims of Christ *without investigation*, through contempt and pride. These Bereans were characterized by a far different temper and a nobler spirit. What Christ had vainly urged upon the Jews at Jerusalem (John 5 : 39), they did; and as a body for the first time was this "searching" done in the spirit of candid and earnest inquiry. Their *nobleness*—so is their spirit characterized by the Holy Ghost—was evinced in a mind attent to hear and awake to perceive, and a heart willing to receive the new truths and thoroughly to investigate their authority and their claims. Therefore, day by day, as Paul taught, they tested his teaching by its agreement with the Scriptures to which he appealed. Thus going to the divine source, without any bias of prejudice or partisanship, they honestly sought for truth, applied their minds to its test, and formed their own judgment upon the evidence divinely furnished. So they *most* honored the Word, and best seconded the efforts of its preachers. And so *searching*, as Christ commanded, they *found*, as Christ had promised: *they believed!* Would that all thoughtful souls were thus *noble!* Would that preachers in the study and the pulpit, hearers in the pew, and readers in the home, were all free from the unconscious trammels of preconceived opinions, of educated prejudice or trained partisanship, respecting the truths of the Divine Word! Would that all were *habituated* to simple, honest, earnest, prayerful search *to know nothing but the mind of God*, as disclosed in the Scriptures He has given us by inspiration.

13, 14. *Paul sent away from Berea, because of Persecution stirred up by Jews from Thessalonica.*—Only a few weeks, at the most, did he probably remain in Berea. During this period he sought, but was unable, to revisit Thessalonica (1 Thes. 2 : 18). With the same spirit and purpose as in his First Journey he was pursued to Lystra, the envious, hating Jews sought to break up his good work in Berea. And they employed their usual method, of instigating the people to mob violence. But the "brethren" anticipated their plans by sending away Paul. *Many* of them escorted him (not "as it were," but) *even down to the sea*, as the quicker and safer way of escape, and the more direct and expeditious route to some place of destination. Some went with him as far as Athens, and returned with his message to Silas and Timothy. B.

That the apostle had no deliberate purpose of going to Athens seems clear from the statement that the brethren at Berea sent him away to go to the sea ; and then his conductors, guided no doubt by circumstances, such as what vessels happened to be sailing, brought him to Athens. The distinctive *divine call* which appointed him the Apostle of the Gentiles is made all the clearer from the slowness, not to say reluctance, with which he is urged on from Jerusalem to Cilicia and Syria, from Asia Minor to Europe, from the Jewish settlements in Macedonia to Athens and Corinth, as if the voice were repeated at every step, "*Depart! for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.*" Paul was no rash adventurer, rushing forward in his own strength

to the conflict with Greek philosophy and Roman force. S.

Of the future of this Berean church we are not informed. Silas remained with it for a considerable period longer. And Timothy took part in his care of it, until Paul sent the youthful evangelist (in his stead) to exhort and confirm in their faith the Thessalonian believers. But the noble character of its members, their remarkable freedom from prejudice, and their instant hearty acceptance of the Word, seem to authorize the belief that theirs was an unusually attractive history ; developing no peculiarities of doctrine or practice that required a distinctive epistle from their great Christian founder. B.

Section 218.

ACTS xviii. 16-34.

16 Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw
17 the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews,
18 and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. Then
certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him. And some
said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange
19 gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. And they took him,
and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof
20 thou speakest, is? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know
21 therefore what these things mean. (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there
spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)
22 Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that
23 in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I
found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye
24 ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things
therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with
25 hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he
26 giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men
for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed,
27 and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might
28 feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: for in him we
live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we
29 are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to
think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's de-
30 vice. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men
31 every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the
world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained: *whereof* he hath given assur-
ance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead.
32 And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said,
33 We will hear thee again of this *matter*. So Paul departed from among them. Howbeit
34 certain men clave unto him, and believed: among the which *was* Dionysius the Areopagite,
and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

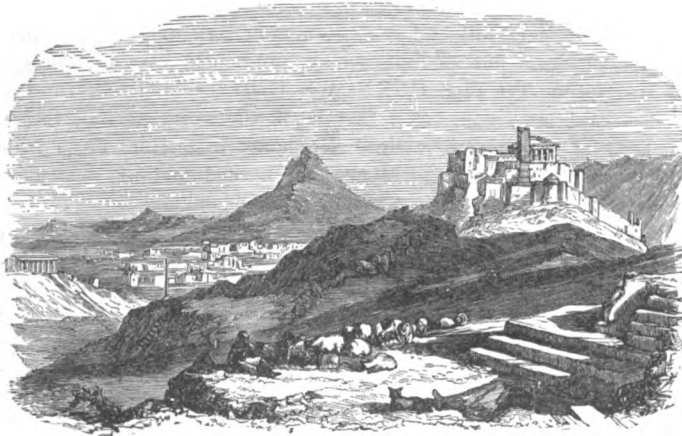
By no means so strange to the ear of the ancient world was the doctrine of the future life, and of the resurrection of the body, as was this doctrine, That Truth is every man's concernment, every man's right, and every man's most necessary possession. The apostolic voice, sounding throughout the ancient world, and calling upon "all men everywhere to repent, and to believe the gospel," besides its direct religious import, carried an inevitable, though latent inference, which has effected the greatest of all the revolutions that have marked the intellectual condition of mankind. This challenge to repent and to believe awakened in every bosom a sense of responsibility altogether new, putting as it did every human being in a position of direct relationship to God, the Judge of all, and fixing in the minds of all a deep conviction that the difference between truth and error is of infinite consequence to men individually. Never, until it was proclaimed by the apostles, had it been surmised, either by Greek or Jew, that Truth, sacred Truth, the brightest daughter of the skies, might be vulgarized, and offered to the acceptance of the mass of mankind. In the ancient world, Truth, whether theological or physical, was, like the costly perfumes of the East, an exquisite luxury, which should be found only within marble palaces. But in the modern world, and this vast change is attributable mainly to the spread of Christianity, truth has become, like the very breezes of heaven, common property, and is everywhere sweet, salutary, free. I. T.

THE order and course of Paul's Second Journey is easily remembered by noting its *three* geographical divisions—the first including *Asia Minor*; the second, *Macedonia*, with the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea; the third (upon which we now enter), *Greece*, then called Achaia. Athens and Corinth were its principal cities. (See map, p. 129.)

16, 17. Athens, forty-six miles east of Corinth, was situated three to four miles from the coast of the Saronic Gulf, though connected by a wall-inclosure with its seaport, Piræus. It had long been distinguished above other ancient cities in art and philosophy, in learning and culture; noted, too, for its statesmen and warriors. Even in its subject and

1. The *Agora*, or *market*, upon a low level in a central locality—a place of concourse for traffic, for worship, and for public discourse or discussion. 2. The *Museum*, upon a hill (south of the Agora). 3. The *Pnyx*, an inclosed rocky eminence (on the west of the Agora) where political assemblages met. 4. The *Acropolis*, a towering temple-crowned height on the east, with a table summit (1,000 by 500 feet), long appropriated to the structures and offices of worship. 5. Another separate rocky eminence (on the north of the Agora, between the Pnyx and the Acropolis), the *Areopagus*, or *Mars Hill*—so called from the legendary trial of that god. A flight of sixteen steps, cut in the stone, led up from the Agora to the Areopagus. Here was the seat of the supreme tribunal, which sentenced eminent State criminals, and adjudicated upon questions of religion. No other place was so appropriate for the proposed theme of Paul's discourse.

All these five centers of popular interest were still great sanctuaries of art, religion, and history. They were still resplendent with temple-structures, porticoes, and altars; edifices of the rarest architectural beauty, consecrated to the gods and to the glory of



Athens—the Acropolis.

declining condition under the Romans, it was still outwardly magnificent—still famous for its trophies of art, its schools of science and philosophy. It was still the university of the world, and its people retained all their pride of knowledge and culture.

There were mainly *five great centers* of public attraction, centers of renowned historic transactions.

They were filled with the master-pieces of statuary, by Phidias and his creative successors, representing all mythical and imaginary divinities, and all memorable persons and events in the long brilliant history of this widely known and famous city. But all this glory of art and history was perverted to the uses and corrupting effects of

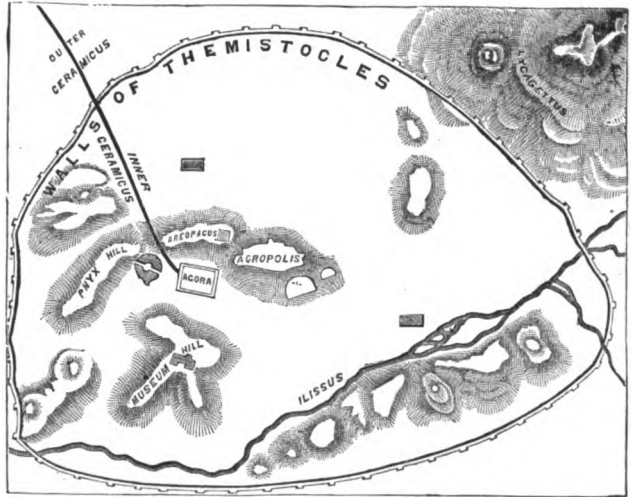
idolatrous worship. Appreciating, as Paul could, the grandeur and beauty of its architecture and sculptures, the high culture and renowned deeds represented in its monumental statuary, his heart was yet profoundly saddened by the waste and misuse of these products of genius in their subservience to a worship which was the medium of all selfish and vile gratification. Destitute of all knowledge of God and of sin, without any high aim or object in living, their religious sentiments, beliefs, and ceremonies of worship, nay more, the very ministry of art, taste, and culture, encouraged and wrought only a shameless profligacy. The popular estimate of the character of their gods was such that Seneca said, "that no other effect could possibly be produced, but that all shame on account of sin must be taken away from men, if they believe in such gods."

Beholding the multitude of idols, to which such a character was attributed and such worship rendered, no wonder that Paul's spirit was stirred within him. No wonder that with the Jews in the synagogue, and with the Greeks in the Agora or market, he *reasoned* (not *disputed*), and preached his old theme—Jesus and the Resurrection.

18-21. Here, first, Christianity came in contact with human philosophy: especially with the two systems most at variance with its pure and elevating principles. *Daily*, for many days, he entered this new arena, where men congregated for worship or gossip, for trade or discussion; and in temple, bazaar, or cloister, boldly avowed and pressed home the Christian truth upon all of every creed and class who would listen. Of the four great schools of philosophy, which had their origin and seat in the city of Socrates, only the representatives of two seem to have here encountered Paul. No reference is made to disciples of the two more distinguished philosophers, Plato and Aristotle; the former, as pupil of Socrates, founder of the Lyceum, and the latter of the Academy. B.—It is observable that no mention is here made of the *Peripatetics*, *Academics*, or *Platonists*, whose doctrines were not so much opposed to Christianity as those of the Stoics and Epicureans. Indeed, they may be said to have in some degree prepared the better part of the world for the reception of the gospel. W.

In a remarkable conception respecting the Teacher from heaven whom the world needs, occurs this prophetic utterance of Plato: "This just person

must be poor, and void of all qualifications but those of virtue alone. A wicked world will not bear his instructions and reproofs; and therefore, within three or four years after he begins to preach,



Plan of Athens, showing the Agora, or Market, the Pnyx, the Areopagus, the Acropolis, and the Museum.

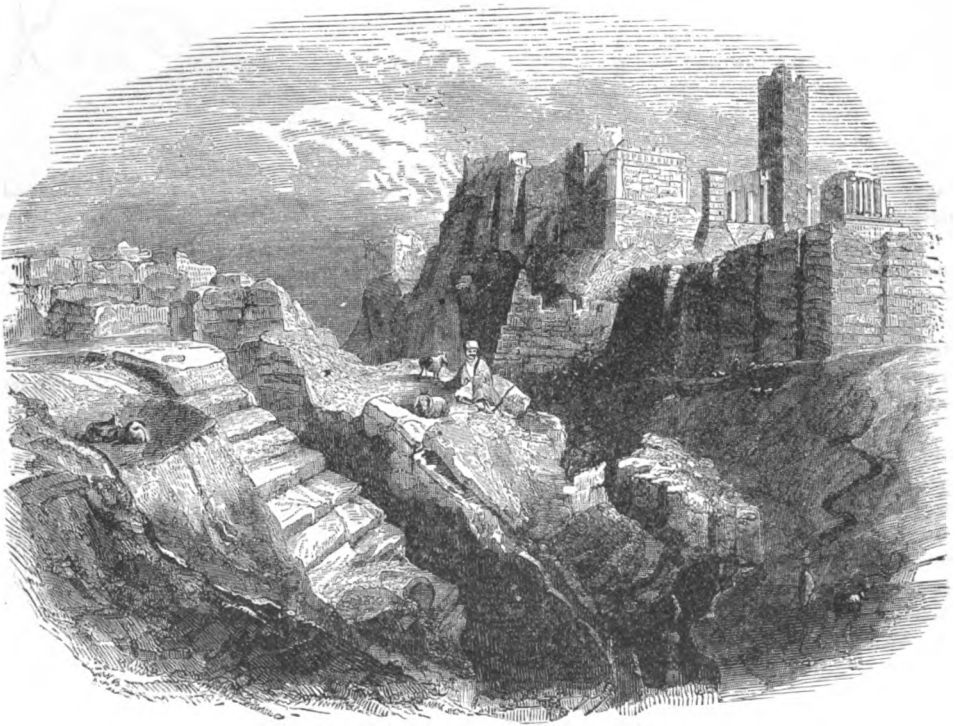
he should be persecuted, imprisoned, scourged, and at last be put to death." B.

Epicureans, or Philosophers of the Garden, owed their name to Epicurus, who died at Athens in B. C. 270, leaving his house and garden to be the constant seat of his philosophy; which was accordingly maintained there till the time of which we are now reading. He taught that the highest good and great end of existence was serene enjoyment, which his followers interpreted as meaning pleasure, and that often of the grossest kind. He ascribed the creation of the world to chance; and, although he acknowledged the existence of the gods, described them as indifferent to human interests and human conduct. The Stoics, or Philosophers of the Porch, were so called from the *Stoa Pæcile*, or Painted Porch, adjoining one of the Athenian squares or markets, where their founder taught at the same time with Epicurus. The Stoics acknowledged the supremacy of moral good, and even affected to deny the difference between pain and pleasure. They also acknowledged a supreme God and a providence; but the former confounded with the world or universe, the latter governed by a fatal necessity. In later times, the Epicurean system was a favorite with the Greeks, and the Stoical with the Romans, as suiting their national characters respectively; but each had adherents in both races. J. A. A.—In Epicureanism, it was man's sensual nature which arrayed itself against the claims of the gospel; in Stoicism, it was his self-righteousness and pride of

intellect; and it is difficult to say which of the two systems rendered its votaries the more indisposed to embrace the truth. *Hackett.*

With mixed curiosity and scorn, Paul was heard by these disciples of Epicurus and Zeno. Some called him "babbler," literally, a bird that picks up seeds; then, a scrap-beggar about the market-place; and last, a reporter of idle tales picked up anywhere. Others, according to the Greek notion of peopling all worlds with spiritual powers or demons, said, He is telling us of new demons or deities. Still they were so much interested in Paul's teaching that they asked him to address them more formally and at length, from the inclosure of the Areopagus adjoining, and led him up the stony steps to a rock-hewn platform. B.

He had brought the new truth, to proclaim it in this capital of men's intellectual life. In his person, on his landing at the Piræus, the morning light of the new age rose on a second continent. Yet everything about him was appallingly bleak, every face was unfriendly. Any courage less valiant than that of the Son of God in his heart must have quailed before the overpowering splendor and despotism of the old heathenism, in the very stronghold of its dominion. Athens was the brain of the world. The apostle had come to it, as fearless of its sophistries and arrogance as he had been of the swords and dungeons of Syria. He had come to say: "You classic Greeks, artists, poets, philosophers, are seeking after wisdom; but the foolishness of God is wiser than the wisest of you. One



The Areopagus and the Acropolis.

God made you; one Saviour died for you. Your Olympus is a fiction. I preach unto you Christ, and him crucified, the wisdom of God and the power of God; your Saviour, if you will be saved." How right that this should have been spoken from the Athenian Areopagus, the hill-top of that luminous center of the old pagan civilization: where Stoics and Epicureans and soldiers—philosophy and pleasure and power—Alexandria and Corinth and Rome, and the three continents, could hear! F. D. H.

Not only in Athens, but no doubt often in his

circuit through Greece and its colonies, he stood surrounded by the sarcastic curiosity of Stoics, Epicureans, and Academicians. He knew, on such occasions, in what spirit he was listened to, as a busy and babbling zealot of the Jewish superstition. He could penetrate—nay, he could feel a sympathy with the erudite scorn of his auditors: he understood the sentiment with which men of high culture give ear, for a moment, to a tale of wonder which they have condemned as absurd before it is commenced. In the oblique glance of the half-closed eye, in the

sneer that played on the lip, he read the mind and the malice of every sophist. He could mentally change positions with his auditors, and at the moment while uttering the "strange things" of the gospel could feel as they felt—the harsh and abhorrent character both of the principles and of the facts which he had to announce—Jesus, the Galilean teacher—crucified—raised to life—constituted Lord and Judge of men, and now giving repentance for remission of sins. This was his burden, at Antioch, at Ephesus, at Nicopolis, at Corinth, and at Athens! I. T.

22, 23. The Introduction and Theme of Paul's Discourse on Mars Hill.—The outlook upon the city from the memorable rocky height upon which he stood, the character of his audience, and the special purpose for which they were now gathered about him, help us to some just appreciation of the courage of the man, and of his wonderful skill in shaping his discourse. In it we find a rare combination of prudence and courtesy, of wisdom, fidelity, and boldness. Never was Paul's own counsel to Timothy (2 Tim. 2: 24), especially its one particular, *apt to teach*, more signally illustrated than in this introduction and in the plan of his address. He does not (as our translation unhappily expresses it) charge them with being "superstitious" or with "ignorantly" worshiping. He simply speaks of their exceeding devoutness or reverence for their gods; and characterizes their worship by borrowing the very term inscribed on their altar. As a wise and model reformer, he knows that truth expels error as light banishes darkness. He seizes his opportunity, not to denounce heathen priestcraft and impure worship, but to proclaim the true God and explain true worship. With a divine guidance he masters the peril of his position by turning its very difficulties into a means of education and of conviction.



Ancient Altars: 1, 2. Egyptian. 3, 5. Assyrian. 4. Babylonian.

As often before, in the manner of Christ, he uses things familiar to the Athenians to teach them great and sublime truths they had never apprehended. With this purpose and in this spirit he refers to the multitude of altars (not *devotions*, but *objects* of devotion), and takes his theme from an inscription upon one: (literally) *TO GOD UNKNOWNABLE*. This God, whom they unknowingly worshiped, and whom they thought to be unknowable, Paul pro-

claims to them. And he addresses them as men of intelligence, and of capable judgment, in all things showing them proper respect and courtesy. B.

The religion of the Greek had in it a kind of attractiveness, but it took all the grandeur out of the universe. Instead of seeing the supreme God and Father everywhere and in all things—shining in the beauty, dazzling in the glory, giving in the fruitfulness, speaking in the truth—he saw himself imaged there. It was man's universe, not Jehovah's. He humanized the clouds, the forests, the rivers, the seas; peopled them with deities and half deities, with satyrs and fauns, with muses and nymphs, each of which represented some side of man's nature. He set upon everything his own image and super-scription. If there was any real and mighty God, any power irresistibly making for righteousness and yet overflowing with love, the Greek had pushed him afar off and out. At best there remained but a horrible dream of God in his conception of all-comprehending and relentless fate. The altar "to the unknown God" became the only Greek altar which was in any sense an altar to the true God. D. S. G.—Paul declared the unknown God, whom the Athenians ignorantly worshiped, to be the great Creator of the world, in whom and by whom all things were made, and exist. From the visible proofs of his providence, in his government of the world, he leads them to the consideration of his spiritual nature; and thus condemns the idolatrous worship of the Athenians, while he gradually unfolds to his philosophical audience the important truths of their accountableness and immortality, which were demonstrated by the fact of Christ's resurrection from the dead. G. T.

24, 25. God, the Creator, Ruler, and Life of the Universe needeth no Service of Men's Hands.—The independent, unlimited, absolute source and controller of all manifest existences is separate from and superior to all. In this implied statement, without directly controverting the polytheism of the Greeks, or particular notions of Epicurean or Stoic, Paul yet overturns the main points of all their systems. For he announces a *personal* God, against the Greek belief in material deities; he declares "the *unity* of the Godhead, against Polytheism; the creation of all things by him, against the Epicurean theory of a fortuitous concourse of atoms; of his *government* of the world, against the Stoical doctrine of Fate and the Epicurean notion of indifference" (Wordsworth).

With temples on every side, majestic and beautiful, but structures of human hands, he yet boldly asserts (as Stephen before him to the Jews) that in hand-made temples the Lord—the Master—of heaven and earth does not dwell; to them he is not confined. Nay, more, with thousands of altars smoking

with offerings, and ten thousand idol-shrines laden with costly gifts and with food and drink, from those who thus supplied their dependent deities' needs, Paul as boldly announces the new and elevating truth, that the *Maker and Giver* of all needs no ministry of those He has made. And amid innumerable forms of idol gods, wrought in gold and silver and stone with every ingenious device of finest human art, he hesitates not to tell them that the Godhead is not to be conceived of or symbolized under such graven or chiseled forms. So boldly and wisely Paul disclosed the positive and fundamental conceptions relating to the one only living and true God. Having thus declared the unity of God, with his creatorship and control of the universe, he turns to consider the corresponding unity of man, and his place and work in God's plan. B.

Up to a certain point in this high view of the Supreme Being, the Philosopher of the Garden, as well as of the Porch, might listen with wonder and admiration. It soared, indeed, high above the vulgar religion; but in the lofty and serene Deity, who disdained to dwell in the earthly temple, and needed nothing from the hand of man, the Epicurean might almost suppose that he heard the language of his own teacher. But the next sentence, which asserted the providence of God as the active, creative energy—as the conservative, the ruling, the ordaining principle—annihilated at once the atomic theory, and the government of blind chance, to which Epicurus ascribed the origin and preservation of the universe. *Milman*.—And when the Stoic heard the apostle say that we ought to rise to the contemplation of the Deity without the intervention of earthly objects, and that we live and move and have our being in him—it might have seemed like an echo of his own thought—until the proud philosopher learned that it was no pantheistic diffusion of power and order of which the apostle spoke, but a living center of government and love—that the world was ruled, not by the iron necessity of Fate, but by the providence of a personal God—and that from the proudest philosopher repentance and meek submission were sternly exacted. H.

26-29. *Mankind one in Nature, limited and controlled as to Time and Place; yet Children of God, supplied by his Providence, and designed for his Companionship.*—Heathenism had never attained the conception of unity in the origin or in the history of the race. According to the common belief, different races or nations had a different origin, and each its independent mission and history. Humanity had no common ties of interest, association, and destiny. This erroneous belief, which suggested and fostered the idea of many gods, Paul corrects by the assertion that God had made *all nations of one blood*. Especially he cuts up by the

root the conceit of the Athenians that they came of an aboriginal stock, and were thus distinct from and superior to all others. B.—The Greeks were a fine race of men; and they knew it. They trusted in themselves that they were intellectually and physically beautiful, and despised others. Mankind were divided in their conception into two great sections—Greeks and Barbarians. They would not admit a community of race with other peoples. *Arnot*.—Paul tells them that they belong to the one race, made and controlled by the one God; that this God is not far from them; that he can be sought and found by them; nay, more, that he has made them in order that they might seek his fellowship, and so find that supreme good for which their souls had long been craving and unconsciously groping. B.

Till Christ came, this majestic fact in our condition, that our little human tent here is overarched by an infinite heaven of light and love which really opens and pours down a living influence upon us, scarcely anywhere broke through the pagan shadows. Here and there, in some half-awakened soul, there was a religious dream or guess—some glimmer of the light that was to rise on rich and poor alike—some Athenian thinker, such as Paul found “feeling after God, if haply he might find him”—some solitary flash like the Stoic maxim, “Deny thyself and aspire,” *almost* worthy of the Son of man—some morning-star like the reason of Plato. But these harbingers of the day only cast slender streaks on a few hill-tops, showing how broad and deep the darkness lay on all the lands below. F. D. H.

Not far from any one of us. Paul purposely calls this to mind in addressing the men of Athens, who were accustomed to represent their gods as in Olympic rest and self-satisfaction, throning it high above earth and her puny inhabitants. He was really within reach of their hand; they had not to climb to the height of heaven, or to descend into the depths of earth, but merely to look within their own bosoms, in order to discover unmistakable traces of him. *Van O.*

Then he advances to the idea of the fatherhood of God. To conciliate their minds toward this grand truth, he cites one of the many vague conceptions of this fatherly relation (of Jove), found in passages of the Greek mythical poetry. The words quoted are found in an astronomical poem of Aratus, a native of Soli in Paul's own province of Cilicia; and also in a hymn to Jupiter by Cleanthes of Lycia.

The point which Paul makes (v. 29) of our childship to God, as proving image-worship to be irrational, is presented in the same conciliatory spirit. “As we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think,” etc. But he puts his point clearly and

strongly. If we, possessing such intellectual and spiritual forces, are sprung from Him, we must conceive of God as something other and higher than a mere metal or stone image. This human spirit can not proceed from the stone or metal forms which human hands have shaped. Human hands can not create the Creator of this breathing, moving, living fabric of body and soul.

30, 31. *Their Past Ignorance God had overlooked; but now, in the Light from the Incarnation, the Cross, and the Resurrection of Christ, all are enjoined to Repentance and Trust; and Disobedience must encounter only Stern Condemnation.*—Two further instances of Paul's moderation and forbearance occur in the simple phrases: "the times of this ignorance." One, that the weightiest charge he makes against corrupt heathenism is its *ignorance*. The other, that he does not make even this a *personal* charge against his listeners; he only includes them in a general way with the cultured heathen of many centuries. Yet, though so courteous and conciliatory, he is faithful. For he does charge these intelligent and polished Athenians with *ignorance*. And, while intimating that God forbore with (not "winked at"—a figure the word will not bear) the ignorance of past generations, suffering it to pass without special interference of his grace or reproof, sending no messengers to them as he did to the Jews, yet, in God's name, he now commands *their* repentance, as sharing the common guilt of men. In his previous daily preaching, the apostle had taught some of them about repentance and faith in the crucified and risen Christ. Now he presses the obligation upon all to confess and turn from sin; and enforces God's command by the great, decisive fact that they, with all mankind, must stand before Christ in an appointed day of judgment. And, in completion of his appeal, he adds, that Christ, *now impliedly the Saviour*, is proven by the *resurrection to be then the Judge!* B.

There is a day appointed wherein the Son of man will appear in sensible glory, and exercise his judicial power upon angels and men. He is now "seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high," and the celestial spheres are under his feet: universal nature feels the power of his scepter: he reigns in the hearts of the saints by his Word and Spirit, and restrains the fury of his enemies in what degrees he pleases: but still his servants are in distress, and his rebellious enemies insolently break his laws; and the curtains of heaven conceal his glory from us: therefore a time is prefixed when in the face of the world he will make an eternal difference by rewards and punishments between the righteous and the wicked, and his government shall have its complete and glorious issue. *Bates.*

32-34. *Results of Paul's Discourse to the as-*

sembled Athenians.—Wise, forbearing, and conciliatory as was his address, the indirect preaching of personal guilt, accountability, and condemnation to the haughty self-righteous Stoic and the pleasure-seeking Epicurean, and especially the mention of a resurrection—counted by all classes an impossible absurdity—at once broke up the audience, and "Paul departed from among them." B.

Paul rightly divided that day the Word of Truth, and the Word divided the hearers into distinct and well-defined groups: into mockers, hesitators, and cleaving believers. The mockers, whether socially higher or lower, were in spirit the hardest and coldest of the company. They were fast and free livers. They enjoyed life, and kept the thought of death away. They went away laughing at the truth of God and the God of truth. The *hesitators*, convinced in their consciences that the testimony of the apostle had all the air of truth, did not dare to scoff; but, wedded to their own ease and pleasure, they were not willing to take up the cross and follow Christ. Accordingly they made a respectful apology to the preacher and went away. The *third* class cleaved to him and believed; that is, while this man's lips were the channel through which the Word of Life reached them, the ultimate longing of their hearts—their ultimate grasp—reached and rested on Christ crucified, whom Paul preached. They cleaved to Paul, but they believed in Christ. *Arnol.*

A few converts were gained; but *one* of the large and intelligent class whom he had aimed to reach. With his name is intimated his membership of that most ancient Athenian tribunal comprising only men of the highest integrity and greatest distinction. The lesson of this failure was of great value to Paul; and he has written it in full in the first three of his Epistles. Among communities of the ignorant, the hardened, and even the wealthy and profligate, as in Asia Minor and Macedonia, and afterward in Corinth and Ephesus, the gospel found ready and abundant entrance. But in this city, which represented the highest attainments in human wisdom and genius, it could obtain no foothold. Paul's utter failure here to found a church of Christ not only showed that "the world by wisdom knew not God," but that mere human wisdom is the mightiest hindrance to the introduction of the knowledge of God, and to the acceptance of a gracious salvation.

In every age, the same two states of mind comprise the chief hindrances to the entrance and converting energy of the truth of God. On the one hand, a worldly heart and the love of pleasure, exemplified by the Sadducees among the Jews and the

Epicureans among the Greeks. On the other, the pride of reason and of self-righteousness, exemplified by the Pharisees and the Stoics. Behind these two hindering states of mind and helping to produce them, were the two leading heresies of ancient and modern times: one—the doctrine of the Stoics—that confounds God with his entire creation, or *pantheism*; the other—that of the Epicureans—which denies a God in creation, or *materialism*. B.

God can dwell only in himself, where he was be-

fore he made the world. He is Himself his temple. Nevertheless, he has built as many temples for himself as there are living hearts that love him; in these he desires to dwell, to be known, and to be adored. *Aug.*

In every age, those who in any measure realize the force of truth are to be classified as were Paul's hearers in Athens: those who dare deride it; those who hesitate and put off obedience to its demands; and those who take it to their hearts. B.

Section 219.

Acts xviii. 1-22.

- 1 AFTER these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; and found a cer-
- 2 tain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (be-
- 3 cause that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.
- 4 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their
- 5 occupation they were tentmakers. And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and
- 6 persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. And when Silas and Timotheus were come from
- 7 Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews *that Jesus was Christ*.
- 8 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook *his* raiment, and said unto
- 9 them, Your blood *be* upon your own heads; I *am* clean: from henceforth I will go unto the
- 10 Gentiles.
- 11 And he departed thence, and entered into a certain *man's* house, named Justus, *one* that
- 12 worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. And Crispus, the chief ruler
- 13 of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians
- 14 hearing believed, and were baptized. Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision,
- 15 Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set
- 16 on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city. And he continued *there* a year
- 17 and six months, teaching the word of God among them.
- 18 And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord
- 19 against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat, saying, This *fellow* persuadeth men to
- 20 worship God contrary to the law. And when Paul was now about to open *his* mouth,
- 21 Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O *ye* Jews,
- 22 reason would that I should bear with you: but if it be a question of words and names, and
- 23 of your law, look ye *to it*; for I will be no judge of such *matters*. And he drave them
- 24 from the judgment seat. Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the syna-
- 25 gogue, and beat *him* before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things.
- 26 And Paul *after this* tarried *there* yet a good while, and then took his leave of the breth-
- 27 ren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn *his* head
- 28 in Cenchrea: for he had a vow. And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he
- 29 himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. When they desired *him*
- 30 to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; but bade them farewell, saying, I must
- 31 by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if
- 32 God will. And he sailed from Ephesus. And when he had landed at Cæsarea, and gone
- up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch.

PAUL does not forget, even when he is living for the higher aim, the care meanwhile necessary for the things of this world. Faith in the earthly task, not less than in the heavenly calling, is here shown in its true nature and in its high significance. The preacher of the gospel and the tent-maker are not two distinct persons, but one and the same; in a higher and lower sphere, animated by the same principle, and with the question on his lips: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" He shuns not to declare the

whole counsel of God ; but there is in Corinth no more faithful, honest, conscientious artisan than he. *Van O.*—The having a trade, besides enabling him to present an example of quiet industry to his converts, gave him scope for the exercise of self-denial and almsgiving. The extra work and weariness which the trade entailed was a means of keeping under his body and bringing it into subjection ; while the money which it brought in to him was employed in relieving the wants of others as well as his own ; for he says to the elders of Ephesus : “Ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have showed you all things, how that *so laboring ye ought to support the weak.*” E. M. G.

Let none be ashamed who follow a trade ; but only let those be ashamed who live to no purpose, and are idle. The souls of those who are always at work are purer and stronger ; for the idler speaks and does many vain things. But he who labors aright does not easily allow anything useless, either in work, word, or thought, for his soul is always directed to a life of labor. For we are the disciples of the fishermen, of the publicans, of the tent-makers, of Him who was brought up in the carpenter's house. *Chrysa.*

1. *Paul finally withdraws from Athens and goes to Corinth.*—After his brief work and its scanty results, he goes from intellectual but idle Athens, with nothing living but its memories of past eminence, to busy, bustling, crowded Corinth. Forty-five miles apart, both cities were in Greece, or the Roman province of Achaia. This province comprised the

mainland south of Macedonia, and the peninsula called Peloponnesus, or island of Pelops.

A neck of land, itself a barren plain, about four miles across at the narrowest part, joined the peninsula with the mainland. Called the *Isthmus* (afterward giving a name to similar strips of connecting land), it was washed on the western side by the

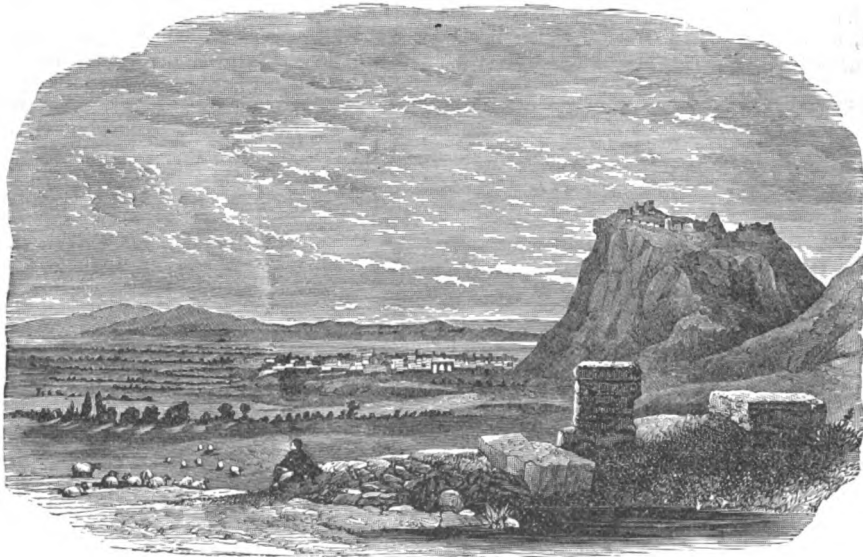


Greece Proper and Peloponnesus. (Note the positions of Athens and Corinth ; the Saronic Gulf, between the two cities ; the Gulf of Corinth, west and north of Corinth ; and the Isthmus, between the two Gulfs.)

Gulf of Corinth, flowing in from the Adriatic Sea ; and on the eastern by the Saronic Gulf, a great inlet of the Ægean Sea. Across the northern end of the Isthmus ran a mountain ridge, having only three defiles, or passes. The southern end was also protected by a ridge (on the east and middle), and by a lofty rock-citadel rising abruptly to a height of two thousand feet, called the *Acrocorinthus*. Between the ridge and the rocky height was a ravine, and on either gulf side a level place. At the base of the northern slope of the Acrocorinthus, "just within the Isthmus, on a table-land descending in terraces to the low plain," lay the city of Corinth. By two seaports—*Lechæum* on the Western Sea, and *Cenchrea* on the Eastern—it could send forth its ships westward and eastward into all waters, and to all the ports of the known then world. And to save time and avoid peril, vessels from either port

were borne over the narrow Isthmus, thus affording larger opportunity for interchange of commodities in the transit and tarry.

The ancient city, i. e., the *Grecian* Corinth, had had a memorable history. It had colonized the shores of the Ionian and Ægean Seas with noted cities. It had established an early historic fame for success in arts and arms, and in manufacture, as well as for commercial greatness and prosperity. But the *Greek* Corinth lasted only until a. c. 146. B. —In that year, by an insult to the ambassadors of Rome, it drew down that terrible destruction which Cicero describes as the extinction of the "light of Greece." Excepting the temples and the buildings on the Acrocorinthus, the city lay in ruins for a century, till it was rebuilt by Julius Cesar in b. c. 46, and the new *Colonia Julia Corinthus* was made the capital of the Roman province of Achaia.



Corinth and the Acrocorinthus.

and the residence of the proconsul. Rapidly recovering its ancient wealth, as a place of great commercial and manufacturing enterprise, it regained also its infamous celebrity as the most dissolute of Greek cities, and a chief seat of the worship of Aphrodite ; while at the same time it was second only to Athens in intellectual activity. S.—It is now an inconsiderable town of two thousand inhabitants with few remnants of the splendid buildings which gave name to the Corinthian order of architecture J. A. A.

Not only by its intense activity and its world-extended commerce was Corinth fitted to be a Christian center, but its people comprised the three main elements upon whom the apostle sought to impress

the truths of the gospel. There were in largest numbers the native *Greeks* of every class and degree of culture. As a Roman colony, there were also a great number of *Romans*, as is intimated by the Latin names in Rom. 16, that epistle being written from Corinth during Paul's second visit. And that a chief settlement of *Jews* was at Corinth, we know from its commercial distinction, and their universal prominence as world-traders, and from Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians. And at this time many had been banished from Rome by Claudius. For these reasons, Paul was guided in the selection of Corinth as the first great center of European Christianity. B.—Corinth claims a conspicuous distinction as the residence of the apostle

during his most critical contests, both with Jews and Greeks, in defense of the very essence of the gospel ; as the place whence he wrote his first apostolic letters—the two Epistles to the Thessalonians ; as the Church to which he addressed those other two epistles, which not only contain the fullest directions on matters of Christian faith and practice, but which reiterate, in terms unequaled in human language for simplicity and force, the one great central truth of the whole gospel—*Jesus Christ and Him Crucified*. S.—From Corinth also, upon his second visit (and third journey), he wrote his most elaborate and instructive Epistle to the Romans.

2, 3. *Takes up his Abode with Aquila and Priscilla.*—Though natives of Pontus in Northeastern Asia Minor, these Jews had resided in Rome, until recently expelled thence with others by Claudius, the fourth Roman emperor. But we find a kind Providence in that edict of Claudius that drove these childless, well-to-do tent-makers with their sympathetic, refined natures from Rome to Corinth. This was God's care of Paul's personal comfort, and his arrangement for the missionary's self-supporting toil. Thus, during the most effective and trying period of his whole career, with the "open door" for the gospel and the "many adversaries," Paul had a home, congenial fellowship, and what he also greatly needed then, a means of invigorating, physical toil and of independent subsistence.

Tent-making he had been taught as a trade in early life, in accordance with universal Jewish usage. This was based upon the idea that without some means of honest livelihood the temptation might arise to knavery or theft. "Teach thy son the law, and teach him a trade !" was the Talmudic instruction to fathers. The latter custom still obtains in the East, and to some extent in Germany and Russia. We may add that the use of tents was and still is very great in those regions ; and tent-making has always been a large and important business. The material—still largely used—was a cloth of goat's hair, which was obtained chiefly from Paul's native province of Cilicia. From the fact that Aquila had a house in Corinth, and afterward another in Ephesus (1 Cor. 16 : 19), and one also in Rome (Rom. 16 : 3-5), it would seem that he conducted an extended and prosperous business, at the same time laboring with his own hands. So that *his* example, as well as that of Paul, affords a signal illustration of the precept: *Not slothful in business ; fervent in spirit ; serving the Lord !* They showed that daily labor, hand-toil or brain-toil (both equally honorable), consists perfectly with and helps to promote spirituality of mind and consecration of heart.

It is further to be noted that Paul had other and special reasons in laboring for his own support among the Greeks of Corinth and Achaia. It was

not a pride of personal independence that led him to forego in his own behalf the Christian law of ministerial support upon which he so earnestly insists in writing to these very Corinthians (1 Cor. 9 : 7-14). But he "would not be burdensome to them" ; nor would he give opportunity to selfish, sharp-eyed Greeks, in or out of the Church, to charge him with seeking *theirs* and not *them*. *Lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ*, summed up his assigned reasons for declining support from the feeble, partially instructed Corinthian Church.

4-6. *His Brief Ministry in the Synagogue, and how brought to a Close.*—Until the arrival of Silas and Timothy—probably for some weeks—he wrought daily through the week, and on the Sabbath earnestly preached in the synagogue to Jews and Greeks. During this period, until after the encouraging vision and words of Christ (vs. 9, 10), Paul seems to have passed through something like Elijah's one experience of excited depression, though without any corresponding act of defection. Speaking of this period, he tells the Corinthians that he was with them *in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling* ; while the tone of both Epistles implies his intensely moved yet depressed frame of mind at this time. And the occurrence in the synagogue, with the special manifestation of Christ immediately following, confirms an impression derived from these Epistles, that the whole of this first Corinthian visit was a time of ordeal and crisis, a period the most active, trying, and decisive in his entire apostolic career.

Yet this depressed state of mind did not arise from personal timidity, for of this, like Elijah, he had none. But his utter failure in Athens, the vastness of that brilliant but most flagrant corruption in the midst of which he stood alone for God, his deep sense of impotence to cope with such tremendous forces of evil, the hardened perversity of the Jews against the truth and their virulent hatred against himself, and his own felt desolation and utter loneliness although naturally so self-reliant—these combined causes stirred all his soul within him. In this excited yet depressed condition Silas and Timothy found him ; and, while relieving his loneliness with their human sympathy and spiritual fellowship, they stimulated his spirit the more by their encouraging news from the Churches of Thessalonica and Berea.

As Christ was *straitened* till his baptism of suffering was accomplished, so Paul, under this state of unworldly excitement, was *straitened* in his work of testimony for Christ. And this intense pressure of spirit wrought itself out in direct fervent appeals to the Jews—to God's own people, who ought to have heeded. But almost as one man, with only a *single known* exception, they opposed Paul and blasphemed

their own Messiah, Jesus. And, under the same intense sense of crisis, the apostle symbolically protests, as their prophets were wont to do, by shaking his raiment; emphatically asserts his own clearance from the guilt of their destruction; and, with warning solemnity, places that guilt upon themselves.

7, 8. *Forsakes the Synagogue, and preaches in the Court of Justus's House.*—As before, at Antioch of Pisidia, Paul departs from the Jewish house of worship. But he goes not far, and with him goes the synagogue's chief ruler as a Christian disciple. In an adjoining house, gladly opened to him by another convert to Christ—a Roman proselyte named Justus—he resumes his fervent faithful ministry. In this new preaching-place, accessible to all of every race and creed and station, many Corinthians were drawn in to hear the truth; and many, besides Crispus and Justus, believed, and confessed Christ in their baptism. B.—From this, as well as several other passages, we find that, when the parents, or heads of households, became Christian believers, so did their children. All were baptized together. So, in one place, we read of "the church which is in the house of Nymphas"; showing that such a group of believers, comprising parents and their children, might constitute a church of itself. How much beauty and sanctity there would be in such a spectacle—a church in each house—and how mightily the world would gain in Christian order, purity, and power, if it were generally realized! F. D. H.

9, 10. *The Manifestation and Encouraging Charge of Christ.*—This vision and the subsequent prosecution before Gallio seem to have occurred very soon after Paul's departure from the synagogue; and while he was still "in weakness and fear and much trembling." Discerning this state of His apostle's heart and the sense of insufficiency that was enfeebling his faith, and foreknowing the greatness of his labor and conflict in the protracted ministry before him, Christ, by this miraculous appearance and word, forearms while forewarning Paul. B.—"I have *much people* in this city"—serving now at heathen altars, slaves now of the grossest vices, nevertheless they are my people; and here you are to abide, from these vile dust-heaps to gather out my jewels—they have not chosen me, but I have chosen them; not for their merits, but out of my mercy chosen them before the foundation of Corinth, or of the world itself. If God's ways are equal, unless there was one rule for the sinners of Corinth and another for us, none are chosen from regard to their merits, or saved through their own ability—salvation being all of grace, pure and undeserved. T. G.

Enough for this single-hearted worker and trustful disciple were the two simple clear declarations of his Master: *I am with thee, and I have much peo-*

ple in this city! No longer could he fear, or would he hold his peace. *We believe and therefore speak!* were among his after words to this very people (2 Cor. 4 : 7-13), verified beforehand in his present large and blessed experience among them. And his Lord's assurance of abundant success was with him only a stronger stimulus to persistent exertion.

11. *Summary of Eighteen Months' Ministry in Corinth.*—His labor was great, his encouragements and discouragements were many and signal. A large church was formed in Corinth, and smaller ones in Cenchrea and at other points in Achaia; for here, as everywhere, his ministry reached to many of the places accessible from the capital. Meanwhile Paul failed not to keep up communication with the infant churches of Macedonia. During this period, too, were written the Two EPISTLES TO THE THESSALONIANS. These were the *first written Epistles*; and the first of Paul's nine Letters to Churches, though the last in the order of our New Testament. Of these two Epistles, the first was prepared and sent soon after Timothy's arrival at Corinth with encouraging intelligence from the church at Thessalonica. Some months later, after receiving further information, the apostle sent the Second Letter to emphasize and confirm the instructions of the First. These Epistles furnish hints of his state of mind: his zealous absorption and success in his labors, his determination of self-support, and his keen sensitiveness to the hostile spirit of the Jews. B.—It is notorious that the order of the Epistles in the New Testament is not their real or chronological order. The mere placing of them in their true sequence throws considerable light upon the history; and, happily, the time of the composition of the more important Epistles can be stated with sufficient certainty. S.

12-17. *Prosecution of Paul before Gallio.*—This immediately followed the night-vision and promise of Christ; and in the result that promise was verified. The Jews were the persecutors. They *assaulted* Paul and brought him to the judgment seat of the proconsul Gallio. The accusation was the same for which Paul and Silas had been illegally scourged and imprisoned at Philippi. But Gallio (the brother of Seneca) had intelligence to discern the truth of the case, and courage to declare an independent judgment upon it. Like Lysias and Festus afterward, he refused to adjudicate upon religious questions outside of their bearing upon Roman law. In his decision, he ruled out the charge which the Jews had made. Not only this, but Paul's accusers were disgracefully driven from the judgment-seat. Even further than this, when the Greeks present immediately turned upon these accusing Jews and beat their leader Sosthenes, the new ruler of the synagogue, Gallio suffered it to be done in his presence.

And so, as Christ had said, "no man set on Paul to hurt him." His work went on not only without hindrance, but the influence of Greeks and Romans thus indirectly favored the Church and its teacher.

18-22. *Conclusion of the Second Missionary Journey.*—His work in Corinth for the time was done. Having entered the city alone, after eighteen months of bold, fervent toil, he left it with many converts and an organized church. Another organization in Cenchrea, and congregations of disciples at other points in Achaia, were additional fruits of his labor. B.

Much importance should not be attached to the fact, incidentally mentioned here, that he had *his head shorn* in Cenchrea, before embarking, on account of a vow. Paul's idea of liberty under the gospel did not go the length of forbidding liberty. He bore witness that those who made any of these observances their righteousness before God, shut themselves out from Christ ; but, when any one was

justified through faith in the Redeemer, Paul and his fellow-apostles allowed the convert unlimited liberty to observe or not observe the Jewish ceremonial.

Arnot.—With the Greeks it was usual only for slaves to wear the hair cut short ; and to have appeared with it cut short at Corinth among the Greek Christians might have exposed him to ridicule and his preaching to contempt. He acted with prudence, therefore, in not cutting off his hair till he was on the point of quitting Greece. W.

From the eastern harbor of Corinth, by the great route of commerce, he crossed over the Ægean to Ephesus, the emporium of the Asian coast. Here a few days' preaching proved so acceptable to the Jews that they prayed him to tarry. But he promised to return to them ; and, leaving Aquila and Priscilla in Ephesus, sailed to Cesarea. After a brief visit to Jerusalem, a greeting and report to the apostles and the Church, Paul returned for the last time to Antioch. About three years, from A. D. 51 to 54, this Second Journey had extended. B.

Section 220.

Acts xviii. 23-28 ; xix. 1-20.

28 AND after he had spent some time *there*, he departed, and went over *all* the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, *and* mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord ; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue : whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him : who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace : for he mightily convinced the Jews, *and that* publicly, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ.

1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the 2 upper coasts came to Ephesus : and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed ? And they said unto him, We have not so much 3 as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were 4 ye baptized ? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him 5 which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard *this*, they were 6 baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, 7 the Holy Ghost came on them ; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the 8 men were about twelve. And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space 9 of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multi- 10 tude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued by the space of two years ; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul : so that from his body were 12 brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and

13 the evil spirits went out of them. Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We
 14 adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of *one* Sceva, a Jew,
 15 and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know,
 16 and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house
 17 naked and wounded. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus;
 18 and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many
 19 that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used
 20 the price of them, and found it fifty thousand *pieces* of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

THE surface of our reading has immensely enlarged, but not the limits of human life. Our morning newspaper must be scanned; we must sweep the whole horizon, and be posted in the world's news. And then the race is working out great problems; thinkers are flinging their thoughts to the winds for the revolving arms of the printing press, and we must keep pace with the march of advanced thought. Many of the books are professedly religious, and so commend themselves to our consciences, and so piquant and palatable as to commend themselves to our taste. Thus, all unwittingly, while we believe in the Bible, praise it, we only read it by snatches. We fail to feed upon it with the keenness of relish and thoroughness of digestion essential to our highest profit. Hence arises a generation eloquent about the Scriptures, but not *mighty in them*. *An.*

The great question which we should be anxious to be able to answer in the affirmative is this, "*Are we receiving the Holy Ghost since we believed?*" Have we been ever since, and are we still, receiving the Holy Ghost? O blessed above all blessedness, if we can say that this is true of us! O blessed with a blessedness most complete, if we only do not too entirely abandon ourselves to enjoy it! Elect of God; holy and beloved; justified and sanctified; there is nothing in all the world that could impair or destroy such happiness, except we ourselves, in evil hour, believed it to be out of the reach of danger. T. A.

23. Commencement of Paul's Third Missionary Journey.—Recall the chief periods of Paul's apostolic career thus far: The *First Journey* of two years or more in Asia Minor; an interval of more than two years in Antioch and Syria; the *Second Journey* of three years or more through Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Achaia; and an interval of a few months at Antioch. Now he undertakes his *Third and last Missionary Journey*; again through Asia Minor, tarrying only among the churches in Phrygia and Galatia, abiding in Ephesus, and then visiting Macedonia and Achaia. The period of this final circuit (recorded Acts 18: 23 to 21: 17) covered about four years, from the summer or fall of A. D. 54 onward. During this period Paul wrote the Epistles to the Corinthians, to the Galatians, and to the Romans.

24-28. An Episode concerning Apollos.—With a few glimpses, Luke here introduces a remarkably fine natural and Christian character, and a history though brief yet rich in instructive suggestions. Apollos, like Paul, was chosen by Christ for his great and special work. He was taken out of the very region where, and from the class by whom, the Old Testament Scriptures had been translated three centuries before into the now world-language. Taught all the learning and trained in the culture of the schools of Alexandria, he had applied all his acquired resources with his great natural gifts to the

study of his own Scriptures. Through some undisclosed teacher, the testimony of the Baptist to Christ and some of the leading facts of Christ's life and ministry had been brought to his knowledge. Enough he had heard to trace the correspondences of that Life with the Old Testament prophecy and promise; and to produce a conviction that Jesus of Nazareth was the expected Messiah. Though uninformed of the eventful issue of that Life, and of the marvels of Pentecost that followed the Ascension, his faith yet fastened itself, like Abraham's, to a dimly revealed Deliverer. To this Redeemer he consecrated himself and all his culture. Under divine prompting, he became a self-appointed evangelist of the Messiah; telling in fervent words all the gospel he knew, the gospel of the Prophets as *fulfilled*.

While Paul is traversing the provinces of Phrygia and Galatia, Apollos is led by the same Spirit to Ephesus, where Aquila and Priscilla had been some time abiding. No wonder that these tent-makers were intensely stirred when this man of bright intellect and burning zeal suddenly appeared in the synagogue at Ephesus; and, like another John, seemed by his eloquence and might of Scriptural truth to be preparing the way of the Lord. For, *partially taught* as he was, note Luke's description (vs. 24, 25) of his qualifications and his spirit. *An eloquent man*—one who could understand his subject and his occasion;

who could grasp and use his points of argument and appeal with clearness, force, and fervor; *mighty in the Scriptures*, in the substance and spirit, not in the letter, of the truth of God; *instructed in the way of the Lord*, so instructed only by the Lord's own Spirit; *fervent in the spirit*, with a soul kindled and ever aglow with a Godlike love for God and man; *he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord*—in private and public, without weariness or ceasing, unfolding and impressing the Scriptures of truth, those Old Testament Scriptures which Paul afterward affirmed, "are able to make wise unto salvation." These particulars may well be pondered, if we would learn the true secret of an evangelist's success. Quick to discern these divine gifts and the missionary spirit of Apollos, yet perceiving how defective was his knowledge of the gospel, the tent-makers sought to instruct him in the fullness of the truth which they had received from Paul. They recognized as their vocation, if not to preach, to teach more perfectly this divinely called preacher.

Again, by this teaching, as often before in this apostolic age, God honors the common priesthood of believers. While the apostles, and after them other appointed ministers, had due honor and a definite vocation, yet, in emergencies and for special purposes, unordained disciples ministered the Word and the ordinances. So, after Stephen's martyrdom, the scattered members of the infant Church went everywhere preaching the Word. So an obscure believer was Christ's messenger to Saul, to declare the truth and admit to the Christian fellowship. And in this case of Apollos, two simple disciples, and one a wo-

man, were guided to this needed ministry of instruction by the Spirit of Christ.

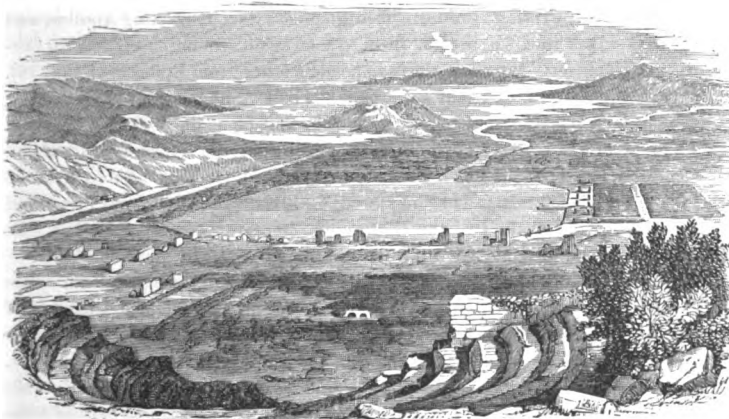
man, were guided to this needed ministry of instruction by the Spirit of Christ.

Simply but clearly are the two chief functions of the gospel preacher intimated in connection with the work of Apollos at Corinth (vs. 27, 28). *He helped them much which had believed through grace*; and *he mightily convinced those that were unbelieving*.

1. *At the End of a Considerable Journey, Paul settles down in Ephesus.*—Timothy seems to have accompanied Paul throughout this Third Circuit; Titus in the earlier, and Luke in the later part. The route from Antioch was, as in the previous journey, over the Cilician plain, through the "Gates," the noted pass of the Taurus Range, into the high table-land of Lycaonia; thence through Cappadocia into Galatia, and then through Phrygia to the Ægean coast. Besides confirming and strengthening the churches everywhere throughout this journey, *as specially charged* by the apostles and brethren in Jerusalem he took order for future collections in behalf of the poorer Christians in Judea. Paul declares that he was "forward to do" this, that the helpfulness of Gentile to Jewish Christians

might promote a closer spiritual unity and fellowship between them.

To Ephesus Paul now comes, in accordance with his previous promise (18 : 21). And *Ephesus proved to be his working-center* during the greater portion of this Third missionary tour, *as Corinth had been* during the larger half of the Second. For Ephesus, like Corinth, was a great world-center of commerce, population, and influence. These two cities shared



Site of Ephesus.

man, were guided to this needed ministry of instruction by the Spirit of Christ.

The manner in which their joint ministry of help and guidance was accepted and acted upon by Apollos furnishes yet further evidence of the grace of

the highest position of prominence and power with Rome and Antioch. And in all these world-centers Paul planted an effective and aggressive Christianity. B.

From the frontier of Phrygia a tract of country

extends to the *Ægean*, which is watered by two of the long western rivers, the *Hermus* and the *Meander*, and which is celebrated through an extended period of classical history, and is sacred to us as the scene of the churches of the *Apocalypse*. *Laodicea* is in the basin of the *Meander*; *Smyrna*, *Thyatira*, *Sardis*, and *Philadelphia* are in that of the *Hermus*; *Pergamus* is further to the north, on the *Caicus*. Between the *Hermus* and the *Meander* is a smaller river, named the *Cayster*. And here, in the level valley of the *Cayster*, in a situation preëminent among the excellent positions which the *Ionians* chose for their cities, *Ephesus* was built, on some hills near the sea. H. (See map, p. 94.)

Originally the royal city of the kings of *Ionian*, it passed successively under the control of *Persia* and *Lydia*, until B. C. 129, when under the Roman rule it was made the capital of the province of *Asia*. Upon the great line of commerce east and west, the meeting place of vessels from all points of the *Mediterranean*, connected by great roads with the interior markets of the East, the most central point between east and west, it naturally drew together *Jew* and *Greek*, *Roman* and *Oriental*. It was, moreover, a free city, though the mass of its population was *Oriental* in origin and in worship. Reason enough we discern why *Paul* should tarry so long and toil so arduously here!

2-7. *The Holy Ghost falls upon Twelve Disciples of John the Baptist.*—*Christian* disciples they were, for the word is only used of such, and because *Paul* recognizes them as *believers*. Like *Apollos*, these men had not heard of the descent of the *Holy Ghost*. To *Paul's* question, "Did ye receive the *Holy Ghost*?" (referring not to the *regenerating* power, but to the *extraordinary* gifts which then so frequently followed conversion), they replied: "We did not even hear whether the *Holy Ghost* is," i. e., is given; whether these miraculous gifts have appeared. They had understood and practiced repentance toward God, and some vague yet real faith in the Lord *Jesus Christ*; but they had not heard *Christ's* disclosures about "another Comforter, the *Holy Ghost*," nor had they experienced his special *Pentecostal* gifts. *John* had taught *Christ's* true *Messiahship*. This was his central truth: Behold the *Lamb of God*! So much these men knew, when they were initiated by baptism into the religion which *John* taught. That religion included as its two main doctrines repentance or reformation of heart and life, and trust in that *Lamb of God* of whom *John* was the forerunner and herald.

After brief colloquy with these believers in the *Messiah*, *Paul* made clear what was vague, and fully unfolded *Christ's* career to His *Ascension*, and the sending of the *Holy Ghost* ten days thereafter. And now, with vastly enlarged vision of spiritual

truth, and with deepened faith, "they were baptized into" (as better representing the chief idea of incorporation) "the name of the Lord *Jesus*." Again, as before, the laying on of the apostle's hands was followed with the miraculous gifts (the speaking with other tongues, and by special inspiration, i. e., "prophesying") of the *Holy Ghost*. And upon these twelve disciples *Paul* laid the foundation of the great Church of the *Ephesians*.

This singular incident (we note in passing), as well as the similar history of *Apollos*, shows how slowly the knowledge of the essential facts of Christianity was spread abroad. It further indicates the depth and force of the impression made upon the whole *Jewish* people by the brief yet powerful ministry of the *Baptist*. Nearly thirty years had now elapsed since his beheading by *Herod*, yet at two widely separated points we find so rich and precious fruit of his faithful testimony. B.—The incident is also important as showing that those who are in a truly believing state of mind believe more or less of *Christian* truth according to their opportunities of knowledge. *Abraham's* faith was probably as strong as that of *Paul*, but not so extensive. This gives us great hope for those who are ignorant, but not for those who reject the truth when made known. If one has "faith" he will hold "the faith" as soon as he can properly discover it; without "faith," holding "the faith" is a dead orthodoxy. Riddle.

8-10. *Three Months in the Synagogue on the Sabbath, then Two Years in the School of Tyrannus daily, Paul preaches the Word of the Lord Jesus.*—Though *Aquila* and *Priscilla* are not mentioned here, we have seen them so lately instructing *Apollos*, and we find them so soon again sending salutations to *Corinth* in the apostle's letter from *Ephesus* (1 Cor. 16), that we can not but believe he met his old associates. It is even probable that he again worked with them at the same trade: for in the address to the *Ephesian* elders (20 : 34) he stated that "his own hands had ministered to his necessities"; and in writing to the *Corinthians* he says (1 Cor. 4 : 11, 12) that such toil had continued even "to that hour." H.

First, three months in the synagogue he spoke boldly. His theme, as at *Thessalonica*, was that of the *Baptist*. It was that doctrine of the kingdom of God which was the key to *Christ's* whole ministry. To the *Jews*, who were still looking for a visible world-empire, he faithfully declared and pressed home the truth respecting "the kingdom of God within them," as the condition of entrance into the final glory of the everlasting kingdom. But his bold fidelity was offensive because his truth was unwelcome. They hardened themselves against his appeals by willfully refusing to believe. Nay, further, they dared publicly revile the truth of God

and to belie the Christian way of believing and living.

Thereupon, as at Corinth, Paul withdrew his disciples from among them. As the house of Justus at Corinth, so here the school of Tyrannus became—and for two years continued—the daily meeting-place of the Christians and the chief preaching-place of Paul. (From the lack of any note of the man, it would seem that this was a hired room where previously a Greek philosopher of that name had been wont to teach.) And for yet nine months longer, making three full years (20 : 31), in this great central city Paul maintained his sublime work of publishing the Christian truths. Doubtless he made many brief tours into the interior, and possibly crossed the Ægean to Corinth; for of such movements we find some indications. So it was that all the inhabitants of pro-consular Asia “heard the word of the Lord Jesus”; a fact confirmed even by heathen writers. And during this period most, if not all, of the Seven Churches of the Apocalypse may have been planted. Of four congregations in that province, those of Ephesus, Colosse, Laodicea, and Hierapolis, Paul speaks definitely in Col. 1 and 4.

11, 12. *Paul's Work for God attested by Specially Adapted Miracles.*—For a second time, and the last, in Paul's history we read of many miracles wrought in connection with his ministry. The occasion—always the same—is some specially demanded attestation of God's presence, speaking and working through him. As in the case of Moses before Pharaoh, and as in Paul's own previous experience before the deputy in Cyprus, an issue was raised here between the antagonistic powers of light and darkness. On the one side were numerous sorcerers, pretended exorcists, and magic-workers, apostles of falsehood and impurity with whom Ephesus was teeming, from all lands; and on the other, Christ's apostle of truth and purity. To give sharpness and force to the decision of this issue, an unquestioned and signal manifestation of Divine power was essential at this juncture in this infested city. Hence, besides the miracles wrought by the hands of Paul, God wrought special wonders in connection with him, yet without his direct intervention. Not the relics of a dead saint, but aprons and handkerchiefs used by a living one in his honest, hallowed, daily toil, were made means of imparting a healing power, like that of Christ's garment-hem to the suffering woman's touch. Those who sought them for this purpose had faith in the application, and God condescended to meet and reward the faith. But only for the time and occasion. There was no second-hand use, for there was no second-hand faith of superstition.

The unusual form of these miracles—therefore

called *special*—was adapted to meet the leading superstition of Ephesus. These very supernatural effects, so publicly wrought and so conclusively real, were designed to confute and triumphantly confuted all professed magical or talismanic claims. Especially did they challenge comparison in their effects with the *charms* and *amulets* constituted by the utterance or transcription of the famous mystic symbols or sentences known as the *Ephesian Letters*, thrice graven upon Diana's image. In connection with these admirably adapted miracles—which have no parallel in apostolic or other subsequent times—Luke is careful to note (17) that it was the name of the Lord Jesus, not that of Paul, that was magnified. B.—Eustathius says that the mysterious symbols called “Ephesian Letters” were engraved on the crown, the girdle, and the feet of the goddess. When pronounced, they were regarded as a charm; and were directed to be used, especially by those who were in the power of evil spirits. When written, they were carried about as amulets. The study of these symbols was an elaborate science: and books, both numerous and costly, were compiled by its professors. H.

13-16. So conclusively real and certainly Divine were the “special miracles” wrought in connection with Paul's preaching, that “certain wandering Jewish exorcists undertook to name over them who had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul preacheth.” This blasphemous appeal was not only damaging as its utter failure showed them to be counterfeits and pretenders; it involved the absurdity of a feebleness of evil agent, with a means confessedly not understood, much less controlled, attempting to dispossess a stronger. In these words, too, the sons of Sceva practically confessed that they had no faith in and stood in no personal relation to Christ; that they were not warranted therefore in such a use of His name; that their own claim to supernatural power was false; that, unlike them and all other sorcerers, Paul was a true man, successfully engaged in a work helpful to man and so honoring to God; and that in this work he was in living alliance with Divine power. Furthermore, this wicked, absurd, and humiliating appeal brought out another *demoniac attestation* to the truth of Paul's mission and the conquering might of Christ. “Jesus I acknowledge,” as Ruler over the world of evil and good, “and Paul I know,” as His minister, “but who are ye?” promptly answered back the kindred spirit whom they could not exorcise. And assaulting two of the seven brothers, he rent off their clothes and drove them wounded from the house.

17-20. *Effect of the Word and its Accompanying Miracles, and of the Overthrow of the Jewish Exorcists, upon Believers in Magic and Dealers in*

Sorcery.—To all the dwellers in Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks, Paul's faithful preaching of Jesus, the special marvels connected with him, and the discomfiture of the sons of Soeva, had become known. Through this knowledge Christ's name was magnified and multitudes believed. Luke notes the special effects of the strikingly exhibited superiority of the divine miracles over the human counterfeits. On the one hand, many who had *previously believed* (18), and yet had not thrown off the early superstitious faith in magic arts, now formally confessed their folly and renounced all connection with sorcerous practices. And on the other, many of the *sorcerers*, of those "who *practiced* magical arts," openly brought together and burned the parchment rolls, transcribed laboriously and at great cost with the secret formulæ and mystic symbols of the magic art, accumulated through previous ages. That these became also Christian believers is evident from the cost and completeness of their voluntary sacrifice. They did not make gain of that which they now knew to be only evil; but showed their sincerity of repentance

by utterly and openly destroying the books that might have been sold for a great sum. The money-value thus deliberately sacrificed by constraint of Christian principle amounted to many thousand dollars. Thus, as always, a genuine faith wrought an honest purpose; a purpose that will sacrifice at any cost and hazard every hindrance in the way of obedience to God and helpfulness to man. A sharp lesson, not only upon sacrifice but upon sincerity, these converted sorcerers of Ephesus convey to many professedly converted men and women in their business dealings.

In this connection the 20th verse presents a remarkable summary of Paul's work in Ephesus: *So mightily grew the Word of God, and prevailed!* The breadth of the sowing of truth, the depth of its rooting, its vital force in the heart and its rich fruitage in the life, are here referred to. Of these great and wide results, the submission and sacrifice of the sorcerers, just alluded to, afford signal examples. The opposite, selfish course of Demetrius and his workmen present as signal exceptions. B.

Section 221.

Acts xix. 21-41.

- 21 AFTER these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see
 22 Rome. So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.
 23 And the same time there arose no small stir about that way. For a certain *man* named
 24 Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto
 25 the craftsmen; whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said,
 26 Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. Moreover ye see and hear, that not
 27 alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned
 28 away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: so that not
 29 only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great
 30 goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia
 31 and the world worshippeth. And when they heard *these sayings*, they were full of wrath,
 32 and cried out, saying, Great *is* Diana of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled with
 33 confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions
 34 in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre. And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. And certain of the chief of Asia,
 35 which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring *him* that he would not adventure himself
 36 into the theatre. Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was
 37 confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. And they drew
 38 Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned
 39 with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people. But when they knew
 40 that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great *is* Diana
 41 of the Ephesians. And when the townclerk had appeased the people, he said, Ye men of
 Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a wor-
 shipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the *image* which fell down from Jupiter? See-

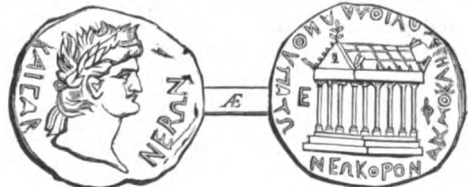
ing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly. For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess. Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another. But if ye enquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly. For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse. And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

CONCEIVE the apostles of Jesus Christ, the tent-maker or the fisherman, entering, as strangers, into one of the splendid cities of Syria, Asia Minor, or Greece. Everywhere they behold temples on which the utmost extravagance of expenditure has been lavished by succeeding generations; idols of the most exquisite workmanship, to which, even if the religious feeling of adoration is enfeebled, the people are strongly attached by national or local vanity. They meet processions, in which the idle find perpetual occupation, the young excitement, the voluptuous a continual stimulant to their passions. They pass a magnificent theatre, on the splendor and success of which the popularity of the existing authorities mainly depends, and in which the serious exhibitions are essentially religious, the lighter as intimately connected with the indulgence of the baser passions. They behold another public building, where even worse feelings—the cruel and the sanguinary—are pampered by the animating contests of wild beasts and of gladiators. They encounter, likewise, itinerant jugglers, diviners, magicians, who impose upon the credulous, and excite the contempt of the enlightened. Such must have been among the overpowering difficulties they contemned and defied. *Milman.*

21, 22. *The Ultimate Plan of Paul's Further Journey. Timothy and Erastus sent before.*—In 2 Cor. 1 : 15, 16, a slightly differing plan is referred to. He *had* intended to pass through Corinth "to Macedonia and to come again out of Macedonia unto Corinth"; that is, to give them a *second benefit* in this journey. But this purpose was changed, *to spare them, that he might not grieve them, or come to them in sorrow or severity* (2 Cor. 1 : 12; 2 : 10). The First Epistle explains all. Sad intelligence reached him in Ephesus of divisions and contentions in the Corinthian Church, of uncensured gross immoralities, and of the scandalous profanation of the Lord's Supper. Instead of the sharp rebuke, which he would have personally administered had he gone first to Corinth, he remains still longer in the province of Asia, and from Ephesus (1 Cor. 16 : 8) writes the admonitory words of his *First Epistle to the Corinthian Church*. B.—While arranging his plans so as to give his disciples at Corinth a space for repentance before his arrival, he stimulated them to that repentance, and gave directions for that reformation of their disorders which would prepare for his coming to them in joy and peace, by writing this letter. Its contents give decisive indications of its date and place: it was written after Paul's second visit to Galatia; after the mission of Timothy, and Erastus; and after the change in the apostle's plans. Paul alludes to his being still in Asia, and at Ephesus, whence he was contemplating his departure at the ensuing Pentecost; circumstances which fix the date to the spring of his last year's residence at Ephesus (A. D. 57). S.—After that,

he decides to delay still further and to go first to Macedonia, that he might learn the effect of his First Letter. While in Macedonia he receives gratifying tidings, to which he refers and responds in his *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, written from Macedonia. Then he goes to Corinth, and after wintering there is brought on his return journey to Jerusalem. Luke, writing here after the event, simply narrates Paul's actual journey. The tarrying "in Asia" (in Ephesus) covered another period of *nine months*, which completes the *three years* of chapter 20 : 31. During these latter months occurred the events that follow in this chapter.

23-28. *Demetrius, a Manufacturer in Silver, craftily excites the Workmen to Riotous Demonstrations against the Christian Movement and its Leaders.*—Again, this movement is characterized as "that way"; meaning the *Christian way of believing and living*. Some knowledge of the temple, the image



Coin of Ephesus, exhibiting the head of Nero and the Temple of Diana.

and the worship of Diana, the tutelary deity of Ephesus, is essential to a clear understanding of the appeal of Demetrius and the resulting commotion. B.

One building at Ephesus surpassed all the rest in magnificence and in fame. This was the Temple of Artemis or Diana, which glittered in brilliant beauty at the head of the harbor, and was reckoned by the ancients as one of the wonders of the world. The sun, it was said, saw nothing in his course more magnificent than Diana's Temple. It consisted essentially in horizontal entablatures resting on vertical columns. These colonnades were erected as subsidiary decorations round the cell which contained the idol, and were, through a great part of their space, open to the sky. The Temple was 425 feet in length and 220 in breadth, and the columns were 60 feet high. The number of columns was 127, each of them the gift of a king; and 36 of them were enriched with ornament and color. All the Greek cities contributed to the structure. The national pride in the sanctuary was so great that, when Alexander offered the spoils of his eastern campaign if he might inscribe his name on the building, the honor was declined. The value and fame of the Temple were enhanced by its being the treasury, in which a large portion of the wealth of Western Asia was stored up.

If the Temple of Diana at Ephesus was magnificent, the Image enshrined within the sumptuous inclosure was primitive and rude. It resembled an Indian idol rather than the beautiful forms which crowded the Acropolis of Athens. The figure, which assumed an emblematic form above, representing the life of all animated beings as fed and supported by nature, was terminated below in a shapeless block. The material was wood. A bar of metal was in each hand. The dress was covered with mystic devices; and the small shrine, where it stood within the Temple, was concealed by a curtain in front. Yet, rude as the image was, it was the object of the utmost veneration. Like the Palladium of Troy—like the most ancient Minerva of the Athenian Acropolis—like the Paphian Venus or Cybele of Pessinus—like the Ceres in Sicily—it was believed to have "fallen down from the sky" (v. 35).

One of the idolatrous customs of the ancient world was the use of portable images or *shrines*, which were little models of the more celebrated objects of devotion. They were carried in processions, on journeys and military expeditions, and set up as household gods in private houses. II.—Such were the "silver shrines for Diana," largely manufactured by Demetrius; small portable models of the Temple, and containing a figure of the goddess. These shrines were in great demand, not only in Ephesus and the province of Asia, but among all nations and in all countries; and hence the business of their manufacture was extensive and lucrative.

The great annual festival of Diana, the patron

deity of Ephesus, took place in her own month of May; when the rude wooden image of the goddess was exhibited to the multitude, and, in her honor, games and dramas were publicly celebrated. Of this opportune occasion Demetrius took advantage to stir up the idle and excitable Greek populace. Yet with all his shrewdness he is constrained to confess the immense power and success of the Word, in the very facts upon which he bases his inflammatory appeals. That the craftsmen in image molding and carving were out of work he declares to result from the preaching of *this Paul*. By him, "much people in Ephesus and throughout all Asia" (that is, the broad strip of the western seaboard of Asia Minor, the *province of Asia*) have been turned away from Diana's worship, and led to disbelieve in gods made with hands. He further praises the true character, methods, and effects of the Gospel, shows where the real power of its preacher lies, and how God honors that power, by the words: *This Paul hath persuaded much people!* To reason and motive they have intelligently and voluntarily responded with faith. And that these are undeniable facts, he appeals to the workmen: *Ye see and hear all this!*

Naturally his *first* argument based upon such facts touches the selfish side. "This craft of ours—the making of these silver temple-models—by which we get our living, is in danger of being done away. Nay more, in time our occupation will become absurd and be accounted disgraceful." Next he appeals to the religious and national feeling of the gathering townspeople, as well as of the workmen. He warns them that the success of the Christian teaching means the decline and overthrow of the Diana-worship, and of the supremacy of their regal city Ephesus.

Arguments so artfully set forth, having so much foundation in fact, and touching his hearers at every personal and practical point, appealing to their imperiled living, to their religious faith, such as it was, and to their patriotic feeling, could not but succeed in inflaming their wrath to the utmost. With a mighty outcry, which expressed all the substance of their superstitious faith and patriotic devotion, *Great! Diana of the Ephesians!* the surging crowd of artisans and people that had gathered at the speech of Demetrius went tumultuously through the streets, increasing as they went, until they poured, a vast throng, into the great theatre.

29-41. *Proceedings in the Theatre*.—This is believed to have been the largest open-air structure of its kind ever constructed by the Greeks—capable of seating 50,000 persons in its many semicircular tiers of stone seats, rising from the stage floor. The still visible remains show its vast dimensions.

Two of Paul's Macedonian disciples, companions

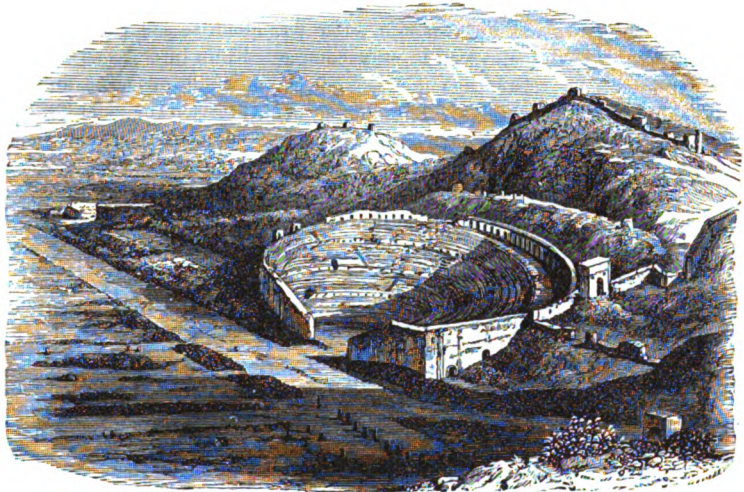
in travel, were seized by the mob on the way, and borne into the theatre. Paul was kept back from entering by some "of the chief of Asia," or *Asiarchs*. B.—These were men (ten in number) annually elected from the wealthiest, most distinguished and influential citizens of the whole province, to conduct the sacrificial worship and to preside over the games of the Artemisian festival, to provide the necessary expenses, and to see that due order was maintained. They held for the time a kind of sacerdotal position; and when, robed in mantles of purple and crowned with garlands, they assumed the duty of regulating the great gymnastic contests, and controlling the tumultuary crowd in the theatre, they might literally be called the "chief of

Asia." H.—Some of the men honored with this high office at this festival were so friendly to Paul, if not to the Christian teachings, that they besought him not to expose himself to unnecessary peril by venturing into the excited and turbulent throng.

Confusion and uproar filled the vast amphitheatre. Probably by Alexander the coppersmith (2 Tim. 4 : 14), the Jews sought to clear themselves of the odium and charge against the Christians. But the angry, blinded crowd recognized no distinction and would hear no defense. For two hours they filled the air with their senseless shout, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians!* Then came among them their highest magistrate, a secretary, or recorder, who kept the archives, and prepared and published all state papers; and who, in various other ways, officially represented the people of the free city of Ephesus. This officer was chosen by themselves, his presence was familiar, and his judgment trusted. B.

The speech is a pattern of candid argument and judicious tact. He first allays the fanatical passions of his listeners by a simple appeal. Then he bids them remember that Paul and his companions had not been guilty of profaning the Temple, or of calumnious expressions against the goddess. Then he points out that the remedy for any injustice was amply provided by the assizes, or by an appeal to the proconsul. And he reminds them that such an

uproar exposed the city to the displeasure of the Romans; for, however great the liberties allowed to an ancient and loyal city, a tumultuous meeting which endangered the public peace would never be tolerated. So he tranquilized the multitude, and formally dismissed the assembly. Thus God used



View of the Theatre at Ephesus.

the eloquence of a Greek magistrate to protect his servant, as he had used the right of Roman citizenship at Philippi, and the justice of a Roman governor at Corinth. And, as in those cases, the narrative here concludes with the notice of a deliberate and affectionate farewell. H.

The town clerk said, "These men are neither robbers of churches nor blasphemers of your goddess." It would appear from this that Paul had proceeded at Ephesus with the same caution which he had displayed at Athens. He effectually undermined all idolatry by preaching Christ; but he did not fly in the face of what his audience considered sacred. His argument was always grave and considerate. He would not needlessly trample on the prejudices of the heathen. *Arnot.*

Nothing more hinders men from going to or going from an opinion than the interest they have by holding it. Men do not care so much for the opinions they hold as for what they hold by their opinions. Many a man thinks what Demetrius said: "This craft, by which we have all our wealth, is like to be set at naught." Hence they begin to fly in the face of truth, and oppose it with outrageous rage, so dearly sweet, and sweetly dear, is their darling gain. When once the copyhold of gain and honor is touched, men begin to look about them, and will never call godliness gain, because gain is their godliness. V.

Section 222.

ACTS xx. 1-16.

1 AND after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto *him* the disciples, and embraced *them*,
 2 and departed for to go into Macedonia. And when he had gone over those parts, and had
 3 given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, and *there* abode three months. And
 4 when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return
 4 through Macedonia. And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the
 Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia,
 5 Tychicus and Trophimus. These going before tarried for us at Troas. And we sailed away
 6 from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days;
 where we abode seven days.
 7 And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread,
 Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until
 8 midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered
 9 together. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen
 into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down
 10 from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and
 11 embracing *him* said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. When he therefore was
 come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of
 12 day, so he departed. And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little com-
 forted.
 13 And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for
 14 so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot. And when he met with us at Assos, we
 15 took him in, and came to Mitylene. And we sailed thence, and came the next *day* over
 against Chios; and the next *day* we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the
 16 next *day* we came to Miletus. For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he
 would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jeru-
 salem the day of Pentecost.

THREE years of faithful labor had been given to Ephesus and the accessible regions of the interior country. Many churches had been planted, including some or all of the seven addressed in the Apocalypse. The First Epistle to the Corinthian Church had been written. Timothy had been sent into Macedonia, and Titus to Corinth: both to superintend the great work of gathering contributions from the Gentile churches for the Christian poor of Judea. Titus had also been charged with a report to Paul of the reception given to his First Epistle by the Church of Corinth.

1-6. In these six verses is compressed the story of ten months' journeying and tarry: from Ephesus to Macedonia and Greece, and back to Troas. *Three Epistles*—the *Second* to the *Corinthians*, and those to the *Galatians* and the *Romans*—largely supplement Luke's brief record here. They detail many incidents, and fully disclose Paul's state of mind; the causes of his anxiety, the special objects and aims of his toil, and the sources of his comfort. They further show that, intellectually, this was the most active period of his career.

From 2 Cor. 2 : 12 we learn that, after leaving

Ephesus, he first tarried at Troas, preaching for some weeks to welcome ears the glad tidings, while anxiously waiting the return of Titus from Corinth. Titus failing to come, Paul sailed for Macedonia, landing as before at Neapolis, and crossing the mountains to Philippi. Here he was rejoined by Timothy; and very soon after was comforted by the news brought by Titus from the Church at Corinth. Under mingled emotions awakened by this intelligence, in conjunction with Timothy, he then wrote

THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CHURCHES OF CORINTH and of the province of Achaia, and sent it by the hands of Titus, who was charged with completing the collection successfully begun. This time and place of writing are intimated by the following facts : B.—It was written after the troubles that had befallen the apostle in Asia; after his preaching and disappointment at Troas, his arrival in Macedonia, and the consolation received there by his meeting with Titus; while he was engaged in making the collection for the poor at Jerusalem; and in anticipation of a renewed visit to Corinth. This Epistle reveals to us what manner of man Paul was when the fountains of his heart were stirred to their in-

most depths. Every reader may perceive that, on passing from the First Epistle to the Second, the scene is almost entirely changed. In the *First*, the faults and difficulties of the Corinthian Church are before us. The apostle writes of these, with spirit indeed and emotion, as he always does, but without passion or disturbance. He calmly asserts his own authority over the Church, and threatens to deal severely with offenders. In the *Second*, he writes as one whose personal relations with those whom he addresses have undergone a most painful shock. The acute pain given by former tidings—the comfort yielded by the account which Titus brought—the vexation of a sensitive mind at the necessity of self-assertion—contend together for utterance. The highly wrought personal sensitiveness, the ebb and flow of emotion, so peculiarly characteristic of the Epistle, are as intelligible as they are noble and beautiful. We see what sustained him in his self-assertion; he knew that he did not preach himself, but Christ Jesus the Lord. S.

From Philippi the apostle went upon a preaching tour westward "as far as Illyricum," on the Adriatic (Rom. 15 : 19), thus "completing (at least in outline) the evangelization of the *Eastern division* of the empire, preparatory to a movement upon Rome itself." Referring to this extended circuit, Luke says: "When he had gone through these parts, he came into Greece, and there abode three months."

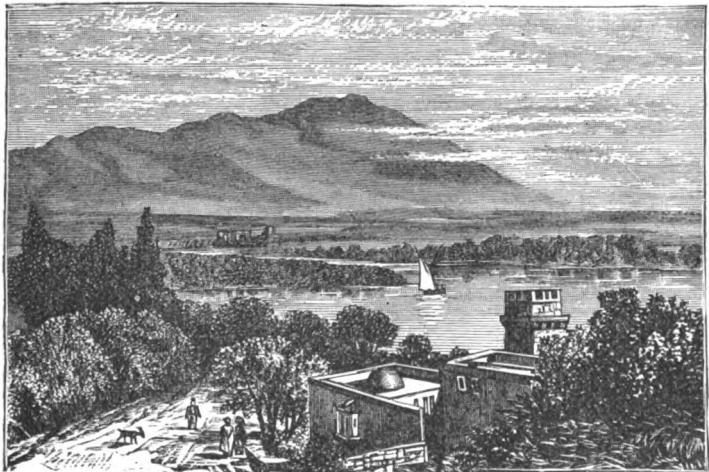
The three winter months (of A. D. 57-58) at Corinth are those here alluded to. Occupied with the settlement of disturbing questions and disorders in that church, with an oversight of other churches in the province, and with "the care of all the churches" that he had founded, the apostle yet found time for the composition of two kindred Epistles: one to the Galatians, the other to the Romans. Of these the former, which was first written, is a sort of ground-plan to the latter.

THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS was written in the early part of this winter at Corinth. Some think that it was prepared and sent before leaving Ephesus. It was aimed at the grand hindrance everywhere encountered in these earliest churches: the Judaizing doctrine that sapped the very life of the Chris-

tian system, by taking out of it all that was spiritual and essential, and leaving an outward, heartless, lifeless ceremonial framework. Abrupt, severe, and self-asserting against the men attempting insidiously to inculcate this destructive teaching, and seeking by falsehoods to supplant Paul in the attachment of the disciples; sometimes ironical even toward those easily deceived disciples; yet his tone of sadness and intense affection shows Paul's heart firmly set upon rescuing and saving them.

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS, the master-work of Paul, which has ever since formed the chief foundation of Christian theology, was certainly written at Corinth. Paul writes as the guest of Gaius, one of the most conspicuous members of the Corinthian Church. He sends salutations from Erastus, the chamberlain of the city, from Timotheus his fellow-laborer, and from Sosipater, whom we presently find accompanying him on his voyage from Greece to Asia (Rom. 16 : 23). He mentions the completion, not only in Macedonia, but also in Achaia, of the collection, which he was then on the point of carrying to the poor saints at Jerusalem. B.

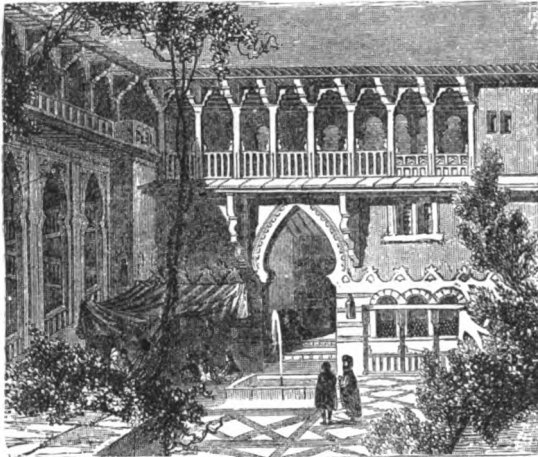
This sacred mission of charity was now the only remaining hindrance to the gratification of a desire which he had cherished for many years, but which his labors in the East had hitherto postponed, to visit the Church of Rome, and even to extend his western mission as far as Spain. His great work of breaking up new ground, of planting the churches, which his successors, like Apollos, were to water, was now



Troas, from Tenedos.

done in the Greek division of the Roman world. "But now having no more place in those regions," is a striking description of a completed work (Rom. 15 : 20-28). It is very striking that, ardent and long-cherished as was his desire to see his Christian

brethren at Rome, he speaks of its approaching fulfillment as but a passing visit, on his way to break



Interior of Oriental House.

up virgin soil for the good seed in Spain. Yet the very errand of mercy to Jerusalem, which he regards as but a temporary delay of his inroad upon the West, was the cause of his being sent as a prisoner to the capital, where his two years' enforced residence provided for the work he had to do both among Jews and Gentiles. S.

3, 4. To disconcert a Jewish plot against his life, Paul returned toward Syria by way of Macedonia. The seven persons named as companions of the journey—possibly bearers of the collection, and in some sort representatives from the Gentile Churches to the mother Jewish Church at Jerusalem—sailed over to Troas in advance of Paul and Luke. For this no reason is given.

6. At Philippi, where we left Luke (16 : 17), he rejoins Paul, and continues with him to Rome. At once we note more specific statements of time and place, and particulars of incident and address.

7-12. Thus we have the interesting story of the evening meeting at Troas, with its showing of the manner of primitive gatherings for worship; and its illustrative argument for the first-day Sabbath, for the observance of the Lord's Supper, and for the sermon (not the after "speech until midnight"), as parts of an orderly Christian service. B.

The place was an upper room, with a balcony projecting over the court. While Paul was continuing in earnest discourse, an occurrence suddenly took place which filled the assembly with alarm, though it was afterward converted into an occasion of joy and thanksgiving. A young listener, whose name was Eutychus, was overcome by heat and weariness, and sank into a deep slumber. He was seated or leaning in the balcony; and, falling down in his sleep, was dashed upon the pavement below and was taken up dead. Confusion and terror followed, with loud lamentation. But Paul was enabled to imitate the power of that Master whose doctrine he was proclaiming. He went down and



Ruins of Assos.

[Assos was a seaport of the Roman province of Asia, in the district anciently called Mysia. It was situated on the north shore of the gulf of *Adramyttium*, about seven miles from the opposite coast of Lesbos. A good Roman road, connecting the central parts of the province with Alexandria Troas (TROAS), passed through Assos, which was about twenty miles from Troas. These geographical points illustrate Paul's rapid passage through the town. He took the much shorter journey by land, and thus was able to join the ship without difficulty, and in sufficient time for her to anchor off Mitylene at the close of the day on which Troas had been left. S.]

fell upon the body, and said to the bystanders : "Do not lament; for his life is in him." With minds solemnized and filled with thankfulness by this won-

derful token of God's power and love, they celebrated the Eucharistic feast. This act was combined, as was usual in the apostolic age, with a common meal; and Paul now took some refreshment after the protracted labor of the evening, and then continued his conversation till the dawning of day. H.

13-16. To gain further time at Troas, and per-

haps to get special strength from solitary communion with Christ by the way, Paul walks the twenty miles between Troas and Assos, while the ship with his companions doubled the promontory of Lectum. From Assos their course lay by the islands of Lesbos (of which Mitylene was the capital), Chios, and Samos, to Miletus. B.

Section 223.

Acts xx. 17-38.

17 AND from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. And when
18 they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came
19 into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with
all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befel me by the
20 lying in wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but
21 have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, testifying both
to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord
22 Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the
23 things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, say-
24 ing that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count
I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry,
25 which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And
now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God,
26 shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I *am* pure from
27 the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.
28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost
hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his
29 own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among
30 you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse
31 things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the
32 space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now,
brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you
33 up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. I have coveted no
34 man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have minis-
35 tered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all things,
how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the
Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.
36 And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they
37 all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words
38 which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto
the ship.

"It is more blessed to give than to receive"; that is, it is more Divine, more Godlike. God who receives so little gives all. He fills his eternal year with an incessant bounty. The very law of his life is self-impartation, self-sacrifice. Dwelling in the perfect ineffable delights of his single yet manifold being, he had no need of us or of anything that we can do—no need except the need of infinite love. To surround himself with creatures to whom he could give of his own life, whom he could train through sun and shadow, sorrow and joy, to enter into his rest; by labors and sacrifices which transcend our thought to make them partakers of his divine nature and eternal peace; to give, and give, and always give; to crowd earth and time, heaven and eternity, with his good gifts; and, all gifts in one, to bestow himself

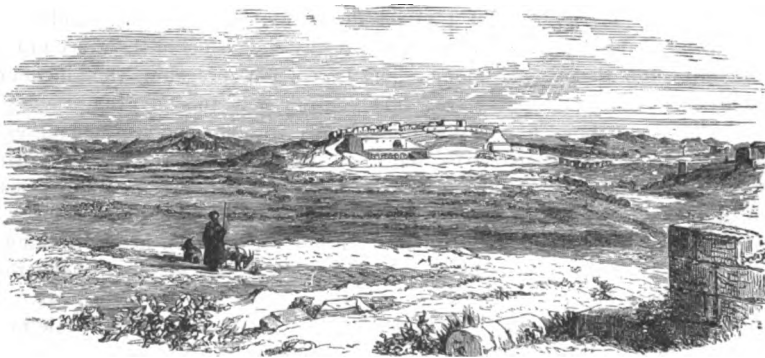
upon us—this has been the work of God, this *his* commentary on the words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." *Cox.*

This "word of the Lord Jesus" found no place in the evangelic histories: it lay silent in loving hearts, or flowed in whispers from loving lips when the disciples met after their Master had departed, until, spoken by Paul on the seashore to the weeping elders of Ephesus, it was recorded by Luke, his companion, for the use of the Church in all coming time. When the Lord intimated that the blessedness of giving is the greater, he did not intimate that the blessedness of receiving was small. He proclaims in one sentence the twofold truth, that the joy of his people in obtaining salvation is great, and his own in bestowing it is greater. *Arnot.*

17. Finding that the vessel might tarry long enough, Paul sends to Ephesus (thirty-seven miles distant) a request that the elders of the Church would meet with him at Miletus. (See map, p. 94.) As he was hastening, with limited time, to Jerusalem, and must abide by his present opportunity, this was the only safe course to secure the interview he sought. At once responding to his call, the elders from the one or more congregations of the Church at Ephesus received from the apostle the touching and instructive farewell address recorded in verses 18-35. As a representative discourse, it ranks with the Epistles. Especially in the memories of Christian work to which it appeals, and in the

truth it imparts respecting the personal relations and duties of the eldership, it resembles many of Paul's Epistles. B.—What Paul said to the elders of Ephesus on this occasion, he said through them to the other presbyters, not only of that province, but of the whole Church, not only then, but ever since and through all ages; for which end it has been left on record. J. A. A.

18-21. *What his Spirit and Ministry among them had been.*—They had been daily witnesses (he said) of his manner of life; of his humility and helpfulness in Christ's service; of his true, deep sympathy with human sorrows; of his tearful urgency with perishing men (2 Cor. 2 : 4 ; Phil. 3 : 18) ;



Ruins of Miletus.

and of his own trials through Jewish malevolent plotting. They knew that in his preaching he had been utterly unaffected by thought of personal danger or popularity; that he had withheld nothing of needed truth; that he had not, with one-sided partiality, dwelt upon peculiar or novel aspects of truth, but had urged *only* and *all* that which was *profitable* "to the use of edifying," or building up: the *whole counsel of God* in its purity and fullness! And this faithful "showing," this fervid "teaching" of the Christian truth had been his practice, not only in the school of Tyrannus and in other gathering places of disciples, but in every accessible household. From house to house, and from soul to soul, day by day had he borne the glad tidings with Christlike desire and yearning. To all classes and races, to the hostile Jew and the sneering Greek,

his one theme—that which, fully expounded, includes all other essential saving truths—was *repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Repentance is the inward change of the spirit and the life; a reversal of the current of the controlling thoughts, desires, aims, and affections; a turning and a supreme setting of these upon God, in place of self. It is wrought by "godly sorrow," or sorrow toward God for the penitent's sin (2 Cor. 7 : 10). B.—Faith is personal trust in this personal Redeemer, as the Saviour from the guilt and pollution of the sin we repent of, and as the atoning Mediator through whom alone we can approach God when we have repentance toward God. The two increase together in the life of a Christian. *Riddle.*—He who preaches the repentance and the

faith here spoken of, in all their fullness and variety, will need to seek no other topics, and may humbly boast of having kept back nothing that was profitable to his hearers. J. A. A.

22-24. Paul's Feeling in View of the Unknown Future.—He refers to a constraint of spirit inwrought by a sense of duty, impelling him into the midst of peril. What else is to transpire besides already familiar bonds and trials he knows and cares not. For the same Holy Ghost who is to him "a prophet of afflictions is also a comforter in afflictions." So that he can bravely declare himself fearless and unshaken in prospect of any evil. Nay more (using his favorite figure of the race), he holds life itself of less account and worth than the successful completion of his ministry for Christ and for souls. *Live he gladly would, and triumph he will if only he can finish his supreme work of testifying the gospel of the grace of God!* (Compare 2 Tim. 4 : 7 and 1 Cor. 9 : 24.) B.

Finish my course with joy. Of such joy, it would be difficult to find a more striking example than that afforded by the late Dr. Payson. "To adopt the figurative language of Bunyan, I might date this letter from the land of Beulah, of which I have been for some weeks a happy inhabitant. The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me, its breezes fan me, its odors are wafted to me, its sounds strike upon my ears, and its spirit is breathed into my heart. The sun of righteousness has been gradually drawing nearer and nearer, appearing larger and brighter as he approached, and now he fills the whole hemisphere, pouring forth a flood of glory, in which I seem to float like an insect in the beams of the sun; exulting, yet almost trembling, while I gaze on this excessive brightness, and wondering, with unutterable wonder, why God should deign thus to shine upon a sinful worm. A single heart, and a single tongue, seem altogether inadequate to my wants. I want a whole heart for every separate emotion, and a whole tongue to express that emotion." J. W. A.

25-27. Paul's Solemn Final Appeal and Asseration touching his Fidelity as a Preacher of the Gospel.—With full consciousness of the dignity of this high office, alluding to himself as the herald of a Divine King and Kingdom, he solemnly invokes their testimony to his faithfulness in "teaching every man and warning every man," so that his soul is freed from all blood-guiltiness in the destruction of any. B.—The form of expression is striking and memorable. It is borrowed from the crime of murder, and the method by which guilt is ordinarily brought home to the criminal. In many cases conviction depends on blood being found on the clothes of the murderer. Hence in almost all cases of violence we hear of desperate efforts being made by

the terrified evil-doer to efface the stain. This is the conception that leaps into the apostle's mind. He can not hope that all who have heard the gospel from his lips in the city are now in Christ. If they die in their sins, how unspeakable the loss—the loss of a soul! He shudders at the thought: and in order to quicken their diligence when they should return to their labor, he endeavors to impart some of his own anxiety to the elders. He in effect invites them to look to their hands and garments to make sure that there is no blood on them. Arnot.

28-32. His Impressive Injunction to Fidelity, and his Loving Commendation to God and his Grace.—The English version has hardly dealt fairly in this case with the sacred text in rendering the original word (v. 28) *overseers*; whereas it ought here, as in all other places, to have been "bishops," that the fact of elders having been originally and apostolically synonymous might be apparent to the ordinary English reader, which now it is not. A.—It is scarcely necessary to remark that in the New Testament the words *episcopos* (bishop) and *presbiteros* (elder) are convertible. H.—In the sending forth of Saul and Barnabas we learned the truth which Paul here declares: that in every genuine appointment of bishops (or elders) it is the Holy Ghost who selects, calls, and appoints to the office and the work. No valid ministry is exclusively man-made. In Paul's case we further learned that God puts upon some body of spiritual men the outward countersigning and sealing of his calls and appointments to spiritual office.

The work of these divinely called bishops or elders is "to shepherd the Church of God"; to nourish with truth, to lead into the way of Christ, to watch over and guard against the entrance of evil, and to administer such rule and discipline as is divinely delegated. The term "flock" is applied by the prophets to the Old Testament Church; and it is Christ's favorite figure. The supreme motive to fidelity, Paul here indirectly states: *Christ's purchase of his Church with his own blood!* B.—"Ye were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ." But Paul says more. By one of those bold figures which man could never have dared to think of, had not God first taught him to use them, he raises yet higher the amount of this ransom. As though determined that none should be ignorant of its amazing worth, he says, when speaking of the Church, "God hath purchased it with his own blood." C. B.—This is here called the *blood of God* as being the blood of that man who is also *God with us*—*God manifest in the flesh*. D.—*His possession, purchased with his blood*—a double argument, the mightiest and most sublime!

Preceding the charge to take heed to the flock, to do intelligently and faithfully this *shepherd-work*, is

an intensely momentous personal charge. *Take heed to yourselves!* Applied here to office-bearers in the Church, equally just, appropriate, and relatively important is its application to Christian parents, teachers, and lay workers in every sphere. The measure of each one's ability and responsibility for good is that of each one's accessible and attainable grace. What grace is promised is to be realized by one's own seeking, receiving, appropriating, and using. The *taking heed* to one's self is this seeking and using. A really helpful, comforting, quickening influence in a man comes alone from a heart first divinely helped, comforted, and quickened. The stream can not rise higher than the fountain, nor distribute a larger volume than it receives. Close and unbroken communion with God is the sole condition and means of receiving the knowledge, the guidance, and the help which it is the Christian worker's privilege and duty to impart. There is an imitative way and a mechanical spirit in doing what may be counted Christian labor. A thoughtful writer justly hints that a great deal of work for and in the Church may be the same in kind and in its actuating spirit as that done in a bank, a manufactory, or in the conduct of a government. Therefore, that his soul may be actuated by the higher, positively divine, and spiritual constraint of the love of Christ, and so that he may press that love effectually upon others, every Christian worker needs this warning to take heed to himself. From the point of human frailty too, the warning presses urgently. No one, however strong or pure, unselfish, humble, or faithful, in past life and service, but needs this counsel. Not only take heed *lest ye fall*, but that ye may be "*stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.*"

And he closes these inimitably beautiful, instructive, and affecting words of direct address with a simple loving commendation to God and to the word of his grace. By that gracious word of truth and promise, inwrought into the thoughts, the desires, the aims; and the life (he declares), God is able to *build them up*, and to give them the *inheritance* of those made holy. Favorite figures both, and richly expressive! Progress in the Christian life is grad-

ual, by adding grace to grace; and so the holy character is *divinely builded up*. An *inheritance* is given only to children, and in its nature is a possession whose tenure is firm and lasting as the being of the possessor.

These farewell words are full of application to preacher and teacher, and to hearers. They show what to preach or teach: not *merely* that which is novel or learned, beautiful or stirring, but, *with* all that is attainable of these, that matter, style, and manner always and only contribute to the one supreme end of *profitable* teaching. And they intimate a fact that can not be too frequently or deeply pondered: that with every utterance and reception of God's truth there comes to speaker and hearer either positive blessing or positive guilt! B.

BAXTER'S SUMMARY OF THIS ADDRESS.

Here we are taught: Our general business: *serving the Lord*; our special work: *taking heed to ourselves and all the flock*; the substance of our doctrine: *repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*; the places and manner of our teaching: *publicly, and from house to house*; the object and internal manner: *warning every one, night and day, with all humility of mind and with tears*; the faithfulness and integrity that are requisite: *I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you; I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God*; the innocence and self-denial to be used: *I have coveted no man's silver or gold*; the patience and resolution to be exercised: *none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus*; and once more, the motives to engage us to all this: *the Holy Ghost has made us overseers*; the church we feed is *the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood*. Write this upon your hearts, and it will do yourselves and the Church more good than twenty years' study of those lower things which often employ your thoughts; which, though they get you greater applause in the world, yet, if separated from these, will make you but "*sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.*"

Section 224.

ACTS xxi. 1-17.

- 1 AND it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we came with a straight course unto Coos, and the *day* following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto
- 2 Patara: and finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth.
- 3 Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria, and
- 4 landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade her burden. And finding disciples, we

- tarried there seven days : who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to
 5 Jerusalem. And when we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way ;
 and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till *we were* out of the city :
 6 and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed. And when we had taken our leave one
 7 of another, we took ship ; and they returned home again. And when we had finished *our*
 course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them
 one day.
 8 And the next *day* we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Cæsarea :
 and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was *one* of the seven ; and
 9 abode with him. And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophecy.
 10 And as we tarried *there* many days, there came down from Judæa a certain prophet, named
 11 Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands
 and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man
 12 that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles. And when
 we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to
 13 Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart ? for I
 am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.
 14 And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.
 15 And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem. There went
 16 with us also *certain* of the disciples of Cæsarea, and brought with them one Mnason of
 17 Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge. And when we were come to Jeru-
 salem, the brethren received us gladly.

THE noble answer of the Apostle is as simple as it is sublime. To understand what it means is easy ; to share in its sentiment is to make high attainment in grace. We need not ask ourselves if we could say this. Living a life of love to Christ, we may be sure that when he places us in such circumstances as those of Paul, his "grace will be sufficient for us." For most of us, it may require more grace to take up the trivial duties and to endure the petty trials of our lives, than to utter some kindred sentiment in times of great trial. *Riddle.*—The time will come when we shall rejoice, not so much because we had been comforted in sorrow and met with great prosperity, as because the will of God had been fulfilled alike in us and through us. How pure and serene is our life when *that* will alone directs us, and when not a trace of our own will remains behind ! With such a frame of mind we become like unto God. *Bernard.*

1-7. *Journey from Miletus to Cæsarea.*—The day of the painful parting on the shore at Miletus, Paul and his company ("after we had *torn ourselves away*," Luke says) sailed southward before the wind to the island of *Cos*, forty miles. Thence rounding the point of *Cnidus*, they continued on to the larger island of *Rhodes*, opposite the southwestern corner of Asia Minor. This island has always "held an illustrious place among the islands of the Mediterranean" ; and its capital (of the same name) was famous for its colossal bronze statue, 105 feet high, the chief of the seven world-wonders. B.—No view in the Levant is more celebrated than that from Rhodes toward the opposite shore of Asia Minor. The last ranges of Mount Taurus come down in magnificent forms to the sea ; and a long line of snowy summits is seen along the Lycian coast, while the sea between is often an unruffled expanse of water under a blue and brilliant sky. Across this expanse and toward *Patara*, a harbor

near the farther edge of these Lycian mountains, the apostle's course was next directed. H.

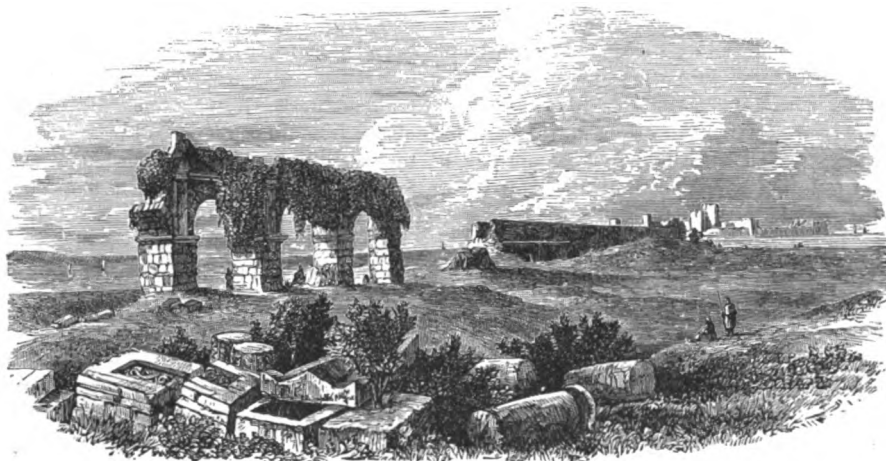
At *Patara* he found, in a vessel bound over the open sea to Phenicia, a favoring providence by which his progress toward Syria was hastened. The 340 miles to *Tyre* was run in about two days. Here the vessel tarried seven days for change of cargo. And here Paul sought for and found a small company of Christian disciples, with whom he remained in happy, helpful fellowship, ministering the word and ordinances. Another beautiful and impressive picture of the harmony of Christian communion and the strength of Christian affection was witnessed on the Tyrian shore at the hour of parting. "They *all* brought us on our way, with wives and children" (the first definite mention of the latter in the Acts) : "and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed."

By the same vessel they sailed southward thirty miles to *Ptolemais*, the ancient *Accho* (Judges 1 : 3) and modern *Acre*. Having the best harbor on the

Syrian coast, and an easy access to the great central plain of Esdraelon (the natural passage-way of armies and caravans to and from the East), this celebrated locality has ever been the landing-place and starting-point of hostile enterprises and commercial ventures; and therefore it has been termed "the

key of Syria." At Ptolemais Paul remained one day with *the brethren*, and the next day traveled by land the thirty-six miles to Cesarea. (See maps, pp. 61, 94.)

8, 9. Philip the Evangelist and his Four Daughters.—After a silence of twenty years following upon



Ruins of Tyre.

Philip's ministry in Samaria and to the Ethiopian treasurer, we meet him in Cesarea, which had ever since been his home. *Cesarea*—the seaport built by Herod the Great, and named in honor of the Emperor Augustus—was sixty miles northwest from Jerusalem, and was the residence of the Roman governors (or procurators) of the province of Judea. The incidents connected with Cornelius, narrated in chapter 10, and with Herod Agrippa, chapter 12 : 19-23, occurred here.

Concerning the four daughters of Philip, Luke merely relates impressions made by what seemed peculiar in their history: that they had all remained unmarried, and that all had received the gift of prophecy referred to by Peter (Acts 2 : 18). He seems to use the term *prophecy* in its ordinary meaning, as a divine inspiration to interpret and unfold truth, not to predict future events. He *states* no connection on their part with the subsequent prediction of Agabus. He does not even *imply* that they, like the disciples at Tyre (v. 4), had foretold Paul's coming trouble.

10, 11. Agabus predicts Paul's Bonds and Imprisonment.—This prophet we have met before (11 : 27-30) as the foreteller of famine in the reign of Claudius. He comes now down from the interior hill country, perhaps from Jerusalem, to forewarn Paul of assault and arrest at the capital, whither he is bound. In imitation of the expressive symbolic acting sometimes employed by the ancient Jewish prophets (Isa. 20 : 2; Jer. 13 : 1; Ezek. 4 : 1, etc.),

this Christian prophet took Paul's girdle, and with it bound his own hands and feet. Using the prophetic form of the Old Testament, "Thus saith the Lord," yet changing it to suit the new dispensation of the *Spirit*, he cites the Holy Ghost as explicitly announcing Paul's capture and imprisonment in Jerusalem. The prediction was fulfilled not many days after.

12-14. Entreaty of the Christian Disciples, with Paul's Reply, and their Acquiescence in Christ's Recognized Will.—The correctness of the previous prophecy of Agabus, and the vivid symbol whereby he now impressed this prediction, produced in their hearts a deep conviction of the certainty of future evil to Paul at Jerusalem. Under this conviction they unitedly besought him not to go to the place of danger. They interpreted the mission and intimation of Agabus as a *warning* given to avoid and so avert the peril. But Paul understood it better. Long years before, at the very outset of his sublime career, he had learned from his Lord what "great things he must *suffer* for his sake." And frequent experience had already verified this word, and made its meaning familiar. So that these new, more specific and intense premonitions of coming trial, clearly intimated by the Holy Ghost (outwardly by various prophets, and inwardly by impressions upon his own consciousness), carried their full weight of meaning to his spirit. Yet his steadfastness to duty, though confronted here with a prospect of danger unto death, yielded not. No ordinary mea-

sure of heroism was it that induced such fixed resistance to the counter-entreaties of such and so many loving friends. But the terms in which he declares his persistency of self-devotion are very touching. As expressing the purest, sublimest affection to Christ and to Christlike human friends, this answer has no human parallel: *What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus!* This tender, lofty utterance furnishes a fitting counterpart to the many strong assertions of consecration and self-sacrifice with which his Epistles so richly abound. And the instant carrying out of this loving and unselfish protest with an unflinching heroism, fixes in our minds an immovable conviction of the apostle's absolute truthfulness in all his high professions of devotion to his Lord.

Responding to the impression produced by these intense words of Paul, recognizing in them a clear indication of that divine will by which his career had been so marvelously guided, the true-hearted disciples ceased all further opposition, and acquiesced in his decision as expressing *the will of the Lord Jesus*. And the fact is singularly suggestive, that the very disciples who would have hindered Paul's arrest at Jerusalem, *by that arrest* were privileged with an unrestrained fellowship with him for two long years.

15. *From Cesarea to Jerusalem. Conclusion of Paul's Third and Last Missionary Journey.*—The word *carriage*, used here in the sense of "things carried," as in Judges 18: 21 and 1 Sam. 17: 22, would be better rendered *baggage*. The whole phrase here employed is expressed by one Greek participle, and indicates the packing of their effects in prepara-

tion for departure. B.—They packed their baggage or luggage. Paul and his companions were not privileged on their sacred errands with exemption from the common inconveniences of travel. So he had a "cloak" that he "left at Troas with Carpus," and requested Timothy to bring. An ancient military historian calls the luggage of his army "*impedimenta*." And human life, whether in travel or at home, has its necessary encumbrances. O. E. D.

16, 17. Still under the care of the disciples at Cesarea, Paul then completed his third and last great missionary tour at Jerusalem. The subsequent return to Antioch, as in the two previous journeys, was prevented by his arrest and imprisonment. B.—This fifth visit of Paul to Jerusalem since his conversion is the last of which we have any certain record. The state of the city, thronged with the excited multitudes who had come up to the Feast of Pentecost, might well recall to him not only the warnings that had encountered him at every step, but the deed of blood in which he himself, twenty-five years before, had played the part for which he never ceased to feel remorse. S.

Twelve years of unhindered travel and ministry, substantially covering the Greek portion of the Roman Empire, he had been permitted to accomplish. Five years of ministry in bonds—mainly in Cesarea and Rome—he is now to enter upon. This ministry is for the most part private, exercised in behalf of individuals or of small gatherings of disciples. Its public part, which is that chiefly reported and recorded, consists of successive *defenses*, which, in the result, prove to be aggressive *triumphs*, of Christianity. B.

Section 225.

Acts xxi. 18-40.

18 AND the *day* following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present.
19 And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought
20 among the Gentiles by his ministry. And when they heard *it*, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe;
21 and they are all zealous of the law: and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to cir-
22 cumcise *their* children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? the mul-
23 titude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this
24 that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; them take and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave *their* heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are no-
25 thing; but *that* thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written *and* concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from *things* offered to idols, and from blood, and from

26 strangled, and from fornication. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

27 And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they
 28 saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Israel, help : This is the man, that teacheth all *men* every where against the people, and the law, and this place : and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted
 29 this holy place. (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.) And all the city was moved,
 30 and the people ran together : and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple : and forthwith the doors were shut. And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the
 31 chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them : and when they saw the chief captain and
 32 the soldiers, they left beating of Paul. Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded *him* to be bound with two chains ; and demanded who he was, and what he
 33 had done. And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude : and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the
 34 castle. And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for
 35 the violence of the people. For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him.

37 And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak
 38 unto thee ? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek ? Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men
 39 that were murderers ? But Paul said, I am a man *which am* a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city : and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people.

40 And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people.

18-26. *An Endeavor to remove the Unfounded Suspicions of Believing Jews, which became the Occasion of Paul's Arrest by Unbelievers.*—On the day succeeding the first private reception and welcome given to Paul and his company, a more public conference was held with James and the elders of the Church. To them Paul made full report of his ministry among the Gentiles ; and they rendered a united thanksgiving for what God had thus wrought. Then, knowing well the temper of the Jewish Christians and their misapprehensions concerning Paul and his teaching, and realizing the crisis existing in the relations between believing Jews and Gentiles on account of Paul's position and teaching, the elders wisely sought to bring about a desirable unity. This they did by suggesting that the apostle should take a simple part in an ancient ceremonial of the Jewish law.

If we would form an intelligent and *fair* judgment respecting this counsel and Paul's compliance with it, these considerations must have due weight. With convincing power and world-wide acceptance Paul had preached salvation by *grace*, through a justifying *faith*, resting and centering alone upon Christ's sacrifice and exaltation. This doctrine indirectly yet positively antagonized the long-cherished reverence and reliance of the Jew, Christian or un-

believer, in behalf of his legal or ceremonial obedience and worship. B.—Paul had opposed the external observance of Judaism only so far as the justification and sanctification of men were made to depend upon it. It was his principle that no one should abandon the national and civil relations in which he stood at the time of his conversion except for important reasons ; and in accordance with this principle he allowed the Jews to adhere to their peculiarities, among which was the observance of the Mosaic law (1 Cor. 7 : 18). N.—Yet the apostle *had* taught that the ceremonials instituted by Moses were *not essential* to salvation. He *had* declared the Gentiles to be free from all obligation to the Jewish ceremonial law. And this freedom of the Gentiles James and the elders were careful to recognize afresh, even while counseling Paul to conciliate the large body of Jewish Christians.

But Paul was *falsely charged* with going further and saying more than this. The charge came from the *false brethren*—a few in every church, who had professed Christianity and entered its fold only to misuse their position by perverting honest disciples back to the old, formal, and lifeless Judaism. This insidious, undermining work (we remark in passing) was the *great obstacle and hindrance* in the introduction of Christianity ; and to its counteraction

Paul's greatest intellectual and personal efforts were addressed. That these false teachers should have reported, and that the large numbers of sincere Christian Jews should have believed, that Paul had gone a step further and *forbidden* the practice of long familiar Jewish rites, is not strange. Much less was it strange that these Jewish Christians should be prejudiced against the apostle, and alienated from him and from the Gentile disciples. For, remember, this was with them a period of *painful* transition, in which all the old fixed religious convictions and habits were to be exchanged for, *supplanted* by, the new; the old involving, too, so much *outward doing*, and gratifying a natural self-righteousness, while the new demanded an inward spiritual faith, and gave self no resting-place. Consider, also, that the training of these "many thousands of Jews who believed" had instilled in them a peculiar reverence for the Mosaic institutions, as originating directly with Jehovah, and hallowed by centuries of observance. They could not but be "all zealous of the law," and regard with alarm and almost aversion the man who was charged with causelessly desecrating that which they counted divine and held so dear.

No place nor time was so opportune to correct this false charge, to make the correction reach as far as the falsehood had been disseminated, even wherever Paul had been or was known. The Jerusalem Church was the center and source of Jewish-Christian sentiment. It everywhere led and controlled this sentiment. Christian Jews, too, were here from every part of the world that Christianity had reached. The false report corrected and the prejudice based upon it broken *here and among this representative multitude*, they would die out and disappear elsewhere. Proving to this vast throng of believing and unbelieving Jews, he would prove to all everywhere that he still recognized the ceremonial law as from God, and as such still revered and regarded it. He *had* shown this, indeed, in coming to this great festival. He had shown it by circumcising Timothy, and by his own vow and ceremonial at Cenchrea. But *now* he will prove it again in the sight of *all the Jews—in their very Temple*. Thus he will again "become a Jew to Jews, that he may gain the Jews" (1 Cor. 9 : 19).

Four men of the Jerusalem Church, who had taken a temporary Nazarite vow (Num. 6), were about entering upon the ceremonial purification by which the vow was completed. The elders' counsel was that Paul should associate himself with these men in this closing ceremony, and himself defray the expense of the offerings to be presented in the Temple. B.—Not that he should make himself a Nazarite, but merely that he should perform such preparatory rites as would enable him to take part

with these Nazarites in the conclusion of their solemn service. J. A. A.—This counsel Paul willingly accepted, and proceeded to act upon.

From the fact that the apostle was seized by *unbelieving* Jews while engaged in this ceremonial service with the avowed design of conciliating Jewish believers, it has been inferred, even by so wise a man as John Knox, that the policy here advised and carried out was inconsistent with true Christian principles. But it certainly harmonized with those principles as laid down in the Epistles to the Corinthians and the Romans. And the *record here* gives no support to such an inference. The history that follows rather intimates that the *end sought may have been fully attained*. The knowledge that Paul was assaulted while showing his regard for their law (he having been some days visibly engaged in the ceremonial) may have drawn out the deeper sympathy of Jewish Christians in his behalf; and so more firmly united the great body of Jewish and Gentile believers in the subsequent persecutions and perils of their common Christian faith.

27-30. *Paul assaulted by Jews and dragged from the Inner Court of Israel into the Outer Court of the Gentiles.* (See Vol. I., Sec. 178.)—A low balustrade of stone, with pillars at regular intervals inscribed with a warning to Gentiles against entrance into the sacred limits beyond, fenced off the Inner Court of Israel from the Outer Court of the Gentiles. One of the stones containing this inscription was recently discovered in the Mohammedan cemetery by Mr. Ganneau. (See Vol. I., p. 621.)

It was within the fenced Inner Court, open only to *worshiping* Israelites, that some Ephesian Jews (of the province of Asia) encountered Paul—whose person seems to have been well known—with his band of Nazarites. Mistakenly inferring that one of these men was an Ephesian Greek (also well known to them), and too much blinded by hate to see clearly, they rushed upon the apostle, and loudly summoned the crowd of worshipers to aid in seizing him. With the same breath they denounced him as a renegade Jew, whose false, malevolent teaching everywhere among the Gentiles had spread suspicion and created hostility against the people, the Law, and the Temple of the Jews; a renegade, who even now dared to pollute the sanctity of this holy place by bringing into it Greeks (rather *Gentiles*, in accordance with the prevalent New Testament antithesis of *Jews and Greeks*). Such a charge instantly stirred to fury the masses always congregating at this festival period in and near the Temple, as the words were swiftly circulated among them. Responding to the wild cry of *Help*, as if *Paul* were the assailant and their sanctuary needed defense against his sacrilegious assault, the excited crowd fell upon the apostle, and, dragging him down

into the Gentile Court, sought to beat him to death. Then the great doors of the "Beautiful" gate were closed by the Levites, to exclude the rioters from the holy court, and to prevent its possible profanation by bloodshed.

In the words of this false charge against Paul (v. 28), again we note (as often before) the evidence furnished by enemies of the vast extent and effectiveness of this apostle's work for Christ and men: *This is the man—that hath taught all men everywhere! Unbelievers and believers—all had heard, or heard of, him.* B.

The extreme corruption and wickedness, not only of the mass of the Jewish people, but even of the rulers and chief men, is asserted by Josephus in the strongest terms: "For that time was fruitful among the Jews in all sorts of wickedness, so that they left no evil deed undone; nor was there any new form of wickedness, which any one could invent, if he wished to do so. Thus they were all corrupt, both in their public and their private relations; and they vied with each other who should excel in impiety toward God and injustice to men." At the same time Josephus testifies to the existence among them of a species of zeal for religion—a readiness to attend the feasts, a regularity in the offering of sacrifice, an almost superstitious regard for the Temple, and a fanatic abhorrence of all who sought to "change the customs which Moses had delivered." G. R.

31-33. Interposition of the Roman Tribune, and Binding of Paul. (See Frontispiece, Vol. I.)—The fortress *Antonia* (the castle here referred to) stood alone on a precipitous rock, near ninety feet high, at the northwest corner of the Temple. It was likewise a work of Herod the Great. The fortress was seventy feet in height. It appeared like a vast square tower, with four other towers at each corner, three of them between eighty and ninety feet high—that at the corner next to the Temple above a hundred and twenty. From this the whole Temple might be seen, and broad flights of steps led down into the northern and western cloisters, or porticoes, of the Temple, in which, during the Roman government, their guards were stationed. *Milman.*

Instantly upon receiving tidings of the uproar from these guards, the *chief captain*—or tribune, commanding one division (one sixth) of a Roman legion of six thousand men—hastened down with a body of soldiers into the Temple Court. The only thought of this man, Lysias by name, in interposing his armed force, was to check the turbulence of a Jewish mob, or to suppress a riot. He cared not about saving an innocent man from murderous violence. With a theory that Paul was a certain well-known insurgent leader, he was rather inclined to second the purpose of the infuriate Jews. His

seizing and binding Paul seem to have been only the preliminary steps to this. Yet, with the Roman style of justice, he demands of Paul's assailants to know who their victim was, and of what they accused him.

34-36. Paul borne up the Castle Stairs amid Malignant Outcries of the Jews.—No accusation could they make. Their hate furnished the only reason for their violence. To rescue Paul from this violence was the tribune's duty, and therefore he commanded the soldiers to whom the apostle was chained to bear him up the stairway of the fortress. And as this was done, the same passionate, murderous cry that thirty years before had rung through the vast area of the Temple Court and Castle was heard again: *Away with him! Before, it was actuated by hatred to Divine purity, truth, and love, incarnated in the person of Christ; now, coming from another generation filled with like malevolent spirit, it is hatred to Christ's most faithful witness and messenger.*

37-39. Brief Colloquy between Paul and Lysias.—As the absent governor's representative, the tribune felt the grave responsibility, not only of preserving the public peace, but of dealing (as he supposed), in the person of this prisoner, with a fanatic insurgent, an Egyptian Jew, whose efforts at insurrection had troubled the whole administration of Felix. This Egyptian impostor had gone into the great Desert of Judea with four thousand assassins, secretly organized into bands. B.—He returned with thirty thousand men, whom he had deluded into the belief that he was the Messiah, and that he would restore the kingdom to Judah; he encamped on the Mount of Olives, threatening to overpower the Roman garrison, and promising that the walls of Jerusalem should fall down. He was attacked by Felix, and his followers dispersed or slain, the Egyptian himself escaping. S.—We find in Josephus a full account of the transaction, which happened under the government of Felix, and, what is remarkable, Josephus does not mention his name, but everywhere calls him "the Egyptian," and "the Egyptian false prophet." M. H.

Surprised at the ease and naturalness with which Paul addressed him in Greek, "as these insurgents probably communicated with their followers only in the dialect of their country," the Roman captain puts a plain question of fact, to which Paul answers as plainly. He said, "I am a Jew; not a characterless vagabond from Egypt, nor even a native of Judea (where insurgents and insurrections were bred), but a *citizen* of refined and wealthy Tarsus in Asiatic Cilicia." This direct, clear answer swept away at once the tribune's suspicion. More than this, too, did Paul's intelligent address and courageous bearing accomplish. Beholding him so un-



awed by the imminent peril, so unruffled in spirit by the rude handling of the mob and the soldiers, the only calm, self-possessed man in the vast, excited, surging throng; noting, too, the self-respect and native dignity in his reference to his own birth-city, and the proper respect to Roman authority evinced in the form of his request, the Roman commander yields to the unconscious mastery of so brave and courteous a spirit, and grants Paul the only liberty he asks, the liberty of speech. And this very liberty he seeks, not for his own sake, but for theirs. He would speak *to the people*, God's people and his. He would use this his grand opportunity as Christ's herald to proclaim his Messiahship to this vast multitude of his "fallen" Israel. Though many strange places were occupied as a pulpit by this matchless

pioneer preacher of the Cross, none was so striking as this, the stairway between the Roman quarters and the venerated area of Jewish pride and worship. And the vast auditorium became strangely still. For even the mad, murderous mob was awed into a temporary quiet, as this unresisting yet undaunted, strong-hearted man, standing chained to two mailed men, stretched forth his manacled right hand to summon their attention.

The whole scene is sublime beyond expression. Like all the marked events and crises of Paul's grandly effective career, it neither requires nor admits any imaginative gloss or coloring. All these signal incidents are best apprehended and most impressively conveyed in the simple form of the Scriptural record. B.

Section 226.

Acts xxi. 40 ; xxii. 1-29.

40 AND when there was made a great silence, he spake unto *them* in the Hebrew tongue, saying, Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence *which I make* now unto you. (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,) I am verily a man *which am* a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished. And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt *there*, came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

17 And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: and when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. And they gave him audience unto this word, and *then* lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a *fellow* from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live. And as they cried out, and cast off *their* clothes, and threw dust into the air, the chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him. And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centu-

26 rion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncon-
 27 demned? When the centurion heard *that*, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take
 28 heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman. Then the chief captain came, and said
 29 unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. And the chief captain answered,
 With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was *free* born. Then
 straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief cap-
 tain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

1-16. Paul's *voluntary* statement, or *first defense*, was made to the maddened Jews massed in the vast Outer Court of the Temple, from the top of the stairway to the adjoining fortress Antonia. His quiet poise of manner and his respectful, dignified courtesy of address helped to calm their excitement. By calling this mob of persecutors *Brethren*, he both acknowledged and claimed a common nationality with them. The old men who were there, priests, rulers, and rabbis, of eminence as leaders and teachers, some of whom had just repeated the act of thirty years before by stirring up the people to persecution, Paul yet addresses with the venerable term *Fathers*. His use, too, of the Hebrew tongue (that is, the then current Aramaic or Syro-Chaldaic dialect of Palestine, which had gradually supplanted the older Hebrew of Judea since the captivity) helped further to attract their attention and to conciliate their feeling at the outset.

With great wisdom and tact he shapes his whole address. He defers to their manifestly hostile feeling by calling it a *defense* (Greek, *apology*). He avows himself a Jew, refers to his pure Jewish blood, his place of birth, and his early and thorough training in the knowledge and practice of the law, at Jerusalem. He recalls that which they also well knew of his early life. He repeats the story of his surpassing zeal and frenzy in the active persecution of Christian disciples; how he went even to Damascus for this purpose, under commission of the high priest and elders. He thus *dwelt upon* his fiercely fanatical career in order that the question might arise in their minds by anticipation, what had wrought so extreme a change. Surely they must feel and know that nothing less than an *irresistible* motive, a conviction of truth absolutely conclusive, could have turned a man of such indomitable, fiery zeal so utterly against himself and his kindred and associates, against all his previous beliefs, practices, prejudices, and hates.

Then he tells the marvelous story of his conversion. He details the miracle of Christ's appearance and words by the way; and the subsequent visit and message of Ananias in Damascus. He characterizes Ananias as "a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there"; and declares that he spake in the name of *Jehovah*, the God of Israel. *By the God*

of their fathers, therefore, he had been changed from a persecutor into an advocate of Christ. Passing over the interval of three years, he proceeds to narrate a miraculous occurrence in Jerusalem.

17-21. *Christ's Second Appearance in the Temple, and his Command that Paul should go forth to Distant Foreign Nations.*—It was while in the Temple, and while *praying there*—thus implying his loyalty to the Jewish sanctuary and its worship, and disproving the charge of hostility and profanation—that Christ came to him again. Not in a foreign country and an alien temple, but in their own sacred, time-hallowed precincts, where their own Jehovah had manifested his presence and recorded his name, this Christ had appeared to him. So appearing in Jehovah's Temple, Paul suggests by implication, this Christ must be from God, *their* God. As it was the fervency of prayer that ushered Paul's spirit into a state of trance, so it was his need of direction, intensely felt and fervidly expressed, that brought Christ a second time into close personal communion with him. This interview is not referred to in Luke's previous account (ch. 9). Paul introduces it here to explain and justify his going to the Gentiles. From this point of view, the colloquy with Christ is specially instructive.

Christ's reason for Paul's instant departure from Jerusalem—"for they will not receive *thy testimony concerning me*"—implies His knowledge that Paul's great desire was to remain and preach Christ among the Jews of Jerusalem. This desire Paul makes even more evident to his present hearers by showing how he demurred to Christ's command. They knew, he said, what a persecutor of Christians he had been; and this fact would give his new testimony for Christ the more weight with them. Thus Paul more than hints to the listening Jews that *his strong desire* was to remain among his own people. But he goes on faithfully to recite Christ's imperative direction (His only reply) to depart, and to minister among far nations.

22, 23. *Why and how Paul's Address was interrupted.*—To the story of the apostle's life and conversion, even to the statement about Christ's second appearance, the vast throng crowding the Temple area had listened silently and intently; and they remembered well the miraculous part of it the next day. They seem to have felt the man's sin-

cerity. They uttered no doubt respecting his *main assertion*, that a direct power from above and not any influence of other minds had transformed the persecutor into the disciple of Christ. But when he spoke "this word"—better, this *saying*, referring to the whole direction of Christ—then instantly was aroused the old, deep-seated, and incurable envy and jealousy at the thought that the Gentiles could be fellow-heirs with them of Jehovah's promised mercy, and subjects of their glorious Messiah. Then, on the instant, reason and reverence were forgotten; all sense of right and justice was overborne in a great outburst of mad rage. Although their Prophets and Psalmists had plainly proclaimed the ultimate world-wide ministry of the Messiah and the extension of God's saving mercies to all peoples, the Jews had never accepted the fact, could never abide the thought. For its statement by Christ they rose upon him at Nazareth and during the week of his passion. For this statement they murdered Stephen; and, at Antioch and Corinth, had sought to murder Paul. And now, in their frantic impotence of wrath, they shout out their murderous execrations and demands, rending off and tossing up their outer garments, with handfuls of dust, into the air.

24-26. *Paul's Announcement of Roman Citizenship arrests the Examination by Scourging.*—By the violent outcry of the Jews not only was Paul silenced but the Roman commander was led to infer that the apostle's defense (which the captain had not understood) had only strengthened *their* conviction of his guilt. Partly from this impression, and partly to gratify the Jewish populace (always a politic custom of the Roman rulers), the tribune directed that he should be tortured to confession by the scourge. The implements of such extorted confession (here called *examination*), including the posts, the binding thongs, and the knotted whips, were always at hand in a Roman fortress.

"But when they stretched him out for the whips," or as they were binding him to the inclined post with leather thongs, Paul asserts, as at Philippi, his Roman citizenship. This he does in a sharply pointed question to the centurion charged with the scourging. To *punish* an *untried* and *uncondemned* Roman, especially to torture such a one with the scourge, was by Roman law one of the highest crimes. At once the centurion hastens to his commanding officer with the warning intelligence that Paul was a Roman.

27-29. *The Tribune's Second Colloquy with Paul, and its Effect.*—Instantly the astonished and alarmed chief captain came to his prisoner (girded for the scourge) to know if it were really so. Not for a moment did he doubt Paul's assertion; for death was the penalty of a false claim to Roman citizenship. Such citizenship involved the highest political rights and civil privileges. It was acquired chiefly by parentage or purchase. By "a great sum" Lysias had purchased it. To Paul it had descended by inheritance.

Paul's appeal had instant full effect. The thongs were untied and he removed from the dishonoring implements. Lysias, too (like the magistrates at Philippi), was greatly alarmed, because the mere binding of Paul to the scourge-post might have been punished with death. But now, as before, the apostle manifested no aggrieved or vindictive feeling. In part it had been a just self-honor, but chiefly regard for the dignity of the great cause he represented, that led him to declare his citizenship. He was always willing to *suffer shame* when such suffering was demanded by, or would in any wise further, his ministry of Christ and of truth among men. Otherwise, in the interest of Christianity, he *claimed* all the honor and respect due to a true manhood, and all the rights of human citizenship. B.

At first under the republic all Roman soldiers were Roman citizens. "But in proportion as the public freedom was lost in extent of conquest, war was gradually improved into an art and degraded into a trade." With the distinction between the prætorian and legionary soldiers all necessary connection between citizenship and military service ceased to exist. In strict conformity with this state of things we find that Claudius Lysias was a citizen by purchase, not because he was a military officer. H.

Wholly at a loss what to do with the apostle, compelled to keep him in custody for the safety of his life, having received vastly higher impressions of Paul's character and standing, yet still ignorant who he was, and what the crime alleged against him by the Jews, Lysias naturally seeks the aid of the Sanhedrim, or great Jewish Council. He therefore summons its members to assemble on the morrow for a hearing of the case, hoping thereby to obtain sufficient understanding to guide his own future course. B.

Section 227.

Acts xxii. 30 ; xxiii. 1-35.

- 80 On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from *his* bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them. And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men *and* brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day. And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth. Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, *thou* whited wall : for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law ? And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest ? Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest : for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people. But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men *and* brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee : of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees : and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit : but the Pharisees confess both. And there arose a great cry : and the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man : but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God. And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring *him* into the castle. And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul : for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.
- 12 And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy. And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul. Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to morrow, as though ye would inquire something more perfectly concerning him : and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him. And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul. Then Paul called one of the centurions unto *him*, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain : for he hath a certain thing to tell him. So he took *him*, and brought *him* to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto *him*, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee. Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went *with him* aside privately, and asked *him*, What is that thou hast to tell me ? And he said, The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to morrow into the council, as though they would inquire something of him more perfectly. But do not thou yield unto them : for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him : and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee. So the chief captain *then* let the young man depart, and charged *him*, See *thou* tell no man that thou hast shewed these things to me. And he called unto *him* two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cæsarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night ; and provide *them* beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring *him* safe unto Felix the governor. And he wrote a letter after this manner : Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix sendeth greeting. This man was taken of the Jews, and should have been killed of them : then came I with an army, and rescued him, having understood that he was a Roman. And when I would have known the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him forth into their council : whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds. And when it was told me how that the Jews laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to thee, and gave commandment to his accusers also to say before thee what *they* had against him. Farewell.
- 31 Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought *him* by night to Antipatris. On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the

83 castle: who, when they came to Cæsarea, and delivered the epistle to the governor, pre-
 84 sented Paul also before him. And when the governor had read *the letter*, he asked of what
 35 province he was. And when he understood that *he was* of Cilicia; I will hear thee, said he,
 when thine accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judg-
 ment hall.

1. *The Assertion with which Paul first breaks the Silence.*—God had used the tribune Lysias (acting for the governor, Felix) to rescue Paul, and then, for his continued safety, to hold him in arrest. Now he makes of the tribune's desire to know more of Paul a new opportunity for the apostle. *This opportunity, like every circumstance and position in which Paul was placed during his period of liberty or of "bonds and imprisonment," is made by him an occasion "for the furtherance of the gospel."*

The Council, or Sanhedrim, was assembled in a hall connected with the Temple chambers. (See diagram, Vol. I., p. 623.) Into this hall Paul was "brought down" from the castle. Here Lysias remained while the military guard retired a little distance, yet ready to interpose (as they did) for his protection. Almost twenty-five years had elapsed since Paul had intensely endorsed the Council's murderous persecution of Stephen, and had been the chief instrument of this supreme judicatory in its vindictive pursuit of Christ's disciples. Now he stands before them as the chief object of their hate, with no responsive hate; altogether unmindful of himself, calmly and undauntedly ("looking steadfastly," Luke says) he studies their faces and their spirit.

Then he asserts a self-respecting dignity by opening the anomalous proceedings. He claims a position of perfect equality, by addressing them as *Brother Men*. He shows that he understood the tribune's object by speaking of himself; and in Greek, that Lysias too might comprehend. As best answering a question touching his criminality, he affirms his own truthful and righteous life. In the spirit and manner of the Master's question, "Who convinceth me of sin?" he challenges them to gainsay the assertion that he had been true to God and man; that in the main his aims, his plans, his deeds, had been single and right. Paul asserts no doctrine or practice of perfection here; but a fact based upon God's gracious inworking. And he does it, not only to justify himself before Lysias, but to sharpen the contrast with *their professed righteousness*, which was hypocrisy. B.

2, 3. *The High Priest's Unjust Command and Paul's Indignant Rejoinder.*—Ananias had been appointed high priest in A. D. 48. In A. D. 52 he was sent to Rome to answer before Claudius on a charge of oppression brought against him by the Samaritans. The result is doubtful; but the best solution

seems to be that Ananias was not formally deposed, but, upon the murder of Jonathan (who had been appointed in his place during his suspension) in A. D. 57, he resumed his functions. The high priest's character for violence and lawlessness suggests that a *guilty conscience* assumed the guise of zeal against blasphemy, when he ordered the bystanders to smite Paul on the mouth. S.—It was not to be tolerated that a man who stood arraigned there as an apostate from the religion of his fathers should assert his innocence. The mouth must be shut that uttered such a declaration. *Hacked.*

It was not the proposed indignity to himself (which, from the question of the bystanders, we may infer was not actually committed), but it was the glaring injustice and hypocrisy of the man who commanded it, that instantly turned the prisoner into a judge and condemner. But Paul's words *were not* an imprecation, nor an outburst of passion, or even of righteous indignation. Severe as was the figure he used—*thou whited wall*—and sharply as the implied charge of falsehood was hurled back against the high priest, more severe was the *whited sepulchre* which Christ used, and more directly and sharply were His terrible denunciations pointed against hypocrites. Paul speaks, too, in God's name; and he assigns the unlawful command of Ananias as the ground of this announced judgment from God. B.—On each of the many such hypocrites who sat before him, the apostle might well denounce the doom, "God shall smite thee"; and there is no difficulty in regarding the special fitness of his words to Ananias—who was deposed by Felix two years later and afterward murdered by the Sicarii—as one of the innumerable examples of unconscious prophecy. S.—Concerning Ananias, Josephus states that in a tumult begun by his own son he was besieged and taken in the royal palace, where having in vain attempted to hide himself in an old aqueduct, he was dragged out and slain, about five years after this. D.

4, 5. *The Bystanders' Question and Paul's Reply.*—The partisans to whom the high priest's unlawful command had been directed, seem to have been so far affected by Paul's boldness as to *substitute a rebuking question* for the smiting on the mouth. In their question, however, they defended, not the unlawful order, but the sacred office of the high priest. *They charge Paul with reviling God's high priest.*

In the apostle's answering avowal of ignorance

respecting Ananias and his high-priestly office, we find one of those Scriptural difficulties which has had many proposed solutions. It seems obvious that Paul did not speak ironically, or as confessing and apologizing for a heedless or intemperate exclamation. Nor did he have reference to the abolition of the priestly office by Christ. Still less did he mean to deny the title of Ananias on account of his suspension from and subsequent usurpation of the high priest's functions. His supposed defect of vision seems also to be ruled out, by his "stedfast looking" at the outset, and by his clear discernment of the two main elements, Sadducaic and Pharisaic, comprised in the Council. Besides the established character of Paul for sincerity and for clearness of perception, there are natural considerations of fact which sustain the view that he honestly pleaded ignorance of the person of the high priest. Ananias had not succeeded to the office until ten or more years after Paul's conversion. He was not necessarily the presiding officer of the Sanhedrim. Nor, when presiding, was it customary always to wear the distinctive robes of the high-priesthood. This was only demanded when performing official duties in the Temple.

Respecting this reply of Paul we note further: (1) That he simply justifies himself as to the charge of *reviling* brought against him. He does not withdraw nor apologize for the condemnation he had uttered against Ananias. That remained: its force and justness unshaken by the attempted diversion of the high priest's adherents. (2) That Paul, by citing from the law (Ex. 22 : 28), distinctly implies that he still holds that law, which he is here charged with rejecting, as the guide and rule of his life. The quotation, thus regarded, further shows that the apostle in this whole colloquy *was now speaking*, as he declared he had *lived, seriously and conscientiously*.

6-9. *Paul ends the Useless Conference by dividing his Adversaries. Strife between the Pharisees and Sadducees.*—Knowing well that he can have neither fair hearing nor just judgment from a body so prejudiced and hostile, with no hope of achieving good by further direct exposition of Christian truth, he wisely and rightly divides his adversaries, and so abruptly breaks up an unsought, anomalous, and useless conference. Not as some mistakenly read it, by a trick suddenly conceived and carried out for his own advantage, but in a way that perfectly accords with the true missionary spirit and work. The state of dissension between these two great parties which for generations divided the nation had always been familiar to Paul. Nay, more, he had always sided with the Pharisees as respects their points of difference with the Sadducees. With them he had shared a belief and hope in the resur-

rection from the dead. Apprehending, as *they* did *not*, its ultimate relation to the risen Christ, *he* could truly declare that his preaching of this doctrine had subjected him to this inquisitorial process before the Sanhedrim. And now he uses this very examination to emphasize, and so call attention to, the great doctrine upon which the two rival sects were chiefly divided; knowing and designing, indeed, thereby to raise an issue that would break up the Council. B. —He had not come to Jerusalem to escape out of the way of danger; but, at the risk of bonds and death, to reconcile the sincere Jews, if possible, to the gospel as the fulfillment of the Law. He desired to prove himself a faithful Israelite by his very testimony to him whom God had raised from the dead. Both these objects might naturally be promoted by an appeal to the nobler professions of the Pharisees, whose *creed*, as distinguished from that of the Sadducees, was still, as it had ever been, his own. Of that creed, faith in the risen Lord was the true fulfillment. He wished to lead his brother Pharisees into a deeper and more living apprehension of their own faith; and, seeing now the hopelessness of gaining over the Sadducees, he made a last appeal to the party of which there remained any hope. S.

He needed no expedient, for he was then in Roman hands and under Roman protection. It was no pretense to serve a turn; it was the genuine language of his heart. In all his other speeches at this crisis the same idea reigns predominant. "I stand and am judged for the *hope of the promise* made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come: for *which hope's sake*, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why is it judged by you a thing incredible *if God raises the dead?*" It is the self-same sound which we heard in the first discourse given us from his lips, when he cried to the Jews of the Pisidian Antioch, "Now we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the *promise* which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, *in that he hath raised up Jesus again.*" And when we read his mind upon this subject more fully in 1 Cor. 15, and indeed in the whole of his writings, we see how truly the resurrection of Christ did, in his view, include the realization of all the hopes with which the Old Covenant was pregnant; how entirely it was to him the *cause and actual commencement*, as well as the pledge and promise, of the resurrection and the life to man. T. D. B.

8. The Sadducees believed in neither angel nor spirit; they rejected the doctrine of a future life, and denied the resurrection of the dead. They were the *rationalists* of their age. They accepted the law, admitted the Divine mission of Moses, and belonged to the Hebrew Church; but they did away with

everything in the constitution of humanity and its relation to God which could sustain the edifice of anything like a high religious life. Eternal life, in the sense of a future immortality, was exploded altogether. T. B.

The immediate result was "a sudden paroxysm of their usual antipathy and party zeal," an array of the two parties against each other, and an assumption, for the moment, of Paul's defense by the more numerous party of the Pharisees. Seemingly referring to the apostle's account on the preceding day of Christ's two miraculous appearances, the Pharisaic scribes assert their belief that he is the true man he claims to be, and that a spirit (or angel) may have spoken to him, as he had said. True to their belief in spiritual messengers from heaven, using (if the sentence be genuine) the very words of Gamaliel (5 : 39), they declare that they will not fight against the God who sends spirits by harming this man to whom he may have sent them.

10. *Paul's Second Rescue from Actual Violence by the Tribune Lysias.*—The controversy between the rival sects grew so sharp, and the actual strife around the person of Paul became so fierce, that the Roman commander was constrained to interpose his soldiers again, and almost forcibly to withdraw his prisoner. Not that Paul, an obscure prisoner, was of any special account. But for the life of Paul, a Roman citizen, he would be held responsible. Besides, he has learned something, if not all he desires to know, about this man. What he has learned has satisfied him that his prisoner is no criminal and deserves no punishment from Jew or Roman. And all that he has heard and seen has greatly raised his estimate of Paul. It has prepared him to take the decisive and costly measures for Paul's deliverance which follow in the history.

11. *Another Night-vision of Christ.*—Once before, at Corinth, and once after, in his ocean peril, came such a divine personal visitation for the needed cheer and stay of Paul's spirit, questioning about the present, and depressed concerning the future. Not for his own Christian comfort or peace in trusting; for his faith was adequate to his mere personal needs. But Christ came, partly to acquaint him that his work in Jerusalem was finished, and that it was approved; but chiefly to assure him concerning his longed-for work at Rome—to let him know that he should finish his course with joy, and the ministry received of the Lord Jesus (20 : 24). B.

So, then, he was to be guided by that unerring Hand, though by a path he had not proposed, to the goal he had so much desired; and we can understand the calmness which this assurance gave him amid the trials of the following years. S.—It upheld and comforted him in the uncertainty of his life from the Jews, in the uncertainty of his liberation

from prison at Cesarea, in the uncertainty of his surviving the storm in the Mediterranean, in the uncertainty of his fate on arriving at Rome. So may one crumb of divine grace and help be multiplied to feed five thousand wants and anxieties. A.

12-35. *Defeat of a Conspiracy to assassinate Paul by his Removal to Cesarea.*—The plot was well laid, and endorsed at least by the Sadducean members of the Sanhedrim. Such vows were not unusual with the Jews; and absolution was readily obtained if they were found impossible of accomplishment. The ready admission of Paul's nephew, and the instant compliance with Paul's request by the centurion, and further, the immediate audience and heed given by the tribune to the young messenger, show how strong an impression the apostle had made upon them. Both officers recognized and at once responded to his prompt judicious action. B.—The details of his acting exhibit a decisive example of the actual union and harmony between the prescient purpose of God and the responsibility of men for duty on their own sphere. It was determined that Paul's life should be saved from these dangers, and that determination was made known to him. He knew for certain that these schemers could not take his life; he knew for certain that the power of God was pledged effectually to frustrate their designs; yet with this knowledge Paul laid his plans skillfully, and executed them with secrecy and energy, for the preservation of his own life, precisely as if he had thought that all depended on his own skill and promptitude. This shows conclusively that in Paul's mind a belief in the decrees of God did not conflict with the obligation to diligent duty on the part of men. He framed and conducted a counterplot to defeat the conspiracy of the Jewish priesthood with as much zeal and care as if he had not obtained previous assurance of his safety. This simple history is most precious as an inspired commentary on some difficult doctrines. It does not indeed make the doctrines easy of comprehension; it does not relieve them of mystery to our minds; but it is fitted to show us that no view of the divine purposes can be right that in any measure tends to slacken human zeal and energy. To be assured that it is God that worketh in them, is the best of all motives to induce intelligent Christians to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2 : 12, 13). *Arnot.*

The Roman commander was fully aware that Paul's life was not secure even in the citadel. B.—The crime of assassination had become fearfully frequent in Jerusalem. Neither the sanctity of the Temple protected the unsuspicious worshiper from the secret dagger, nor did the majesty of the high priest's office secure the first religious and civil magistrate of the nation from the same ignoble

fate. Milman.—Hence the tribune Claudius Lysias, upon learning of the vow of these fanatic zealots against the apostle's life, the same night sent his prisoner under a strong protecting guard to Felix, the procurator or governor (of the Imperial Province of Judea), who resided at Cesarea. B.

We may be surprised that so large a force was sent to secure the safety of one man; but we must remember that this man was a Roman citizen, while the garrison in Antonia, consisting of more than a thousand men, could easily spare such a number for one day on such a service. The utmost secrecy, as well as promptitude, was evidently required; and therefore an hour was chosen, when the earliest part of the night would be already past. At the

time appointed, the troops, with Paul in the midst of them, marched out of the fortress, and at a rapid pace took the road to Cesarea. The foot-soldiers proceeded no farther than Antipatris, but returned from thence to Jerusalem. They were no longer necessary to secure Paul's safety; but they might very probably be required in the fortress of Antonia. It would be in the course of the afternoon that the remaining soldiers with their weary horses entered the streets of Cesarea. The centurion who remained in command of them proceeded at once to the governor, and gave up his prisoner; and at the same time presented the dispatch with which he was charged by the commandant of the garrison at Jerusalem. H.

Section 228.

Acts xxiv. 1-27.

- 1 AND after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and *with* a certain
- 2 orator *named* Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul. And when he was called
- 3 forth, Tertullus began to accuse *him*, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness,
- 4 and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, we accept *it*
- 5 always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness. Notwithstanding, that
- 6 I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency
- 7 a few words. For we have found this man *a* pestilent *fellow*, and a mover of sedition
- 8 among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes:
- 9 who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged
- 10 according to our law. But the chief captain Lysias came *upon us*, and with great violence
- 11 took *him* away out of our hands, commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examin-
- 12 ing of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him.
- 13 And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so.
- 14 Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Foras-
- 15 much as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more
- 16 cheerfully answer for myself: because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but
- 17 twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship. And they neither found me in
- 18 the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues,
- 19 nor in the city: neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me. But this I
- 20 confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my
- 21 fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: and have
- 22 hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of
- 23 the dead, both of the just and unjust. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a
- 24 conscience void of offence toward God, and *toward* men. Now after many years I came
- 25 to bring alms to my nation, and offerings. Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me
- 26 purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult. Who ought to have been
- 27 here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me. Or else let these same *here*
- 28 say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council, except it be
- 29 for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead
- 30 I am called in question by you this day. And when Felix heard these things, having more
- 31 perfect knowledge of *that* way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain
- 32 shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter. And he commanded a centu-
- 33 rion to keep Paul, and to let *him* have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his ac-
- 34 quaintance to minister or come unto him.
- 35 And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he

25 sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way
 26 for this time ; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him : wherefore he sent
 27 for him the oftener, and communed with him. But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room : and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.

AMID the superficial cares and pleasures of a worldly existence a man's deeper nature may slumber ; the surface-ripple of the stream of common life may fill the sense and lull the soul to sleep, but to almost every one there come occasions when the smooth current of the life of sense is interrupted, and his true self is roused to a temporary wakefulness. In the stillness of the lonely sick-bed, amid worldly reversees, in declining health, or under bitter bereavement—in such passages of man's history, the soul, eternity, God, become for the moment real things, and the most thoughtless and worldly-minded is forced to pause and think. Or, again, when the man listens to some very earnest exhibition of divine truth, or is brought into contact with one who is living a very holy, pure, unselfish life, a painful impression of his own deficiencies—a transient glimpse of a nobler, purer ideal of life, to which his own presents a miserable contrast—may visit his mind. Instead of seeking true comfort by the steady, however painful, contemplation, and then, through God's grace, by the deliberate, persevering correction of its evil self, the mind too often seeks a speedier but most unreal satisfaction, by forgetting its convictions, and seeing itself only in the false glass of the world's opinions. Thus, with many, life is but a continuous endeavor to forget and keep out of sight their true selves—a vain eluding and outstripping of a reality which is still ever with them, and to the consciousness of which they must one day awake. *Caird.*

1-9. *Renewed Accusation against Paul by the Jews, before the Tribunal of Felix.*—Very promptly (within five days) was Paul followed to Cesarea by Ananias and some of the Jewish elders. They brought with them a professional Roman advocate, Tertullus, whom they had hired to prosecute Paul before the Roman governor. Among themselves there was no one competent to encounter Paul ; and they would conciliate Felix by employing a Roman pleader. Flattery and falsehood characterized this man's address to Felix. Abuse and falsehood made up his charge against Paul.

Artfully as his *encomium* is framed, it is false in all its points. Historical facts (mainly from the Jew Josephus and the Roman Tacitus) show the reverse of "quietness" in the nation, and of "worthy deeds" wrought by "the providence" of Felix ; and that instead of "thankfulness," Felix was followed to Rome with the sharpest accusations by the Jews. B.—Felix was appointed (A. D. 53) partly at the instance of Jonathan, the then high priest. He ruled the province in a mean, cruel, and profligate manner. Tacitus says, "By every form of cruelty and lust, he wielded the power of a king in the spirit of a slave." S.

The charge against Paul is threefold : *treason* against the Roman power—"a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world" ; *heresy* against the law of Moses—a ringleader of the Christians ; and *sacrilege*—a profaner of the Temple. And Tertullus closes his address with the

further falsehood, that the Sanhedrim would have judged Paul lawfully, if Lysias had not interfered. To all these false charges, stated vaguely and without a single specification, the high priest and his colleagues personally assented ; "saying that these things were so."

10, 11. *Introduction of Paul's Defense.*—Although twice before Paul had spoken what he called a *defense*—first before a vast crowd of Jews in the Temple area, and again before the assembled Council or Sanhedrim—yet this is his first actual defense, as he now stands before an imperial tribunal, the governor representing the person and authority of the emperor.

Receiving the usual signal according him a hearing in reply, Paul frankly expresses his readiness to answer before Felix, because of his long residence among the Jews and of his consequent familiarity with the matters now in issue before him. Not a word of flattery here, but a proper recognition of the intelligent and unprejudiced character of the tribunal before which the apostle is now really on trial. For the comparatively long period of six or seven years Felix had been in Jerusalem and Cesarea. In both places were many Christian disciples. In Cesarea many Roman soldiers, after Cornelius, had received Christianity. He knew enough of these matters to appreciate the particulars of Paul's answer, and to determine the case on its merits, as he *did* by not condemning Paul. His failure to acquit and release grew out of other selfish causes,

as we know. And it may be added that with his opportunities of knowing the current events "among the Jews throughout the world," Felix must have heard of such "a pest and mover of sedition" as Paul's accuser alleged him to have been, if the charge had been true.

Paul notes another fact at the outset. He declares that Felix can readily ascertain that little more than a week had elapsed since the things directly complained of occurred. Including his journey to Cesarea and the five days' imprisonment there, it had been only twelve days since Paul had gone to Jerusalem to worship; and only eight or nine days since his arrest in the Temple.

12, 13. His Denial of Treason, and Challenge of his Accusers to the Proof.—In terms of unqualified denial he meets the first charge—of *sedition*. *Worship*, not the plotting of insurrection, was the object of his so recent visit to Jerusalem; and *while worshipping* he was found and arrested. He had not even spoken in public, much less by artful harangue sought to gather disaffected persons either in the Temple, the synagogues, or the city. This particular and emphatic denial he enforces by a challenge to his accusers, there present, to *produce proof* of this, their *only criminal* charge against him.

14-16. His Confession of the Second Charge, the So-called Heresy of Christianity; and Justification, by the Jewish Law and Prophets, of his Avowed Christian Faith, Hope, and Life.—He avows himself to be a conscientious adherent of the new, or Christian, way of believing and living. In denial of their accusation of heresy (or the introduction with schismatic spirit of a false religion—which was *their* meaning in using the term *heresy* or *sect*) he affirms that this was the way of their fathers. Boldly confessing his faith in Christ, he asserts the unity of the Christian belief with the old covenant and promises "written in the law and the prophets." No apostate was he from his fathers' God or faith, he assures Felix, who shared the Roman dislike to any one's abandonment of his own national modes of worship. To Jew and Roman he uses his opportunity thus implicitly to declare that Christ was the center, soul, and substance of all the truths and promises given to Israel; that Christianity was the true outcome and ultimate fulfillment of spiritual and vital Judaism. As Christ its founder had said, it did not destroy but it fulfilled all the law and the prophets.

And in confirmation of his general assertion, he adds the specific declaration that in common with many of his accusers, and with the mass of his nation, he holds steadfastly to the fathers' hope of a resurrection from death, through the promise and power of the fathers' God. To this hope he had distinctly appealed a few days before, when standing

before the Council in the Temple. In accordance with this belief and hope in the resurrection (common to Jews and Christians), he further affirms his *conscientious endeavor* to meet every obligation to God and man. He strives as the athlete or warrior, only his struggle and warfare is within the soul. His *supreme aim* and *constant effort* was to keep his *conscience* from *striking against stumbling-stones* of accusing purpose, wrong thought, or evil deed. Not that he always or ever perfectly *attained*, or succeeded in this high endeavor, but he *always exercises* himself—*habitually practices*—toward attainment, ever "pressing toward the mark." B.—And if the Apostle of the Gentiles, a man great in the faith, found it necessary to maintain constantly a military watchfulness and practice, how presumptuous in any of us to count on keeping the course, and acquiring the crown, by an indolent wish to be safe, without a constant watchfulness, an energetic effort, and a more than military sternness in laying aside every weight, and the sin that doth most easily beset us! *Arnot.*

17-21. His Refutation of the Third Charge, of Profaning the Temple.—One chief purpose of his visit to Jerusalem he states with great simplicity, as properly introducing his denial of this charge. He came as the almoner of help, not as the fomentor of disturbance and source of injury to his nation. And it is to be noted that this incidental statement, so drawn from him, is the only allusion in the Acts to the fact that Paul had been engaged for four years in gathering collections from all the Gentile churches in aid of the poor Christian Jews of Judea. In the Epistles, especially those to the Corinthians and Romans, Paul frequently refers to this matter (Rom. 15: 25, 26; 1 Cor. 16: 1-4; 2 Cor. 8: 1-4).

Repeating part of his previous assertion (in denial now of their third charge), that he had neither gathered a crowd nor stirred up tumult in the Temple, he impliedly and truthfully charges "certain Jews from Asia" with doing this very thing, and so profaning the sanctuary. These Jews, he yet further declares, found him engaged in appropriate temple worship, actually making offerings after undergoing ceremonial purification. And he makes a sharp point upon his present accusers, and a just argument in his own defense, in demanding that *those Asiatic Jews, his real accusers*, should meet him face to face, and sustain their accusation and assault upon him in the Temple. Since these, however, were absent, did not care or dare to appear against him, he turns with a bold challenge to the Jews present, the Sadducean members of the Council. He demands their own personal testimony upon the facts that occurred when he stood before the Sanhedrim. With a keen thrust that they could not parry, he asks if *the utterance of the hated truth of*

the resurrection was not the only charge of evil-doing that they could bring against him.

There was no rejoinder to Paul's fearless, simple, conclusive reply. As the accusation of Tertullus was artificial and vague, flattering and false, so the defense is natural and plain, specific, complete, and manifestly sincere. And, as always, he finds his opportunity to *preach Jesus and the resurrection*, and to testify his own Christian faith and hope, and his Christlike love to God and man.

22, 23. *By the Decision of Felix, Paul is held in Easy Confinement.*—The after-statements show conclusively that Felix virtually decided the case in favor of Paul. But he wished to retain, as far as possible, the favor of the Jews. He therefore pronounced no actual decision, simply putting off the two parties upon a pretext of seeking further information from Lysias. Verses 26 and 27 disclose his real motive in declining to release Paul.

The apostle's condition, however, was not a hard one. He was simply kept in a custody that protected his threatened life, and provided for his needs; while his friends in Cesarea (including Philip and Luke), and those from abroad, had free access to him. So the word of God was not bound. Freely and abundantly did Paul preach *the faith in Christ*. That this was with the full knowledge and consent of Felix, we clearly infer from his sending for the apostle to "hear him concerning that faith." And *this state of things continued for two years*. So that we may regard *Cesarea* as another great working-center of Paul, to be classed with *Antioch*, *Corinth*, *Ephesus*, and afterward *Rome*.

24-26. *Paul's Faithful Reasoning with Felix and Drusilla, and its Effect.*—Drusilla was a daughter of Herod Agrippa I. (Acts 12 : 1, 21), and sister of Agrippa II. and Bernice (25 : 13). She left her husband, the King of Emesa, to live with Felix. The suggestion of sending for Paul, doubtless, came from her. "A Jewish princess must necessarily have been curious to hear some account of what professed to be the fulfillment of Jewish prophecy." As curious, too, she may have been to hear about this widely bruited religion of the Nazarenes.

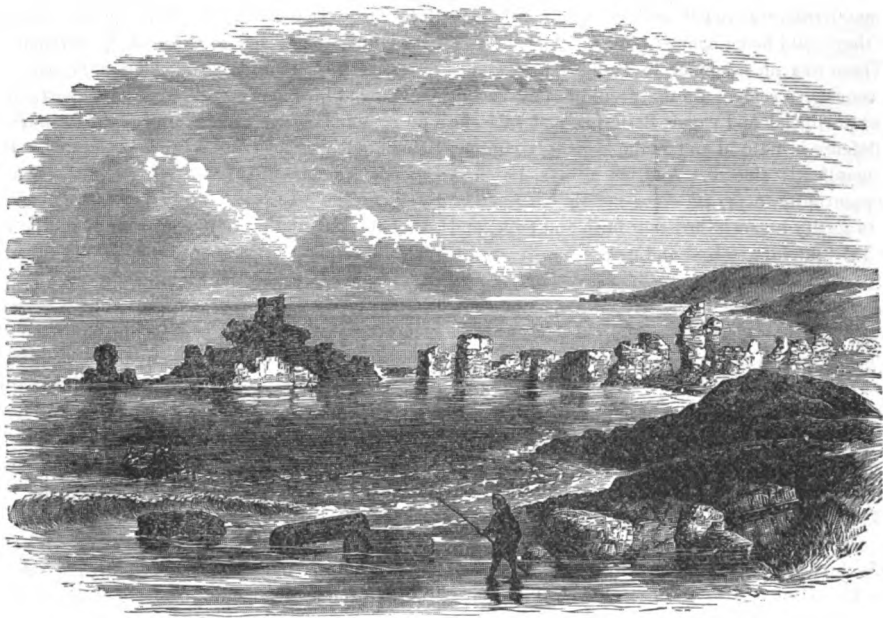
Never did this master of skill and fitness in discourse more conclusively prove this mastery than in the bold, faithful reasoning whose main drift and conclusion is here recorded in three words. In these words, *after expounding the faith in Christ* (which they asked to hear about), or the scheme of redemption foreshown in the Jewish Scriptures, he sums up a suitable application to these hearers. Before him sat an unjust judge—a cruel, rapacious governor. To him he discourses about righteousness, i. e., "rightness, justness, in thought, word, and deed toward all—toward God and toward man." To a Roman libertine noble and a profligate Jewish prin-

cess he expounds the Christian gospel of purity. And upon both, self-condemned by conscience, he presses the fearful fact of a *judgment to come*, which each must meet. Yet this Christian apostle makes no personal charge, utters no personal denunciation. He only leaves the truth to work in the soul. Hence no anger against Paul was stirred in the breast of Felix. The fear awakened in him was wrought, not by Paul, but by the Holy Ghost through the truth. The *object*, as well as the *cause*, of his dread was the Divine Law and the Divine Judge now so vividly disclosed by the apostle. That Felix was alarmed showed that he was not past feeling, not dead to the appeal of saving truth. In his alarm we read sure evidence of the convincing power of the Holy Ghost, *reproving of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment*.

And in the feeble, palliative half-purpose of future response with which he appeases the sharp demands of a troubled conscience, in the postponing reply with which he turns aside the faithful appeal and dismisses the friendly appellant and preacher, we find the precise point and form of his resistance to the Holy Ghost. The terrified prison-keeper at Philippi was ready and willing for the instant saving response, "What must I do?" The alarmed governor was neither ready nor willing now. And though the *convenient season* came, though he *often called for Paul* and "communed with him," yet the same state of feeling never returned. His avarice and other lusts regained their mastery. Every salutary fear and impulse was forgotten, and all spiritual sensibility for ever crushed out. He only sought, with Paul's connivance, to gain selfish advantage by the apostle's release. B.

How has the intimidated and yet unrepentant Felix become the living and most striking type of millions! Again and again is repeated the same pretext, and with the same self-deception. There is no set purpose to harden the heart against receiving the truth; there is merely absence of determination immediately to surrender. The word of truth is not rejected, but obedience to its dictates is put off to a more convenient season: the child puts off till he shall be a youth, the youth till he shall be a man, the man till hoary-headed age; the gray-beard till he shall be stretched upon his deathbed. So innocent and natural appear many of the pleas on which men excuse themselves from compliance with the highest demands, that many a sinner shall himself stand utterly dismayed when before the judgment-bar of God the last covering of shame shall be flung aside for ever. *Van. O.*

27. Though convinced of Paul's innocence, Felix left him in custody, that he might induce the Jews to withhold complaints at Rome against his administration. But this unprincipled procedure



Ruins of Caesarea.

also failed; for the men he thus sought to please followed him with accusations to Cesar's judgment seat. B.—In the following year, the city of Caesarea, where Paul was thus kept a prisoner, was the scene of one of the frequent and frightful tumults between the Jews and the Syrian Greeks, A. D. 59. Felix was denounced to the emperor for either ordering or conniving at a massacre of the Jews, and he was recalled to answer for his conduct at the same time that Domitius Corbulo succeeded Ummidius Quadratus as prefect of Syria. This was two full years after the beginning of Paul's imprisonment in May, A. D. 58, and Porcius Festus, who accompanied Corbulo as procurator of

Judea, would reach his destination about July, A. D. 60. S.

The apostle's captivity of five years was mainly spent in Caesarea and Rome. His whole career strikingly illustrates *the method of God's Spirit in planting Christianity chiefly in the great cities*. Paul's first center of Christian labor was in Antioch. For more than three years he toiled in this capital and chief city of Syria. A similar period was spent in Ephesus, the most influential center of Asia Minor. Two years he abode in Corinth, the leading city of Greece. And in the period of his captivity he labored two years in Caesarea, the political capital of Judea, and two years in Rome, the world's center. B.

Section 229.

Acts xxv. 1-27.

1 Now when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Cæsa-
 2 rea to Jerusalem. Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against
 3 Paul, and besought him, and desired favour against him, that he would send for him to
 4 Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him. But Festus answered, that Paul should be
 5 kept at Cæsarea, and that he himself would depart shortly *thither*. Let them therefore,
 6 said he, which among you are able, go down with *me*, and accuse this man, if there be any
 7 wickedness in him. And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went
 8 down unto Cæsarea; and the next day sitting on the judgment seat commanded Paul to be
 9 brought. And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round
 about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove.
 8 While he answered for himself, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the
 9 temple, nor yet against Cæsar, have I offended anything at all. But Festus, willing to do

the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me? Then said Paul, I stand at Cæsar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Cæsar. Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? unto Cæsar shalt thou go.

And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came unto Cæsarea to salute Festus. And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, saying, There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix: about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him. To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him. Therefore, when they were come hither, without any delay on the morrow I sat on the judgment seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth. Against whom when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed: but had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters. But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Cæsar. Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him.

And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth. And Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, ye see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and also here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him. Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and especially before thee, O king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write. For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him.

1-12. Paul's Arraignment before Festus, and his Appeal to the Emperor.—About midsummer of A. D. 60 Porcius Festus arrived in Cesarea, the Roman capital of the province of Judea, and assumed the procuratorship. At once he goes up to Jerusalem, the Jewish metropolis. Instantly he is besought by the high priest (Ismael, who had succeeded Ananias) and leading Jews to bring Paul to Jerusalem for a new trial. Two years had passed, yet the hatred of the Sadducaic members of the Sanhedrim remained as bitter and their purpose of assassination as determined as ever. Their malevolent feeling had originated in the vast Christian work Paul had wrought. It had been fostered and intensified by the effective use he had made of his prison liberty at Cesarea, in still further spreading the Christian truth almost before their very eyes. In all his labor, perhaps most of all in this Cæsarean ministry, he had been undermining their prestige and destroying their power as leaders of the Jewish people. B.—The whole history of Paul's

imprisonment, the conspiracy of the fifty Jews, with the consent of the Sanhedrim, their petition to Festus to send him from Cesarea, with an intent to murder him on the road, are facts which correspond to the character of the times, as described by Josephus, who mentions the principal persons recorded in the Acts, and paints their profligacy in colors even stronger than those of Luke. G. T.

Festus declines to send Paul up to Jerusalem, and so the murderous project is foiled and the apostle's life is saved. But he invites the Jews, by those in authority as responsible accusers, to renew their charges against the apostle before him at Cesarea. The day after his return, the parties met again before the same tribunal. The character of the "many and grievous complaints against Paul" is intimated in his answer. He had not violated Jewish law, nor profaned the Temple, nor incited sedition against the emperor. It was the trial before Felix repeated; vague and false assertion on the accusers' side, and explicit, truthful denial on Paul's part.

And the issue was the same, in that Festus was satisfied of the apostle's innocence as respected Roman law, and refused to condemn him.

But Festus, too, like Felix, "wished to do the Jews a pleasure." He therefore makes to Paul the very proposal which he himself had rejected when made to him by the Jews at Jerusalem. He asks if the apostle is willing to be tried in the Sanhedrim's presence at Jerusalem. But Paul declines, in words that sharply imply the injustice and wrong of the governor's request. He understood the situation perfectly. He knew the peril of assassination on the journey. He knew that to the cause of righteousness nothing would be gained and much would be lost by a trial in Jerusalem. He stood *now* at the chief seat of the Imperial power, in the capital of the Province, before the tribunal of Cesar. Here he had a *right* to be judged; and only the governor (as he fearlessly tells him) had a right to sit in judgment upon him. He further boldly declares that Festus well knew that he had done no wrong to the Jews. Therefore he will not even submit to trial in their presence.

Influenced by these just and self-respecting considerations, when Paul found that Festus was hindered from releasing him by the clamorous opposition of the Jews, *he was constrained* (as he tells the Jews of Rome, 27 : 18, 19) *to appeal unto Cesar*. By those few potent words he transferred the issue and its decision from the Provincial to the Imperial tribunal, from the Procurator to the Emperor. Thus also he relieved Festus, protected his own life, and insured his long-desired visit to Rome. We can not but note, in passing, the simple dignity and steadfast courage of the apostle, his conscious rectitude and dependence upon God so finely expressed in his whole spirit and answer. He is willing to die if he has done aught worthy of death. But he will not be wrongfully adjudged to death, through the hate and malice of his unchristian foes. To avert this, he promptly uses his power of peremptory appeal as a Roman citizen.

13-27. Festus, constrained to accept Paul's appeal to the emperor, was yet embarrassed by the case. He was about to send a prisoner against whom he could specify no charge. At this juncture, the king, Herod Agrippa, came with his sister Bernice to greet and congratulate the new governor. B.

Herod Agrippa II., the son of Herod Agrippa I., was at Rome when his father died. He was only seventeen years old, and Claudius made his youth a reason for not giving him his father's kingdom, as he had intended. The emperor afterward gave him the kingdom of Chalcis (A. D. 50), which was vacant by the death of his uncle Herod (A. D. 48); and this was soon exchanged for the tetrarchies of Iturea and Abilene, to which Nero added certain cities of the Decapolis about the Lake of Galilee (A. D. 52). But beyond the limits of his own dominions Agrippa was permitted to exercise throughout Judea that influence which even Paul recognized as welcome to a Jew who saw in him the last scion of the Asmonean house. He gratified his hereditary taste for magnificence by adorning Jerusalem and Berytus with costly buildings, but in such a manner as mortally to offend the Jews; and his relations to his sister Berenice (or Bernice), the widow of his uncle Herod, were of a very doubtful character. But his one leading principle was to preserve fidelity to Rome. S.

Naturally Festus spoke with his princely Jewish guests concerning the perplexing case of Paul; and as naturally Agrippa expressed a desire to hear the apostle. Such a hearing was gladly ordered by Festus, in hope of finding relief from his perplexity. Into the midst of a great assembly of the noblest Jews and Romans, with Agrippa and Bernice and Festus, Paul was led. After a brief statement of the facts by the governor, Agrippa gave Paul permission to speak for himself.

Paul, we remember, had volunteered his defense or story before the Jewish mob in the Temple area. He had asserted his pure and truthful life, and affirmed his hope of resurrection, before the whole Sanhedrim. He had made a formal defense against formal charges before Felix; and he had summarily repeated this defense against summary charges before Festus. Still another, the fifth and last, statement he makes now before the Jewish king and high Roman officials. All these addresses, and the history out of which they grew, have come to successive generations of Christian believers in every age and nation. They have helped to enlarge our estimate of the man, and to expound more fully the recorded truths of his grand Epistles. B.

Section 230.

ACTS xxvi. 1-32.

- 1 THEN Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul
 2 stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself: I think myself happy, king Agrippa,
 because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am
 3 accused of the Jews: especially *because I know* thee to be expert in all customs and ques-
 4 tions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently. My man-
 ner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem,
 5 know all the Jews; which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after
 6 the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. And now I stand and am judged
 7 for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which *promise* our
 twelve tribes, instantly serving *God* day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake,
 8 king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible
 with you, that God should raise the dead?
- 9 I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of
 10 Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut
 up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put
 11 to death, I gave my voice against *them*. And I punished them oft in every synagogue,
 and compelled *them* to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted
 12 *them* even unto strange cities. Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and com-
 13 mission from the chief priests, at midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven,
 above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with
 14 me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and say-
 ing in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? *it is* hard for thee to kick
 15 against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou
 16 persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this pur-
 pose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and
 17 of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and
 18 *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from
 darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness
 19 of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Where-
 20 upon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but shewed first
 unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judæa, and *then*
 to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.
 21 For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill *me*.
- 22 Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small
 and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should
 23 come: that Christ should suffer, *and* that he should be the first that should rise from the
 24 dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles. And as he thus spake
 for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth
 25 make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words
 26 of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak
 freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hid from him; for this thing
 27 was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou
 28 believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.
 29 And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were
 both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.
- 30 And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and
 31 they that sat with them: and when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves,
 32 saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. Then said Agrippa unto Fes-
 tus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar.

Both almost, and altogether.—What matters it to the skillful seaman, that with helm in hand, and eye continually upon sea and sky, he has carried his well-trimmed bark over many a league of ocean, and filled her with the treasures of other lands, and steered her through many a rocky channel, and carried

her through many a furious gale, if, just as the haven is in sight, the tempest takes her and whelms her in the deep? And what matters it if we be almost, if we be not altogether, Christians? *Hanna*.—It is he that holdeth out to the end that must be saved; it is he that overcometh that shall inherit all things; it is not every one that begins. Agrippa took a fair step for a sudden. "Almost," saith he to Paul, "thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Ah, it was but *almost*; and so he had as good have never been a *whit*; he stepped fair indeed, but yet he stepped short. O this *almost*! I tell you, this lost his soul *Bunyan*.

1-5. After expressing his satisfaction in stating to the king Agrippa the matters in issue between the accusing Jews and himself, Paul proceeds to vindicate his consistency as a true spiritual Israelite, while he explains and justifies his mission as the apostle to the Gentiles. What he was known to be as a Pharisee, when and how he was converted and commissioned by Christ, and how he had fulfilled his commission in accordance with the teachings of Moses and the prophets: these comprise the leading points in this instructive address.

6-8. *Paul asserts the Chief Ground of the Jews' Accusation to be his Preaching of the Messiahship and the Resurrection of Christ. His Appeal to Agrippa*.—This hope of a Messiah he declares to be based upon the promise of God to the Patriarchs and Leaders of Israel. *They had not received the fulfillment*; hence a *future* life was essential if God's word to them was true. And the true Israel, even all that remained of the twelve tribes, following the faith and hope of the earlier generations, were still looking for the fulfillment of the promise. He had *found* the Messiah in Jesus of Nazareth; and the *proof* of his Messiahship he saw in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. And, knowing the Sadducean tendencies of Agrippa, he turns upon him with the pointed argumentative question, *Do you think a resurrection incredible, knowing all that God has done in Israel, knowing, too, God's promise of a deliverer, who should be a conqueror of death?*

9-11. *His Prejudices had been Bitter and his Hostility Virulent toward Christ and his Disciples*.—Taking up the account of himself from verse 5, he narrates how with a conscientious enmity he had persecuted and imprisoned those he now knew to be saints, as he himself was now persecuted and imprisoned. "I gave my voice, or *vote*, against them." Whether this word is to be taken literally, implying his act as a *member of the Sanhedrim*, or figuratively (as it may be), signifying only a moral assent to proceedings in the synagogues, can not be decisively determined. A strong objection to the former and favorite view is that it is wholly unsupported by other evidence, especially by other words of his own. And the fact, if it was a fact, of his membership of the great Jewish Council would have sharpened many an argument, and strongly enforced all that he says of himself in Phil. 3 and elsewhere.

12-18. *Paul's Second Statement of his Conver-*

sion and Commission by Christ.—The first had been given to the Jews from the Temple stairs (ch. 22). (Compare both statements with Luke's account, ch. 9.) Paul has spoken of his own mad hostility to the name and to the saints of Christ. How this hate was changed to love, and this hostility to supreme devotion, he proceeds to tell. B.

The apostle knew so well the fruit which the world would gather from his conversion, that he employs it as a favorite argument in his preaching. Of the five discourses by him, which have been preserved to us in the Acts, two derive their subject from this event, not to speak of the repeated allusions which he makes to it in his Epistles. After the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the descent of the Holy Spirit, the gospel history has no evidence equaling the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. *Monod*.—Nowhere throughout the Sacred Annals is the power of divine grace over the sinful heart so fully shown as in his sudden change from a self-righteous, fanatical persecutor of Jesus and Christians, to a humble, self-sacrificing servant of Christ and his Church; nor is it easy to see how an honest inquirer can resist a fact so confirmatory of the gospel as the open advocacy of its faith by the most logical, accomplished, and determined spirit that ever battled on the side of its enemies. *Bethune*.

His *appointment to preach* and *what* he was instructed to preach to the Gentiles, are the *main* points in *this* address, the last and most complete made by the apostle. The sublime themes of his testimony and the grand results of his ministry he sums up in these four realities of spiritual experience: 1. Divine enlightenment—a vision of God and knowledge of the truth he has disclosed. 2. A turning or conversion, and so a deliverance, from the kingdom of darkness and the enslaving power of its Prince into the kingdom of light and of God. "Darkness and light are common figures of the New Testament, not only for ignorance and knowledge of spiritual things, but for the states of which these are necessary incidents, a state of sin and one of holiness." (J. A. A.) 3. Forgiveness of sins. 4. An abiding inheritance with the saints in glory. Of this pardon and inheritance Dr. Arnot says: "The gift, like the work, is twofold: it removes from a believer what he deserves, and bestows upon him the deserts of his Redeemer. The birthright of condemnation is taken away, and the birthright of

sons is conferred. Christ has taken your portion, and you obtain his. The pardon and the inheritance go together." Of all these spiritual effects and experiences, Christ declares to Paul, there is one condition essential for every soul's reception. It is FAITH IN ME—*trust*, not in human works or offerings, not in creeds, in ceremonials, or in descent, but in Christ alone! B.

The germ of all Paul's epistles, the key-note to which all his writings are but the melody that follows, the mighty voice of which all his teaching is but the prolonged echo, we find in these words: "To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in Me." What of Paul's gospel is not here? Man's ruin, man's depravity, the state of darkness, the power of Satan, the sole redemptive work of Christ, justification by belief in that, sanctification coming with justification, and glory, rest, and heaven at last—there they all are in the very first words that sounded upon the quickened ear of the blinded man when he turned from darkness to light. A. M.

19, 20. *He affirms his Instant Obedience and his Steadfast Fidelity to the Heavenly Call of Christ.—This is one of the grand points of instruction and personal application in Paul's whole career.* He began on the instant, where he was, to obey. He sought on the instant and ever afterward (for now twenty-four years) to *know* and to *do* the Lord's will. Day by day had he gone on *as directed*. He had sought to win men back to God, to reveal Christ and His complete work for man's redemption, that they might trust, repent, and return to God; that, with a divinely renewed heart and reversed life, they might do works meet for repentance. 21-23. He goes on to say that, *for this work* of seeking to obey God and save men, the Jews had sought to kill him in the Temple. But God had been his deliverer, so that his *ministry* had been continued until now. And he adds the supreme fact *that all he taught was in exact agreement with Moses and the prophets*. This fact utterly overthrew all the charges of his accusers, and *convicted them of rejecting the law and the prophets*, which was the crime alleged against himself. For the Jewish Scriptures disclosed a suffering Messiah, who should rise from the dead, and who should bring a bright and glad redemption to the Gentiles. B.—*That Christ should suffer, should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the Gentiles*: these are the three chief points in the writings of the prophets; and precisely these three were most of all unwelcome to the Jews. The first gave them offense, the second was denied by them, and the third awakened their envy. *Starke*. —There was never any that understood the Old

Testament so well as Paul, except John the Baptist and John the Divine. He dearly loved Moses and Isaiah, for they, together with King David, were the chief prophets. The words and things of Paul are taken out of Moses and the prophets. *Luther*.—These truths which Paul had preached, his accusers had disallowed and willfully rejected; and in justifying himself so fervently and conclusively, he preaches a living, burning gospel of Christ to Festus and Agrippa, and to the brilliant court in which they were central and sovereign.

24-26. *The Excited Exclamation of Festus, and Paul's Calm Reply.*—To the Roman governor, deeply stirred by Paul's impassioned utterance, the apostle's words yet conveyed no meaning. B.—What Paul had said of a resurrection from the dead accomplished in Jesus as the first fruits, of a person coming from the Jews who should enlighten not only his own people but even the Gentiles, among the rest the polite and learned Greeks and Romans, and of the manner in which this was revealed to him—all this would lead such a half-thinker and pagan as Festus to conclude roundly that Paul was a visionary enthusiast. D.—"Much learning," or "many writings," had turned his brain, the idea being suggested by Paul's many allusions to Moses and the prophets.

But Paul, "taught from the fullness of a heart which divine grace had convinced and blessed that Christianity is no fable and that faith is not madness," replies with quiet Christian courtesy: "Not frenzied or mad, most noble Festus, but I speak of things that are real, and with perfect soundness of reason!" And instantly he refers for confirmation of his words to Agrippa, as one to whom the main facts of Christianity (of which he had spoken) were well known. B.

This thing was not done in a corner. The existence at this time of one called by his followers Christ, the place of his teaching, his execution by Pontius Pilate, Procurator of Judea under Tiberius, the rapid spread of his doctrine through the Roman world, the vast number of converts made in a short time, the persecutions which they underwent, the innocency of their lives, their worship of Christ as God—are witnessed to by heathen writers of eminence, and would be certain and indisputable facts had the New Testament never been written. Tacitus, Suetonius, Juvenal, Pliny, Trajan, Adrian, writing in the century immediately following upon the death of Christ, declare these things to us, and establish, so firmly that no skeptic can even profess to doubt it, the historical character of at least that primary groundwork whereon the Christian story, as related by the evangelists, rests as on an immovable basis. These classic notices compel even those who set no value on the historical Christ to admit his ex-

istence; they give a definite standing-point to the religion, which might otherwise have been declared to have no historical foundation at all, but to be purely and absolutely mythic; they furnish, taken by themselves, no unimportant argument for the truth of the religion, which they prove to have been propagated with such zeal, by persons of pure and holy lives, in spite of punishments and persecutions of the most fearful kind; and they form, in combination with the argument from the historic accuracy of the incidental allusions, an evidence in favor of the substantial truth of the New Testament narrative which is amply sufficient to satisfy any fair mind. G. R.

"Few persons, perhaps," says Isaac Taylor, "give due attention to the relative position of the Christian history, which stands upon the very point of intersection where three distinct lines of history meet, namely, the Jewish, the Grecian, and the Roman. These three bodies of ancient literature alone have descended by an uninterrupted channel of transmission to modern times; and these three, by a most extraordinary combination of circumstances, were brought together to elucidate the origination of Christianity. If upon the broad field of history there rests the common light of day, upon that spot where a new religion was given to man, there shines the intensity of a concentrated brightness." The Jews had their own literature; they had been formerly conquered by the Greeks, and the Greek language was in common use; they were also a Roman province, and "during more than a century, in the center of which stands the ministry of Christ, the affairs of Syria attracted the peculiar attention of the Roman Government. No other people of antiquity can be named upon whose history and sentiments there falls this triple flood of historic light, and upon no period in the history of this one people do these triple rays so precisely meet as upon the moment when the voice of one was heard in the wilderness of Jordan, saying, 'Prepare ye the way of t'c Lord.'" Well, then, might an apostle say, "These things were not done in a corner." It was in Jerusalem that Christ arose; in Asia Minor—the theatre of history from the first. It was, perhaps, the only place on earth in which a Roman governor would have called the three languages which contain the literature of ancient civilization into requisition, to proclaim at once the accusation and the true character of Christ. M. H.

27, 28. *Paul's Appeal to Agrippa, Agrippa's Reply, and Paul's Rejoinder.*—To the Roman Festus Paul's words had no meaning. But to the Jew Agrippa, familiar with the writings of the prophets, and to the grandnephew of Herod Antipas, familiar with the facts of a living, crucified, and risen Jesus

of Nazareth, Paul has been powerfully preaching Christianity (while defending it) by exhibiting its unity with the Mosaic covenant and Prophetic promises. In here giving his preaching a personal turn (not offensively, for he compliments Agrippa's intelligence and judgment), he takes high ground as becomes the ambassador of Jehovah, and uses a lofty tone of utterance. We must infer that something he saw in Agrippa's expression, some manifestation of feeling (not certainly scorn or contempt), led the apostle to make this sudden appeal to the Jewish king, and so instantly and impressively *himself* to answer his own appeal.

King and Jew as he was, in face of the disparaging charge of madness by Festus, Agrippa had so felt in his inmost soul the power of the truth, and of Paul's own mighty force of conviction, that his remarkable confession was forced almost unconsciously from his lips. His reply seems to be a parry, and to show that he had felt a thrust. About the meaning of this reply, as well as the spirit that actuated it, there is a difference of judgment among scholarly interpreters. The two words rendered *almost* are literally *in small*. The words rendered *altogether* in verse 29 are literally *in great*. The noun to be supplied may be either *time, effort, degree, or measure*. That Agrippa refers to the *little time or effort* used by Paul in this brief address, as insufficient to make of *him* a Christian, and that he speaks ironically or even indifferently (an interpretation favored by many modern commentators), seems to be out of keeping with all that precedes and follows. It accords neither with the subsequent course of Agrippa nor with the previous words of Paul; and still less with the serious, sympathetic, and fervent tone of Paul's instant rejoinder. Agrippa's sudden breaking up of the conference after Paul's manly, touching expression of good will, surely intimates something other than a jesting or indifferent state of mind. And his serious, almost regretful words to Festus about Paul's liberty that immediately followed, with their implied tone of sympathy with the apostle, can scarcely consist with an ironical or heedless spirit; so that we must still hold to the older and the widely accepted interpretation, which takes the words of Agrippa as spoken in earnest, and under *some* slightly aroused feeling. "*In some small degree or measure* ('almost' being too strong) *thou persuaded me!*"

And with this interpretation admirably agrees Paul's large-hearted response. The picture is one of rare beauty and sublimity, as the words finely illustrate the spirit and epitomize the substance of *his* gospel. A prisoner, whose Christlike spirit and whose burning words had fascinated their attention, stands in the attitude of blessing while he prays: Not in small but in great degree would I have you

and all who hear me to know and rejoice as I know and rejoice in Christ and the Christian life. And, holding up his chained hands, he adds to his prayer for them, "except only these bonds."

In this noble close to his crowning defense, the absoluteness of his faith and the strength and breadth of his unselfish, yearning benevolence stand out with wonderful distinctness. "King," he says, "or high noble and ruler, as you are, there is for you a higher crown and a more enduring kingdom that I would to God you might share." A *Christian* Agrippa knew Paul to be. What a Christian *was* Paul had already described in the inward and spiritual experiences referred to in his great commission from Christ. These experiences were not the result of outward relations, of ordinances, ceremonials, or of church connections. They consisted in an understanding opened to and illumined by the truth, a heart touched and broken, and a will made submissive by the Spirit of Christ. In other words, a Christian was one who knew, who trusted in, obeyed, and rested on *Christ*; whose ruling thought and affection and whose constraining principle of life was *Christ's love to him*.

Such a one was *not* Agrippa. However strongly

moved, as Felix had been, like Felix he deliberately rose up, turned away his thought, and went back to his selfish, dissolute life. He *might* have been *fully* persuaded had he yielded to the divine influences so mightily proceeding from Paul's heart and lips. But he grieved away the Spirit, remained "joined to his idols," and God "let him alone"! Retaining his nominal and idle faith in the prophets, this last Prince of the Herods lived a self-seeking, useless life, in dependence upon Roman favor, long after his nation had been destroyed by Roman arms. Yet, like all the marked personages whose careers are referred to in the Sacred Record, this man, by this single utterance, in connection with what preceded and followed, remains to point an instructive and warning lesson. B.

Verily, we need not long remain in uncertainty who at that moment was the greatest in the palace! And all the spiritual greatness of Paul is the work of the Holy Ghost, who has entirely renewed him, and has exalted him above the moral littleness around him, nay, even above himself; so that here, in the fullest sense of the words, even when he returned to his lonely dungeon, he left the field as conqueror. *Van O.*

Section 231.

Acts xxvii. 1-26.

- 1 AND when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and
- 2 certain other prisoners unto *one* named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band. And entering
- 3 into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; *one* Aris-
- 4 tarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us. And the next *day* we touched at
- 5 Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave *him* liberty to go unto his friends
- 6 to refresh himself. And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, be-
- 7 cause the winds were contrary. And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and
- 8 Pamphylia, we came to Myra, *a city* of Lycia.
- 9 And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us
- 10 therein. And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against
- 11 Unidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone; and,
- 12 hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The fair havens; nigh whereunto was
- 13 the city of Lasea. Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous,
- 14 because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished *them*, and said unto them, Sirs, I
- 15 perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and
- 16 ship, but also of our lives. Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner
- of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul. And because the haven
- was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any
- means they might attain to Phenice, *and there* to winter; *which is* an haven of Crete, and
- lieth toward the south west and north west. And when the south wind blew softly, sup-
- posing that they had obtained *their* purpose, loosing *thence*, they sailed close by Crete.
- But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon. And
- when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let *her* drive.
- And running under a certain island which is called Claudia, we had much work to come

17 by the boat : which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship ; and, 18 fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven. And we 19 being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next *day* they lightened the ship ; and the 20 third *day* we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship. And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on *us*, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.

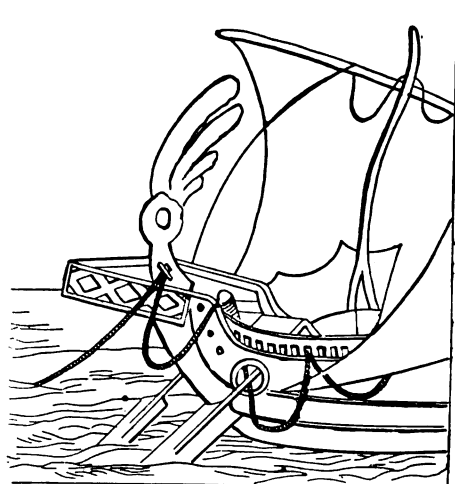
21 But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm 22 and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer : for there shall be no loss of *any* 23 *man's* life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, 24 whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul ; thou must be brought before 25 Cæsar : and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of 26 good cheer : for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.

PAUL had been declared by Festus innocent of crime under Roman law ; and by Agrippa alike innocent of offense against Jewish law. But his appeal had been made and could not be recalled. He must be sent to Rome, as God had purposed and promised. The voyage thither (recounted in this chapter) is one of great interest in itself, as well as on account of its *chief result*—the carrying of the Christian Gospel to the world's central capital, from whence it was destined to go forth in the fullness of time with its fullness of blessing to humankind.

The details of this entire voyage, especially its nautical and topographical points, have been thoroughly elucidated in a volume by an educated English gentleman—James Smith, of Jordanhill (London, 1848 and 1856). With the single purpose of exhaustively investigating and interpreting Luke's narrative, he mastered all accessible information bearing upon the ship-building and navigation of the ancients ; consulted experienced seamen and modern log-books, as well as ancient statements and accounts of voyages, respecting the actual navigation of the sea-route taken by Paul's vessel ; and, during a winter's residence in Malta, carefully examined the various localities of that island. In the judgment of Biblical scholars, he has shown that while the writer of this chapter could not have been a seaman, since his language is not technical or professional, yet he must have been an eye-witness of the facts he has recorded, because of his accuracy and consistency in all the parts of his description. According to the same judgment, Mr. Smith has explained many previously obscure points, and contributed new and invaluable evidence in support of the historic truth and the credibility of this Book of the Acts.

The arts and instruments of modern navigation were unknown to the ancients. They had neither chronometer nor compass, sextant nor chart. The place of the sun by day, and of the known stars by night, gave them general lines of direction when out

of sight of coast lines. As compared also with modern construction, the ships were rude and frailly fastened. They were built with high, sharp stern as well as prow ; generally with one great mast near the stern. Their square sails enabled them to sail rapidly before the wind ; while against it they could make but feeble headway. For rudders they used *two* broad-bladed oars, projecting from either side at a little distance from the sharp stern. The "rudder bands" were ropes attached to these oar rudders, by which they could be lifted from the water and fastened to the vessel's side. B.



Stern Portion of Ancient Vessel, showing the Two Oar Rudders and Anchor Cable.

1. Festus can be proved, almost with certainty, to have succeeded Felix as procurator of Judea in A. D. 60—in the autumn of which year, therefore, Paul was sent as a prisoner from Cesarea to Rome. From the latter date we can safely reckon back, through his two years' imprisonment at Cesarea, to the Pentecost of A. D. 58, as the date of his last arrival at Jerusalem. S.

Luke here relates that, "when Paul was sent from Cesarea to Rome, he was with the other prisoners committed to the care of Julius, an officer of the Augustan cohort," that is, a Roman cohort, which had the honor of bearing the name of the emperor. Now it appears from Josephus that when Felix was procurator of Judea, the Roman garrison at Cesarea was chiefly composed of soldiers who were natives of Syria. But it also appears that a small body of Roman soldiers was stationed there at the same time, and that this body of Roman soldiers was dignified with the title of Augustan, the same Greek word being employed by Josephus as by the author of the Acts of the Apostles. And when Festus, who succeeded Felix, had occasion to send prisoners from Cesarea to Rome, he would of course intrust them to the care of an officer belonging to this select corps. That this select body of soldiers bore the title of Augustan, was known of course to Luke. But that, in the time of the Emperor Nero, the garrison of Cesarea, which consisted chiefly of Syrian soldiers, contained also a small body of Roman soldiers, and that they were dignified by the epithet Augustan, are circumstances so minute, that no impostor of a later age would have known them. And they prove incontestably that the Acts of the Apostles could have been written only by a person in the situation of Luke. G. T.

2. (For this voyage, see small maps on pp. 61, 94, and the large map opposite title-page.) The Roman Empire had no packet service, nor were ships of war usually employed for the transport of prisoners from the provinces to Rome. But for such a purpose, as well as for ordinary passengers, ample opportunities were furnished by the great lines of commercial traffic over the seas. There were the main lines, of which the most important in the East was that of the vessels that carried the corn of Egypt from Alexandria to Italy, and particularly to the port of Puteoli; and it was in two such ships that Paul made the chief portions of his voyage. Then there was the coasting trade, which (in the Levant) was chiefly conducted by the Greeks of Asia Minor, of whose vessels we have already seen Paul making use. It was in such a ship, belonging to Adramyttium (a seaport of the province of Asia, in the district called Mysia), that he now set sail, with other prisoners, under the care of Julius, a centurion, whose conduct in the sequel entitles him to a place among the military worthies of the New Testament. The number of the prisoners appears to have been considerable. But Paul was cheered by the society of "the beloved physician," and of the Thessalonian Aristarchus, his constant fellow-traveler, who had accompanied him from Macedonia, and now became his fellow-prisoner at Rome. That the voyage was commenced about

the end of summer, in order to reach Italy before winter, is evident from the subsequent mention of the Great Fast. S.

3-5. *From Cesarea to Myra in Lycia.*—The route lay northward along the Phœnician coast to Sidon, thence under the lee, that is (*the wind being south*), on the northward side of Cyprus, over the sea adjacent to Cilicia and Pamphylia. At Sidon, where the vessel touched for purposes of trade, Paul was permitted to visit Christian friends. This courteous treatment, followed by like consideration and respect throughout the voyage, shows the strongly favorable impression made by Paul upon Julius, as previously upon Festus, Agrippa, Felix, Lysias, and the Asiarchs of Ephesus.

6. "At the port of Myra in Lycia, they fell into the great line of the Egyptian corn-trade, and found a corn-ship of Alexandria bound for Italy; to this vessel Julius transferred his prisoners." That this ship was large, with a tonnage of five hundred to a thousand tons, we infer from the number of persons (276) added to her freight; and also from "the known fact that the Egyptian merchantmen were among the largest in the Mediterranean." We note the intimation of Luke's presence (*we*) for the first time since Paul's arrival at Jerusalem. With himself he doubtless includes Aristarchus.

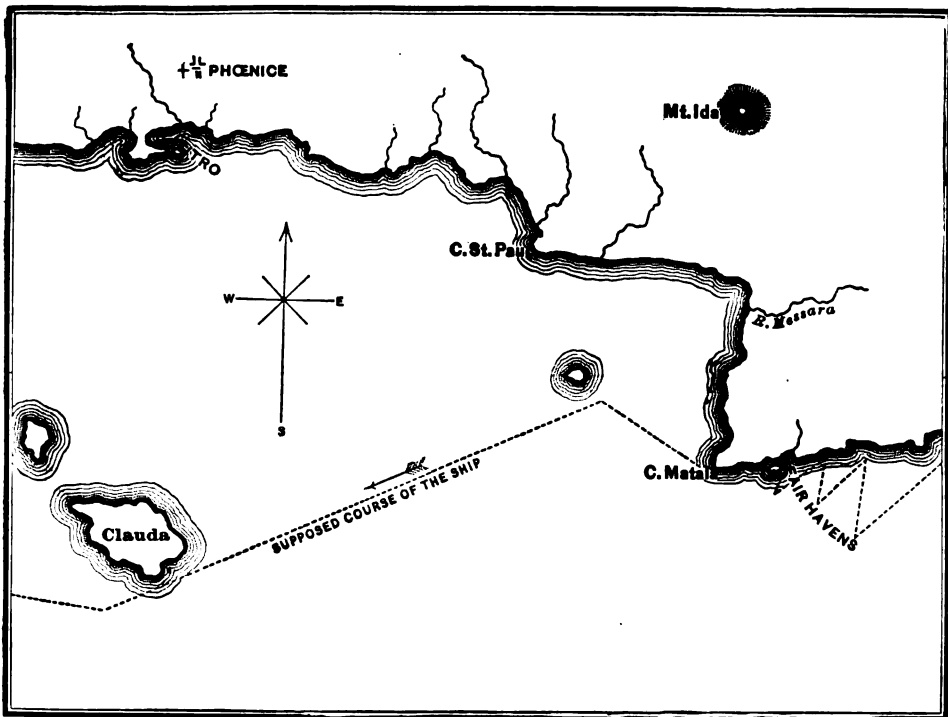
7-13. *From Myra to Crete.*—Sailing very slowly westward, after many days they reached Cnidus, a city at the southwest extremity of Asia Minor, on the point of the long, narrow peninsula (now called Cape Crio) where the coast line turns northward. Thence standing out to sea, the wind compelled their course toward the eastern end of the island of Crete. Doubling the promontory of Salmone, upon the eastern extremity, they moved westward under the southern side of the isle, as far as a place of anchorage (still) called the Fair Havens. Here, compelled to await fair winds, the navigation having now become "dangerous," Paul interposes the first of his warnings in terms which imply that he spoke under divine guidance, as well as with much former experience of "perils in the sea." His counsel was that they should winter in the comparatively safe harbor where they were. But the master and others in charge of the ship, in concert with the centurion, decided to set sail, and endeavor to make the better harbor of Phenice, farther westward and northward upon the island. They were fully agreed with Paul that the favorable season for sailing had passed, and that the voyage to Italy ought not to be continued. But they would not let well alone, and wished to make both safety and comfort doubly sure. They thought the short sail of forty miles might be accomplished without peril. But the event proved their mistake. On a summer-like day, "when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had

obtained their purpose," that is, thinking that they could safely and swiftly reach the harbor of Phenice, about the 18th of October they sailed out from the Fair Havens westward along the southern shore of Crete.

14-17. *Caught suddenly by a Typhonic Wind from the Northeast, they are driven under the Lee of the Island Claudia.*—Only five miles west of the Fair Havens the southern coast line of Crete turns sharply (in a right angle), receding directly northward at a point now called Cape Matala. This point had scarcely been turned, and their direction changed for Phenice (distant thirty-five miles north-northwest through an open sea), when the soft

south wind was suddenly succeeded by a north-easter, "sweeping down the gullies of Mount Ida with all the fury of a typhoon. The sailors, accustomed to those seas, recognized their dreaded enemy by its well-known name *Euroclydon*."

Unable (according to Luke's graphic account) to face or eye the wind (possibly a reference to the painted eye upon the vessel's prow, for adornment and symbol), they were compelled to scud south-westward before the gale. So they were driven twenty-three miles through the open sea to the small island *Clauda*. Running under the lee of this island, they took advantage of the slight shelter and smooth water, first, to lift their boat (towing at



Southwest Coast of Crete, and the Island Claudia.

the stern) out of the sea; next, to *undergird the ship*; and last, to *lower the gear*.

The *undergirding* (now called *frapping* in the English navy) consisted in passing rope or chain cables under the keel at right angles with and over the gunwales, "and then drawing them tight by means of pulleys and levers." These "helps" were always part of the ordinary equipment of ancient vessels. They served to brace the entire framework of hull and decks, and to counteract the strain caused by the single mast with its large square sail. "This precaution," says Admiral Penrose, "was taken, not only because the ship might

strain her planks and timbers and become leaky, but from the fears that, if the gale continued from the northeast, they might be driven into the deep bight on the coast of Africa, where were the greater and lesser *Syrtis* so much dreaded by the ancients, and by these means of security be enabled to keep together longer, should they be involved in the quicksands." (See large map opposite title-page.)

And for both reasons, too, but especially the latter—"lest they should fall into the quicksands"—they *lowered the gear*. Had the ship continued to run before the wind, she would have been driven directly into the Syrtis bay of quicksand. To avert

this, they lowered the heavy main yard and sail with all the weighty masthead gear, and set in its place a small storm-sail. This was so adjusted as to bring the vessel's head as near to the wind as possible and to prevent her from falling off into the trough of the sea. The nautical term which describes this arrangement is *lying to*. It is the common method of weathering out a gale. B.

18-20. *Tossed in the Tempest, they lighten the Ship, and for Eleven Days hopelessly await the Issue.*—Lying to under a storm-sail, with her starboard (or right) side to the wind, would keep her head well off the African coast, and cause her to drift a little to the north of west at the rate of about a mile and a half an hour, or thirty-six miles a day. S.—“It can be shown that this position would give her a drift motion precisely in the direction of Malta, the place on which she ultimately struck.” As in the ship of Jonah (1 : 5) so here, they first *lightened the ship* in part, and the next day with the passengers' help “cast out the gear that had already been sent down on deck.” B.

Then followed “many days” of continued hardship and anxiety. No one who has never been in a leaking ship in a continued gale can know what is suffered under such circumstances. The strain both of mind and body—the incessant demand for the labor of all the crew—the terror of all the passengers—the hopeless working at the pumps—the laboring of the ship's frame and cordage—the driving of the storm—the benumbing effect of the cold and wet—make up a scene of no ordinary confusion, anxiety, and fatigue. To this despair was added a further suffering from want of food, in consequence of the injury done to the provisions, and the impossibility of preparing any regular meal. Hence we see the force of the phrase which alludes to what a casual reader might suppose an unimportant part of the suffering, that there was *much abstinence*. H.

21-26. *Paul's Cheering Assurance of Ultimate Deliverance.*—“Under that dark sky, and in that hopelessly drifting ship, there appeared the light of joy and life; for it held no Jonah fleeing from duty, but a Paul bound in spirit to testify for God also at Rome.” Timed indeed to the need of these three hundred souls were his hopeful, encouraging words. But first he reminds them of their error in disregarding his counsel at the Fair Havens. This he does, *not to reproach them*, much less to vaunt his own superior wisdom, but to give them a basis of

confidence in his present comforting assurances. “Had my words in Crete been heeded,” he said, “ye would have been spared this injury and loss. But now, even in this crowning hour of your utter exhaustion and hopelessness, I bid you be of good cheer; for no man among you shall perish!”

And then he announces to them the vision vouchsafed to him in the night: how, as so oft before in his own crises of need, *the angel of that God* whose he was and whom he served had stood by him, and promised him a gift of the life of all that sailed with him. Under these circumstances of helpless, hopeless peril, how strangely solemn the utterance of such words by a seemingly obscure, frail man! With what intensity of marvel must they have heard his simple assertion of a divine vision and of a pledge so adequate for hope and cheer even in this awful emergency! His God had recognized his need and would interpose for his deliverance. And not for his rescue only, but *for his sake* in a strangeness of mercy would deliver all who sailed with him—would bring them all safely through the billows now gaping wide for their destruction. And their faith and hope in these strong, bright words of promise were reinforced by Paul's own grand confession of trust in the God whose merciful purpose he had just announced to them. How must the souls of even those godless men—Roman soldiers, Egyptian sailors, Jewish, Greek, and Oriental passengers—*then* have been moved by such steadfast, invincible assurance so calmly expressed, in tones that rang clear above the tempest roar!

That they *will be saved* by his God is not Paul's mere *opinion*. There is a *must be* here, as in the 24th verse. And the *must*, in both cases, expresses nothing less or other than *God's purpose*, which Paul *knows* will be surely fulfilled. But like all prophetic vision and announcement, this of Paul is only partial; it reveals no detail of the approaching events. He assures them of *all that he knows*. Not *when*, *where*, or *how*, but simply that *all shall be saved*, at some unknown time, upon a certain unknown island. Only the ship will be lost. Therefore *be cheerful and trust* the God whom I serve—the true God! So this brave, large-hearted man of God, who by fervent intercession brought blessing upon those associated with him, impressed their hearts with the sublime lesson of faith in God, of dependence upon his purpose and reliance upon his promise, even in respect of that which was most improbable. B.

Section 232.

Acts xxvii. 27-44.

27 But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria,
 28 about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country; and sounded,
 and found *it* twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again,
 29 and found *it* fifteen fathoms. Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast
 30 four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day. And as the shipmen were about to
 flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though
 31 they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, Paul said to the centurion and to the
 32 soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. Then the soldiers cut off the
 ropes of the boat, and let her fall off.

33 And while the day was coming on, Paul besought *them* all to take meat, saying, This day
 is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing.
 34 Wherefore I pray you to take *some* meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an
 35 hair fall from the head of any of you. And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and
 gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken *it*, he began to eat.
 36 Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took *some* meat. And we were in all in
 37 the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls. And when they had eaten enough,
 38 they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea.

39 And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a
 40 shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship. And
 when they had taken up the anchors, they committed *themselves* unto the sea, and loosed
 41 the rudder bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore. And
 falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck
 fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the
 42 waves. And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim
 43 out, and escape. But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from *their* purpose;
 and commanded that they which could swim should cast *themselves* first into the sea, and
 44 get to land: and the rest, some on boards, and some on *broken pieces* of the ship. And so
 it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.

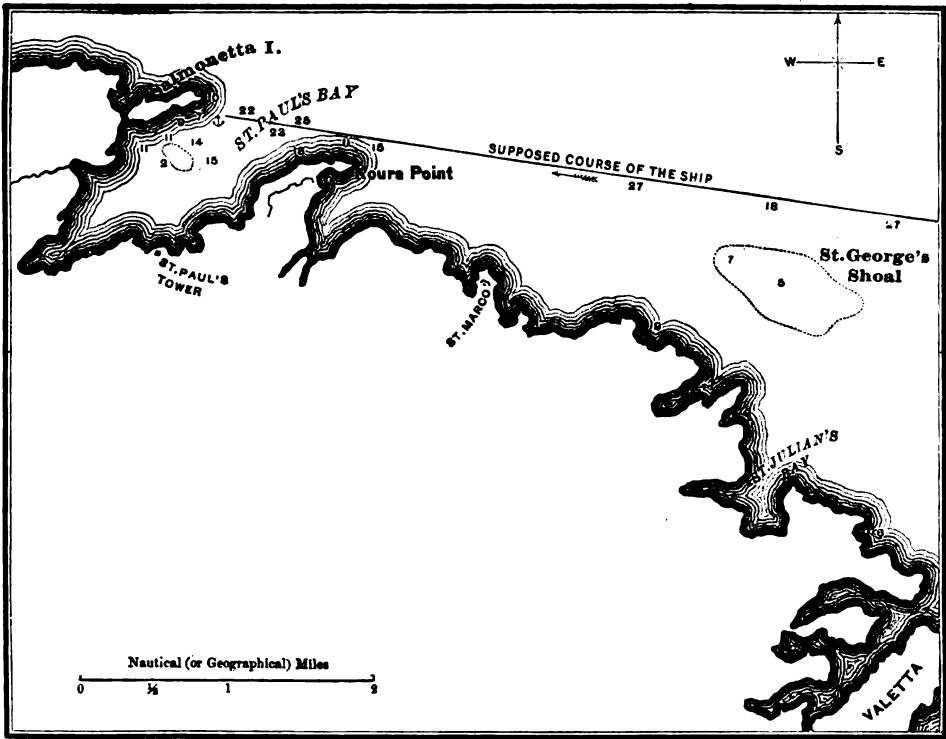
27-32. *How the Chief Part of the Fourteenth and Last Night was spent.*—For a fortnight the vessel had been storm-stricken, and had steadily drifted westward through the sea of Adria. [Not the Adriatic Gulf, but that part of the Mediterranean lying between Greece and Sicily, which in ancient times was called the Adriatic Sea.] B.

A gale of such duration is by no means unprecedented in that part of the Mediterranean, especially toward winter. A naval officer writes thus: "In October, 1839, I left Malta in a powerful steam-frigate, and encountered *Euroclydon* (or, as we call it, a *Levanter*) in full force. We were four days without being able to sit down at table to a meal, during which time we saw 'neither sun nor stars.' Being charged with dispatches, we forced the vessel through, though with much injury. Had we been a mere log on the water, like Paul's ship, we should have drifted 'many days.'" H.

At midnight the sailors inferred that *some land* was *nearing them*. (This expression accords with

their notion that the ship was the chief thing.) They distinguished the peculiar sound made by the breaking of the sea against and over hidden rock-reefs. The upper coast line of the eastern portion of Malta (as far as Koura Point, the eastern limit of St. Paul's Bay) runs in the same general direction as the supposed course of the general ship; so that they would *hear the breakers* for a considerable distance, *yet would not strike upon them*. More than this, *actual measurements* taken upon the supposed line of drift correspond precisely with the soundings here recorded by Luke.

But at length the fear of striking upon hidden rocks led them to take in the storm-sail and oar-rudders, and to cast out anchors from the stern. B. —Ships of any size had several anchors; here we have four. The most powerful anchor, the "last hope," was called the *sacred*; and we may well suppose that the remembrance of the night when his ship rode out the storm in the Maltese bay, with her straining cables passed out into the darkness, sug-



Part of Island of Melita, with course of the vessel, point of anchorage, and place of beaching.

gested the image of the Christian's sole but certain hope, "which we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil" (Heb. 6:19). The ship anchored *by the stern*, not only as the best means of checking her course and preventing her swinging round on to the rocks, but to be in readiness to run ashore as soon as daylight enabled them to choose a proper spot. Nelson anchored his fleet by the stern both at the Nile and Copenhagen; and, after the latter battle, he stated that *he had been that morning reading the 27th chapter of the Acts. S. & H.*

30-32. Selfishness, showing itself Cowardly, Deceitful, and Inhuman, frustrated by Paul.—The sailors were willing to leave soldiers and passengers (utterly helpless without them) to destruction; and they used a natural pretext to deceive those they would desert. But Paul, by divine suggestion, discerned their purpose. He knew, without inspiration, that the soldiers could not work the ship, and that without miracle *all could not be saved*. Never in any contingency depending upon a *miracle*, in this exigency he speaks the right word to the right persons. He wastes neither time nor breath by appeal to the sailors. He simply tells the soldiers and their commander that *their safety is impossible if*

the sailors are allowed to enter the small boat (now lowered to receive them). Very promptly the soldiers settle the matter by cutting the boat adrift with their short, sharp swords. Thus compelled to share the fate of all on board, thenceforward the self-interest of the seamen was engaged in the work of *saving all*.

An objector to the doctrine of a divine purpose as sovereignly controlling human affairs thinks that he finds support from Paul's *two positive assertions*, in verses 22-24 and 31. In the former, the apostle assures all of safety, and affirms this to be *God's purpose and promise*. In the latter, he declares a certain human action to be an *essential condition* of such safety. As one important point in answer to such objector, mark that Paul does *not*, in the former case, affirm God's purpose to be unconditional, or independent of human acting; so that there is *no contradiction* in his after-statement concerning the sailors abiding by the ship. Mark further, that all divine purposes respecting human experiences are necessarily connected with, and so far dependent upon, human agencies and instrumentalities. In the case before us the connection is (supernaturally) disclosed, and we see *how* God's purpose may depend upon men's acting; and we also *may* see that such dependence is simply part of (and comprehended in)

His broader, all-inclusive plan. In our own experiences, similar in principle to this, we can not always know God's purpose, and therefore can not certainly discern its human conditions or dependencies. Rightly apprehended, then, these two utterances of Paul convey needed instruction, while enforcing trust and imparting comfort. B.

33-38. *At Paul's Urgent Request, and upon his Renewed Assurance of Safety, they all take Meat. The Cargo then cast out.*—For the fourth time in this memorable voyage and tempest (vs. 10, 21, 31) Paul the prisoner comes forward as the counselor and comforter of those who seemed to have his life and liberty at their disposal. J. A. A.—In the first faint glimmer of the dull dawn, he goes among the exhausted seamen and soldiers, now half famished from want of prepared meals for a fortnight, and urges them to take a full supply of food. There was need for *this* also in the carrying out of God's purpose in their final deliverance. His argument is their *health*, or better, their *safety*. The full meal would strengthen them for the labor of casting out the cargo, and for the exposure and fatigue in reaching the shore.

Paul sustains his appeal by his renewed assurance of their safety, and then strengthens it by the contagious force of his own faith and example. *Before them all*, first, he shows *his* own trust and loyalty to God by his *outspoken thanks to Him*. Then he eats the bread for which he has given thanks. And this grand exhibition of unselfish humanity, of undaunted faith and courage, with his simple, sublime recognition of God's mercy, added to all his previous noble acts and words, constrained all those two hundred and seventy-five souls to cheer and hopefulness; "and they also took meat." In this humane counsel we see the human side of the Christian gospel finely illustrated. Christ's apostle is Christlike in his thorough, practical sympathy with bodily needs. He shows God to these heathen souls as the carer for their bodies and the giver of their daily bread; and by exemplifying a grateful spirit, helps to awaken it in their hearts.

Thus refreshed in spirit and invigorated in body, as their final preparation for the morning's attempt to beach the vessel, with the first dawn they all—sailors, soldiers, and passengers—proceeded to cast out the cargo of wheat into the sea. This freight was untouched so long as there was a possibility of saving the vessel. Now that vessel and freight must be lost, the casting out of the latter may "enable them by a lighter draught of water either to run into any small harbor, or at least closer in with the dry land, should they be obliged to run the ship on the rocks or beach." The same writer (Admiral Penrose) suggests yet another probable reason for throwing the wheat overboard. "From the ship

having been so long pressed down on one side, the cargo had shifted, so that the ship heeled to that side. To bring her upright, and enable her to be more accurately steered and navigated toward the land at daybreak, it would be useful to throw out as much of the wheat as time allowed."

39-41. *An Inlet discovered into which they enter, and run the Ship aground.*—At broad daylight, the sailors saw before them a bay with a smooth beach. Into this bay and upon this beach they decide "to thrust the ship." Three things, in way of preparation, were simultaneously done by the skilled Alexandrian mariners: 1. *They cut the anchor cables and left the anchors in the sea.* (Our version is quite astray here.) There was no object in saving the anchors, and they needed to economize both time and labor. So "they committed *them*" (the anchors) "unto the sea." 2. *They loosed the rudder bands.* They did not, as some readers understand it, cut the ropes that managed the rudders, but the lashings by which these oar rudders were fastened, after being drawn up out of the water. B.—The ships of the ancients were not steered, like ours, by a single rudder hinged on at the stern, but by a pair of broad-bladed oars or paddles, each acting in a rowlock or through a port-hole, according as the ship was small or large. Traces of the two rudders are found in the time of Louis IX.; and the hinged rudder first appears on the coins of King Edward IV. Hence the steering apparatus of the ancient ships was named in the *plural*. In the case before us, when four anchors were let go at the stern, it would of course be necessary to lash or trice up both paddles, lest they should interfere with the ground-tackle. When the ship had to be steered again, and the cables were cut, the lashings of the paddles would of course be unfastened. S.—3. *They hoisted up the foresail to the wind.* Not the *mainsail*, which with its yard and heavy gear had already been thrown overboard. "This *artemon* was the *foresail*, carried on a small foremast, which may be seen raking over the bow in representations of ships on Roman coins." The foresail thus set would enable them "to steer freely, to steady the vessel's course, and to *press her farther on upon the land*." In this connection Dr. Howson cites the following from a letter in the London "Times" of December 5, 1855: "The Lord Raglan (merchant-ship) is on shore, but taken there in a most sailor-like manner. Directly her captain found he could not save her, he cut away his mainmast and mizzen, and, *setting a topsail on her foremast, ran her ashore stem on.*" B.

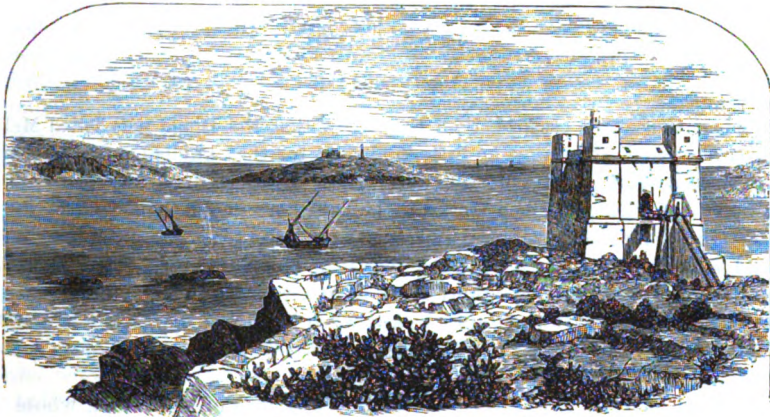
Thus they drove right ashore, stem on, and the bow stuck fast on the muddy beach. But then it proved that the spot they had mistaken for the bottom of a creek was at the mouth of the little strait separating the islet of *Salmonetta* from the main

land, "a place where two seas met." The swell of the open sea, rolling in from the north through this channel, dashed the hinder part of the ship to pieces; but the fore part, fixed "upright and immovable," afforded a refuge to the voyagers while preparing to escape to shore. S.

The rocks of Malta disintegrate into extremely minute particles of sand and clay, which form a deposit of tenacious clay and mud. A ship, therefore, impelled by the force of the gale into a creek with a bottom such as has been described, would strike a bottom of mud, into which the fore part would fix itself and be held fast, while the stern was exposed to the force of the waves. J. Smith.

The island was unquestionably *Malta*; and it is almost equally certain that the scene of the ship-

wreck was that to which local tradition has given the name of *St. Paul's Bay*, on the northeast coast of the island. The direction of the ship's head when she lay to off *Clauda*, and her estimated rate of drift, were just such as to carry her to *Malta* in the fourteen days, and she could make *St. Paul's Bay* without first touching any other part of the island, which from this point trends to the south-east. A glance at the chart is of itself enough to show how her course was guided by that *special providence* which so plainly announced itself to Paul. The ship was borne in the darkness so near to *Koura Point*, the southeast headland of the bay, that the breakers striking its rocks gave the warning to anchor just in time to avoid striking on the opposite shore; and the soundings are precisely those mentioned in the narrative. She anchored off the



St. Paul's Bay, Malta. Salmonetta in the distance.

east point of the islet of *Salmonetta*, which would appear from that point of view to join the mainland, with its beach of sand or mud. S.

42-44. The Prisoners saved by the Centurion, and all escape to the Land.—The stern strictness of Roman discipline is seen in the soldiers' counsel to kill the prisoners. B.—Their plan, unlike that of the sailors (v. 30), was not to save their own lives, but to fulfill their trust as guards over the prisoners. It was more in accordance with their notions of military honor and discipline to kill the prisoners than to suffer them to escape by swimming to shore. This would imply that the soldiers themselves scarcely expected to escape. Such stern fidelity had made the Romans conquerors of the world. *Riddle.*—Here Paul is only the occasion of the fulfillment of God's announced purpose of *saving all*. *Julius* is God's *instrument*, and that through *his own acting*, under the natural impulse of his friendly feeling for Paul. Another equally instructive illustration of the *coworking* (without sign of conflict or difficulty)

of God's purpose and agency with man's. For Paul's sake the centurion spared *all* the prisoners, and so contributed to the accomplishment of God's purpose, and for the same Paul's sake God had spared centurion and soldiers. B.

It is better for all in the ship that they have a Paul on board, hastening to execute God's commission on the earth, than to have a *Jonah* fleeing from his work, and hiding from his Master. It was God's will that this messenger should publish the gospel in Rome; and his purpose shall stand. The tumults of the people had already been stilled; and now the waves of the sea must hear and obey the same Divine command. Neither tumult will be permitted to swallow up the "chosen vessel," until it has discharged its precious burden on the appointed spot. *Arnot.*

When Dr. Chalmers wished to preach a sermon on a topic on which all men have to think, on which all churches have opinions, and which has sadly su-

ferred from irreverent and injudicious handling, namely, Predestination, he selected the 31st verse in connection with the 22d. He proceeds to show that there is no contradiction between the two statements, that God's decree is carried out by means, and includes the means; that when he settled the security of the two hundred and seventy-six lives, he settled also that the sailors should be at their posts; that their duties should be done; that at the critical time they should "lighten the ship," "take up the anchor," run before the wind and "loose the rudder bands," hoist up the sail to the wind, and so run her "aground"; that they who could swim should swim, and the rest, as they best could, "escape safe to land." And even so, argues the great preacher, no

certainly of assurance as to the result, no decree of God, even if we certainly knew it, is to diminish one jot of that zeal, industry, and diligence, in the use of means which the Lord contemplates in the decree, and will not permit us to disregard. His people do come to eternal life—"they shall never perish" (John 10:28); but it is not by apathy, and neglect of the fitting, appointed means, but through repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus. And what was true in the perils of the sea is just as true in that more momentous voyage on which we embarked the day we were born, of which the end is to be safety in the haven of eternal rest, or a shipwreck of the soul, terrible beyond description or conception. *J. Hall.*

Section 233.

ACTS xxviii. 1-15.

1 AND when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Melita. And
2 the barbarous people shewed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us
3 every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold. And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid *them* on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and
4 fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the *venomous* beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath
5 escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. And he shook off the beast into the
6 fire, and felt no harm. Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.
7 In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously. And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and
8 prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him. So when this was done, others also,
9 which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed: who also honoured us with many honours; and when we departed, they laded *us* with such things as were necessary.
11 And after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the
12 isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux. And landing at Syracuse, we tarried *there* three
13 days. And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to Rhegium: and after one day
14 the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli: where we found brethren, and
15 were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome. And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

WE all know one who was known to stand very high in Christ's divine regards, and who for eighteen hundred years has stood very high in the regard, affection, admiration of the whole Christian world—and this is a description of his ordinary life: "In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." It was not every day that companies of friends came to meet him, so that he could "thank God and take courage." But every day found him on the road; and although he was not always what you would call "happy," yet keeping his uprightness, keeping his "good conscience toward God and man," and his life-purpose unbroken, in the habit of a noble self-sacrifice, giving all his days and all his being to Christ, he certainly went along a path of light, that

shone more and more unto his perfect day. If we read our lives in the light of his—to say nothing at present of the yet grander and purer life after which his was fashioned, and from which all its inspiration came—we shall see what a poor thing it is to be always hankering after happiness: and what a noble thing it is to keep the line of duty! And what a safe thing it is, by God's grace, to settle the whole being in uprightness; for "unto the upright," be they of high or low degree, "light ariseth in the darkness." A. R.

1, 2. The island. That this island, here called *Melita*, was the modern *Malta*, can not well be doubted. The positive reasons for the common belief as to the place of the shipwreck are, that the traditional evidence sustains it; that Malta lies in the track of a vessel driven by a northeast wind; that the reputed locality of the wreck agrees with Luke's account; that the Alexandrian ship in which they reembarked would very naturally winter there; and that the subsequent course of the voyage to Puteoli is that which a vessel would pursue in going from Malta. *Hackett*.

Independent calculations made by several experienced naval officers as to the rate at which a ship would drive before the wind in such a storm as that described above, agree almost exactly in the singular conclusion that the vessel, on the fifteenth morning after leaving Crete, must have been precisely where tradition has assigned the place of the apostle's shipwreck. J. A. A.

The native islanders were of Phenician descent. Using neither the Greek nor Latin languages and customs, then dominant over the civilized world, they would be classed as *barbarians*. So Luke employs the term; and Paul also comprehends all mankind under the distinction of *Greeks and barbarians*. "And to this day the African coast over against this island is called Barbary." But this "barbarous people" showed the higher refinement of a genuine courtesy and hospitality in their cordial reception and care of the shipwrecked passengers and crew.

3-6. The Double Misjudgment of the Islanders concerning Paul when bitten by the Viper.—Paul was again illustrating the practical side of Christianity by taking his share in the necessary work of gathering materials for fire. In this he only exemplified Christ's word about the greatness of *serving*. Soon after laying his armful of sticks upon the flame a poisonous viper thrust itself up, and, fastening its fangs upon Paul's hand, swung its whole body clear of the heating wood. It was roused from a torpid state to sudden activity by the intense heat. The sharp-eyed natives *saw* the reptile hanging from the apostle's hand. They knew that the poisoned fangs, by which only it *could* hang, were bedded in the hand; and they knew the virulence of the poison now in contact with the life-blood. Inferring nothing else but Paul's instant death, with an instinctive feeling of natural retribu-

tion for crime, they count the viper a Nemesis, a revenger of blood. "This man is doubtless a murderer," they say to each other, "whom justice still is tracking and hath found, even after his deliverance from the sea." B.—This is the very basis of all natural religion; the idea of the connection between guilt and retribution. In some form or other it underlies all mythologies. The sleepless, never-dying avenger of wrong; the Nemesis who presides over retribution; the vengeance which suffereth not the murderer to live; the whips and scorpions of the Furies—it seems the first instinct of religion. F. W. R.—But they erred, as the ignorant and superstitious always err, in limiting the agency and sphere of retribution to this life, and in taking the actual experience of calamity as proof of guilt.

Luke's narrative seems to imply that Paul had suffered the reptile to hang for a moment. Yet, while they were speaking about him, Paul quietly shook it off into the fire, "and suffered no harm." Then for a long time the islanders continued to watch him closely, expecting to see the natural effects of such an envenomed bite, in sudden inflammation and death. But when the result disproved their previous notion, they went to another extreme of misjudgment. Now Paul was a serpent-charmer, and to these people of Oriental origin an object himself of worship as possessing the power of miracle. This conclusion, like the other, was not so much out of the way for men untaught in any principles of true religion. For *there was a miracle* enacted here; and none but a divine power could enact it. Paul was the only being that they knew to be concerned with the transaction. The poison had been injected into his veins, and he had been unharmed by it. He must possess divine power.

We remember that the Lystrans exactly reversed this process of judgment about Paul. They first counted him worthy of worship and then of death. The Maltese first judge him deserving of death, and afterward of worship. Both judgments are mistaken. Instead of being a murderer or a god, he is, as Bengel quaintly suggests, *a man of God*. As these islanders went no further than uttering their impression of Paul's divinity, the apostle took no notice of their mere notion. He knew that their error would soon be corrected by the events. As always, however, he utilized the influence it gave him, by exemplifying still more the Godlike spirit

of his Master as well as by transferring to Christ all claim and right to true Deity.

7-9. *The Hospitality of Publius, and Paul's Return of Kindness to all in a Large Ministry of Healing.*—Publius is here called the *first* man or primate. The reference is neither to his birth, rank, nor wealth, since his father would be his superior. By inscriptions (in Greek and Latin) upon a stone pillar in Malta, discovered 1747, it seems to refer to an established official title. He was, probably, the legate of the prætor of Sicily, to which province Malta belonged.

The three days' hospitality of Publius was well repaid by Paul in the miraculous healing of the father. Concerning the Greek term *dysentery* here used by Luke, Dr. Hackett has this note: "No other writer of the New Testament exhibits this sort of technical precision in speaking of diseases. The disorder with which the father of Publius was affected was dysentery combined with fever. It was formerly asserted that a dry climate, like that of Malta, would not produce such a disorder, but we have now the testimony of physicians resident in that island, that it is by no means uncommon there at the present day."

Yet more effectually was Paul introduced and authenticated as God's true messenger by this signal marvel of cure. In this and the previous incident of the viper, we find a remarkable verification of Christ's promise (Mk. 16 : 18). And it would seem that the three months which followed were filled up with a double Christlike ministry of healing and preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

10. *Grateful Returns from the Islanders attest the Success of his Ministry.*—"They honored us, and they *laded* us!" Luke writes. Neither honors nor gifts were bestowed in any wise as remuneration for the healing or the ministry of Paul. Nor were they other than he might properly receive. The hearts of these barbarians had been intensely moved by the kind and unselfish ministries of these Christian missionaries. They naturally desired to reciprocate so great favors. The *honors* they rendered could be no more than simple attentions and tokens of respect and gratitude. The *gifts* were things necessary for their supply and comfort in the further voyage; some of which they had lost in the shipwreck. And the statement indicates that outward honors and benefits, if bestowed with a right spirit, may be accepted and enjoyed, if received with the same spirit. B.

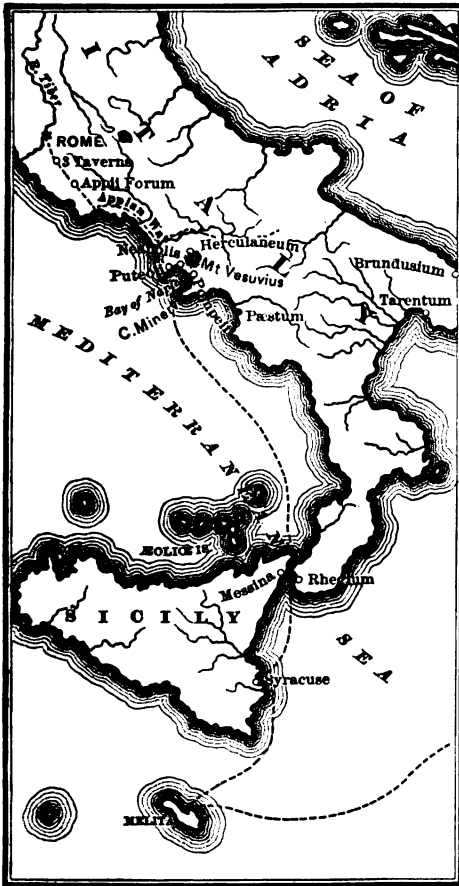
In what a great variety of places and circumstances do we find Paul! Here we have him in an island, to which in all probability he had never come if he had not been thrown upon it by a storm; and yet it seems God has work for him to do here. Even stormy winds fulfill God's counsel; and an ill

wind indeed it is that blows nobody any good. His ill wind blew good to the island of Melita, for it gave them Paul's company for three months, who was a blessing to every place he came to. Henry.

11-15. *The Further Voyage and Journey to Rome.*—After three months' detention at Malta, early in February, A. D. 61, Julius and his prisoners sailed in another Alexandrian ship, "that had wintered in the isle." Castor and Pollux, the name or sign of this vessel, were twin heroes, sons of Jupiter and favorite gods of the Greek and Roman sailors. Their images were either set as a figure-head, or painted or carved on each side of the prow.

Their first stopping-place was Syracuse, the chief city of the province of Sicily, eighty miles distant (east of north). Here they tarried three days for purposes of trade. Thence they "made a circuit," or beat up (as Mr. J. Smith explains the term) to Rhegium, eighty miles farther. This seaport of Italy, now called Reggio, lies upon the promontory at the south entrance of the straits of Messina. After one day's detention, a fair south wind carried them swiftly northward one hundred and eighty miles to Puteoli. B.—At the rate of seven knots an hour, the passage would be accomplished in about twenty-six hours, which agrees perfectly with the account of Luke, who says that, after leaving Rhegium, they came "*the next day*" to Puteoli. Before the close of the first day they would see on the left the volcanic cone and smoke of Stromboli, the nearest of the Liparian islands. In the course of the night they would have neared that projecting part of the mainland which forms the southern limit of the bay of Salerno. Sailing across the wide opening of this gulf, they would, in a few hours, enter that other bay, the bay of Naples, in the northern part of which Puteoli was situated. Its southeastern limit is the promontory of Minerva, with the island of Caprea opposite, which is so associated with the memory of Tiberius, that its cliffs still seem to rise from the blue waters as a monument of hideous vice in the midst of the fairest scenes of nature. The opposite boundary was the promontory of Misenum, where one of the imperial fleets lay at anchor under the shelter of the islands of Ischia and Procida. In the intermediate space the Campanian coast curves round in the loveliest forms, with Vesuvius as the prominent feature of the view. But here one difference must be marked between Paul's day and our own. The angry neighbor of Naples was not then an unsleeping volcano, but a green and sunny background to the bay, with its westward slope covered with vines. And little did the apostle dream, when he looked from the vessel's deck across the bay to the right, that a ruin, like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, hung over the fair cities at the base of the mountain, and that the

Jewish princess, who had so lately conversed with him in his prison at Cesarea, would find her tomb in that ruin, with the child she had borne to Felix. In this wide and sunny expanse of blue waters, no part was calmer or more beautiful than the recess in the northern part of the bay, between Baiæ and Puteoli. Baiæ was a place of resort for the invalids and fashionable idlers of Rome. Puteoli, on the opposite side of this inner bay, was the Liverpool of Italy. Between them was that inclosed reach of water, called the Lucrine Lake, which contained the



From Melita to Rome.

oyster beds for the luxurious tables of Rome. Still farther inland was that other calm basin, the Lacus Avernus, which an artificial passage connected with the former, and thus converted into a harbor. Not far beyond was Cumæ, once a flourishing Greek city, but when the apostle visited this coast, a decayed country town, famous only for the recollections of the Sibyl. H.

At Puteoli the *voyage* was completed, and here they found *brethren*, unnamed disciples, with whom

(the centurion consenting) they seem to have tarried seven days for rest and Christian converse. By this delay the news of Paul's arrival was communicated to the Christians of Rome, so that they could send a double deputation to meet him on the journey thither. That journey lay for the most part over the Appian Way. This was the oldest and most noted of the Roman roads, the great line of communication (from the south) with the Eternal City. It was constructed three centuries before Christ by the censor Appius Claudius. Upon a foundation of concrete, large blocks of basaltic lava were so closely fitted and cemented as to resemble a natural rock formation. Besides the milestones marking the whole distance, post-stations for relays of horses and for the comfort of travelers were established every twenty miles. Five hundred years after Christ, "notwithstanding the traffic of so many ages, the stones were not displaced, nor had they lost their original smoothness."

At two well-known stations on this road—Appii Forum, forty-three miles from Rome, and the Three Taverns, ten miles nearer the city—Paul and his company were met and warmly welcomed by deputations from the Roman Church. Of the origin and founding of this Church we have no information. Three years before Paul had written to its members his grand Epistle, expressing his strong desire to come among them. And now this fervent greeting, the first he had ever received in advance of his coming, deeply moved the apostle's heart. Here was the proof of a great work that God had wrought in the world's capital, and the earnest of a yet larger work, in which God would employ his ministry, and concerning which Christ had already given him an assurance of success. Therefore, with glad and hopeful spirit, this trusting, brave apostle, as he grasped these welcoming hands, *thanked God, and took courage!* B.

From the point of the present he looks backward and forward. All the past of his life he seems to count only a preparation; his work lies still before him. It is a beautiful character that is displayed here in two great hemispheres: for the past it is devout gratitude; for the future, filial confidence. For the future this true, bold man took not comfort but courage. *Arnot.*—How can we help being touched by such incidents as this? They set this great hero and champion of the faith before us as a man of like passions with ourselves. He feels as we should have felt. He is dejected and inspirited by the very causes which tell on us. Like us he sees all things in "hues borrowed from the heart." God is not nearer to him nor more truly with him now that he has reached Appii Forum, or the Three Taverns, than he was before; his chains are not removed; the soldiers still surround and

watch him : but he has met attached and pitying friends, and his chains grow lighter, and *their* love deepens the sense of God's love within his soul. *Cœz.*

And through all the brief remaining journey, as he passed along the great Appian Way, retained by this humble band of Christian disciples, and as at length a conqueror for Christ, though a prisoner, he passed through that memorable gateway of triumphal entrance by crowned victors, how must that word of Christ, spoken in the prison of Antonia, have cheered and strengthened his heroic soul : *Thou must bear witness of me at Rome!* B.—“And so we came to Rome.” In such a manner as this Paul had not thought to come to Rome ; the goal was reached, but by what a different road from that which he proposed ! For this end had the Roman chief captain torn him from the hands of the Jews ; for this had an unscrupulous governor violated, in regard to him, that justice which he now must seek before a higher tribunal ; for this, then, had all the hatred of his foes been constrained to coöperate for the fulfillment of his ardent desire.

And now at last his feet stand within the gates of pagan Rome ; he comes accused as a malefactor, but yet one to whom the opportunity of freely declaring the gospel shall not at first be wanting. Perhaps he would himself have desired this crisis to have arrived earlier, but the Lord's hour only struck now, and at the close we see that it was best thus. The Euroclydon had damaged his vessel, but had at last cast him ashore on the island of Malta ; the poisonous serpent had twined round his arm without abating his courage ; all God's waves and billows had gone over his bowed-down head, but the end of it all is, that the intuition of his heart has deceived him as little as the promise of his Lord, and that he now with his own eyes beholds Rome in all her glory and in all her degradation. What a moment was this in the annals of the kingdom of God, when this plain inhabitant of Tarsus, unmarked and unencumbered, made his entry into the world's capital, in which he shall at once win so many subjects for the spiritual kingdom of God, and lay the first foundations of the transformation of pagan into Christian Rome ! *Van O.*

Section 234.

Acts xxviii. 16–31.

16 AND when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the
17 guard : but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him. And it
came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together : and when
they were come together, he said unto them, Men *and* brethren, though I have committed
nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from
18 Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. Who, when they had examined me, would have
19 let *me* go, because there was no cause of death in me. But when the Jews spake against
it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar ; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of.
20 For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see *you*, and to speak with *you* : because
21 that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. And they said unto him, We nei-
ther received letters out of Judæa concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came
22 shewed or spake any harm of thee. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest : for
as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.
23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into *his* lodging ; to
whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus,
24 both out of the law of Moses, and *out of* the prophets, from morning till evening. And
25 some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed
not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the
26 Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say.
Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand ; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive :
27 for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their
eyes have they closed ; lest they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and
28 understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known
therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and *that* they will
29 hear it. And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning
among themselves.

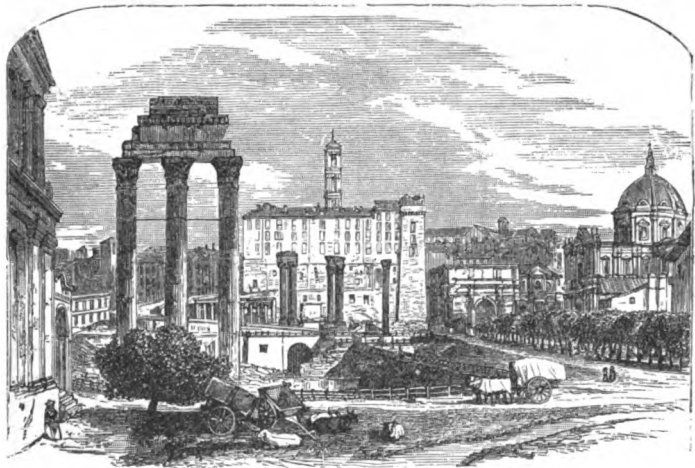
30 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in
31 unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

THE apostles uniformly appealed to those audiences who were most capable of examining the evidences of Christianity, and were at the same time prejudiced against its doctrines. Jerusalem, the seat of the doctors, the judges of religion, was the first place in which, by the command of their Lord, the disciples preached Christ crucified. They were, therefore, not afraid to have their cause tried by the most rigid test of Scripture, and in the very spot, too, where that Scripture was best understood. When the same apostles carried this gospel to heathen countries, they went to Cesarea, to Antioch, to Thessalonica, to Athens, to Corinth, to Ephesus, to Rome, to the very places where learning flourished most, where sciences were best cultivated, where imposture was most likely to be detected, and where the secular power existed in the most despotic manner, and could at once have crushed them, if they could have been proved to be impostors, or if they had not been under the immediate protection of Heaven. They preached Christ crucified, where it was the most solemn interest of the Jews to disprove their doctrine, that they might exculpate themselves from the murder of Jesus Christ. They preached the same Christ, and the vanity of idolatry, where idolatry existed in the plenitude of its power; and where all its interests required it to make the most desperate and formidable stand against those innovators. G. T.

16. *Paul surrendered by Julius to the Custody of the Prefect of the Prætorian Guard.*—The name of Christ borne by the chosen vessel has now been brought to Rome. It had passed from Jerusalem through Judea and Samaria; and now it had reached those seven hills which, politically, were the loftiest pinnacle of the earth, and from which it might be carried by the natural channels to the whole circle of subject nations. Wonderful were the ways of God in reaching this result. The imperial legions must furnish an escort, and the imperial exchequer must pay the passage. Even to the stormy waves of the Mediterranean the word of the Lord had come in power: Destroy not this frail vessel, for it bears a blessing to the Western world. *Arnot.*

Ancient Rome was not, like modern Rome, impressive from its solitude, standing alone, with its one conspicuous cupola, in the midst of a desolate though beautiful waste. Within a circuit of little more than twelve miles more than two millions of inhabitants were crowded. It was a vast city, covering the Campagna, and almost continuously connected by its suburbs with the villas on the adjacent hill, and with the bright towns which clustered on

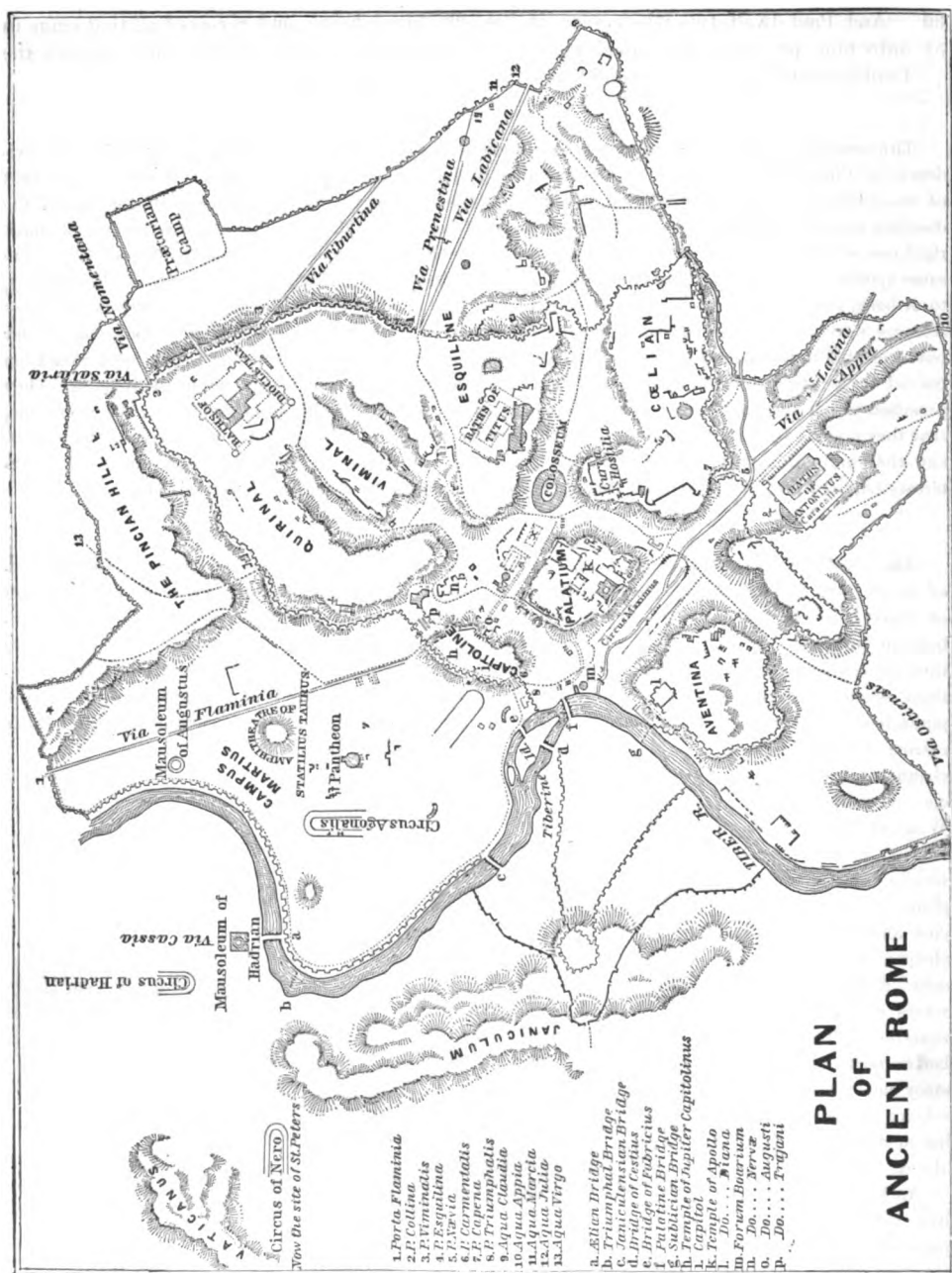
the sides of the mountains. Over all the intermediate space were the houses and gardens, through which aqueducts and roads might be traced in converging lines toward the confused mass of edifices which formed the city of Rome. Here no conspicuous building, elevated above the rest, attracted the eye or the imagination. Ancient Rome had neither



Rome—the Forum.

[Three well-known Corinthian columns of the best period of art under the emperors remain near the base of the Palatine. They are popularly called the remains of the Temple of Jupiter Stator; perhaps they are part of the Temple of Castor and Pollux. H.]

cupola nor campanile. Still less had it any of those spires which give life to all the landscapes of Northern Christendom. The Coliseum, the Basilica of Constantine, and the baths of other emperors, and many other buildings which are now regarded as the conspicuous features of ancient Rome, did not then



exist. The Pantheon still remains, as a monument of the reign of Augustus. The city was a wide-spread aggregate of buildings, which, though separated by narrow streets and open squares, appeared, when seen from near Aricia, blended into one indiscriminate mass : for distance concealed the contrasts which divided the crowded habitations of the poor and the dark haunts of filth and misery from the

theatres and colonnades, the baths, the temples and palaces with gilded roofs, flashing back the sun.

Entering the city by the Porta Capena, or gate of the Appian Way, Julius and his prisoners moved on, with the Aventine on their left, close round the base of the Caelian, and through the hollow ground which lay between this hill and the Palatine; thence over the low ridge called Velia, where afterward was

built the arch of Titus, to commemorate the destruction of Jerusalem; and then descending, by the *Sacra Via*, into that space which was the center of imperial power and imperial magnificence, and associated also with the most glorious recollections of the republic. The Forum was to Rome what the Acropolis was to Athens, the heart of all the characteristic interest of the place. Here was the *Miliarium Aureum* (the Golden Milestone), to which the roads of all the provinces converged. All around were the stately buildings, which were raised in the closing years of the republic, and by the earlier emperors. In front was the Capitoline Hill, illustrious long before the invasion of the Gauls. Close on the left, covering that hill, whose name is associated in every modern European language with the notion of imperial splendor, were the vast ranges of the *palace*—the “house of Cesar” (Phil. 4 : 22). Here were the household troops quartered in a *prætorium* attached to the palace. And here Julius gave up his prisoner to Burrus, the *Prætorian Prefect*, who was the official custodian of all accused persons who were to be tried before the emperor. H.—It was a Providential circumstance that prisoners, who were sent on appeal to Rome, were consigned to the custody of the Chief of the Imperial Guard. Thus Paul’s words became manifest in Christ (Phil. 1 : 12), and the gospel was brought home to the hearts of those of Cesar’s household. W.

The strongly favorable report of the centurion Julius concerning Paul, together with the absence of all criminal charge in the official statement of Festus, secured for the apostle at the outset the singular liberty of dwelling outside the prison precincts. At first he abode in a *lodging*, or guest-chamber of some devoted Christian friend (perhaps Aquila), and afterward in apartments permanently rented (*his own hired house*, verse 30); both dwellings being in the vicinity of the *Prætorium*, and not far from the Jewish quarter. But, though privileged in living thus privately, and perhaps having large liberty in going abroad through the city, a *prætorian* soldier was ever his guard. At home and abroad, by day and night, in his public and social conferences and his private worship, his arm was always linked by a chain to that of a sentinel attendant. As this companion guard was frequently relieved, it naturally occurred that Paul became intimately known to a great number of *prætorian* soldiers; and this, he intimates (Phil. 1 : 12, 13), happened “for the furtherance of the gospel.” Many touching allusions he elsewhere makes to this always binding chain, though never in tone of complaint. He counts himself the prisoner of the Lord, not of Nero.

17-22. *Paul’s First Interview with the Jewish Leaders in Rome.*—To the Jew first, had been the

invariable rule of his Christian ministry; and this rule he maintains to the end. Though, like his Lord, so often rejected in his fervent endeavor to bless his own people, still, as he had written to the Roman disciples three years before, “his heart’s desire and prayer was that Israel might be saved.” And now prompt, as always, to do what his heart moved him to do, at once he summons the elders and rulers of the synagogue and others socially prominent among the Jews to a conference in his own dwelling. This he did because he could not go to them or properly appear in their synagogue.

By this early conference he would anticipate the coming of his accusers from Jerusalem. In his address, he answers to the prejudices that might have arisen against him from information previously transmitted concerning his missionary career. And he fairly states and answers the accusations that had actually been made against him. But his tone is frankly conciliating and generous throughout. He makes no accusation even against his accusers, save that involved in his appeal. No anger had he, much less malice against them, notwithstanding their murderous hate against him. And concerning the whole Jewish people—*his nation*, he touchingly calls them—he has nothing to say *against them*. At this interview he simply *justifies himself* with regard to the circumstances in which they find him, appealing to Cesar. Though (he said) he had offended against neither Jewish law nor custom, yet the violent opposition of the Jews had constrained him to this appeal. How mistaken this opposition was, that had made and kept him a prisoner, he intimates by the declaration that the highest, truest hope of the Jews found its fulfillment in the grand facts of Christianity. Upon these facts he afterward rests the justification of his strange career and seeming apostasy.

In reply, the leading Jews first refer to what Paul had said about his appeal. Neither by letter nor by messenger from Jerusalem had they heard of any accusation against him. They *implied* that they *had heard of him*, by their request to know what he thought concerning this new sect (of Christians). Not only had they heard of the rapid and wide extension of Christianity by report of Jews that opposed it, but for some years a congregation of Christian disciples had maintained a living and effective organization beside their synagogue in Rome. That they spoke so cautiously, and subsequently made no demonstration of hostility against Paul, is readily accounted for. The apostle was held in special favor by the chief officer of Nero’s household; and the Jews of the synagogue were themselves subject to persecution, so that they were powerless to persecute the disciples of Christ. Of Paul’s old accusers of the Sanhedrim we hear no

more. They did not follow him to Rome because, with their trivial charges against the apostle, they could hope for no better success from the Emperor than from his Judean deputy.

23, 24. *Paul's All-day Exposition of the Kingdom of God, and Testimony to Christ as its King; and the Effects of his Preaching.*—Many others accompanied the chief Jews on the day appointed. At an early hour they gathered in his apartment. As always, so now for the last time, Paul takes as his theme that doctrine of the kingdom of God which was the central truth of the Old Testament and of the New; that great disclosure of the prophets which was still, as it had been for centuries, the supreme thought and hope of the whole Jewish people. In their interpretations of the prophet's meaning, in their understanding of the nature of the kingdom, in the person and character, the experiences and achievements of the King, lay the vital difference between the natural and spiritual Israelites, between the Jew and the Christian. Again Paul follows the very line of his risen Lord's exposition to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. B.—Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he showed these hearers that the predicted kingdom is not limited to one nation, but coextensive with the world; that if it be limited for a time, it is limited like a seed, only until the set time come for its indefinite multiplication and expansion. He showed them that the King, though universal Lord, yet suffers and dies—gives his life a ransom; that his kingdom is not of this world; that he is King of thoughts, not of armies; that he wins by love—by enduring. He showed them that in Jesus of Nazareth all the conditions of the expected Messiah were fulfilled; he employed the law to shut them up unto the gospel. *Arnot.*

From his first reported speech at the Pisidian Antioch, which bases all upon the Scriptures, still he goes on with the Scriptures in his hand, till he stands and is judged, "believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets"; and finally parts from the Roman Jews after "persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses and out of the Prophets, from morning till evening." This then is the position taken at the beginning and fought for to the end; and it is a striking sight to see how resolutely Paul insists that he and his doctrine are the true representatives of the Law and the Prophets, while he is being persecuted and cast out, as having betrayed and blasphemed them. T. D. B.—And as his theme and method were the same which had characterized his whole ministry among the Jews of Judea and Syria, of Asia Minor and Greece, so was the result. A few were won to faith in the Christ; but the many disbelieved the teachings of their own Scriptures, and

rejected the suffering Messiah whom those Scriptures so plainly disclosed.

25-29. *Paul's Fearful Farewell Words of Warning.*—With these solemn words of the Holy Ghost, spoken by Isaiah, Christ had opened his teaching by parables (Mat. 13 : 14, 15), and had finally closed his ministry among the Jews (John 12 : 40). And now Paul, as if himself commissioned by the Holy Ghost as a prophet of the New Testament, sadly redelivers the same message, enforced by the awful emphasis of the Master's double utterance. Thus the apostle, under divine direction, formally and finally seals up the gospel offer to God's disobedient and rejecting people. B.—This part of the original prediction has the form of an ironical commission or command, in which the prophet is required to stupefy and blind the people, which is only a strong and paradoxical mode of commanding him to do his duty or perform his office, with an accompanying intimation of its actual effect upon the people, through their own perversity and unbelief (compare the similar command of Christ in Mat. 23 : 32). In this fearful process there are three distinguishable agencies expressly or implicitly described—the ministerial agency of the prophet, the judicial agency of God, and the suicidal agency of the people themselves. J. A. A.—Spiritually blind and deaf under the brightest light of the gospel and its plainest proclamations, hardening the heart against the most gracious offers of healing and life, and arming themselves against their own salvation with weapons of eternal death, justly were they at last given over by God, and sealed up under incurable obstinacy! D.

And, we add, the warning is equally applicable to Gentiles who will not hear, and who similarly reject the salvation of God, sent now to them. They who make themselves blind and insensate by willfully closing their eyes against the light and hardening their hearts against the grace of God, shall assuredly experience the same exclusion from hope, and be for ever debarred from entrance into the fellowship and joy of God. B.

Close of the History.—Here, so far as the Scripture narrative is concerned, the curtain falls upon the contest of Jewish unbelief against the things that concerned their salvation. And this we incline to regard as the very reason why the history of the Acts breaks off. As the narrative which illustrates the command of Jesus to his apostles, to "preach the gospel to the whole world, beginning at Jerusalem," it opens with the opening of that commission at the religious center of the world; it traces the successive offers to the Jews of Judea, Samaria, and the dispersion; to proselytes and Hellenists, in all the provinces that they frequented; and it shows how their general disbelief caused the Gentiles to

be received step by step into their place of privilege; till the apostle, bringing back the offerings of those Gentile converts to bless his countrymen at Jerusalem, was finally rejected by them, and sent in chains to Rome. There, in the capital of the world, the unbelief of the last section of the Jewish family, to whom he revealed their Messiah, completed the first stage in the history of the diffusion of Christianity, at which the mass of the Jewish race are, for the time, cut off from the kingdom of God.

They are not, however, finally left in this fallen state. If the last recorded words of the apostle's living voice proclaimed at Rome their present sentence, the enduring records of his pen, gathering up the substance of the ancient promises, had already embodied, in writing to the Church of Rome, that prophetic announcement of their restoration, the mystery of which remains to be fulfilled, and those three wonderful chapters of the *Epistle to the Romans* (9-11) may be regarded as a supplement to the *Acts*. The spread of the gospel over the purely heathen portion of the world belongs to the new chain of history which comes down to our own time; the end of which will be found linked with the fulfillment of the promises concerning the Jews. S.

30, 31. Paul's Unhindered Ministry of Two Years in Rome.—Fully and boldly, to all that visited his humble abode, he proclaimed the establishment of that kingdom of God (foreannounced through the prophets) by the incarnation and the life, the death, the resurrection, and the ascension of the Lord Jesus. And this prolonged, successful, and unfettered ministry of the "prisoner of the Lord" fitly completes this succinct and well-defined account of the great process by which Christianity was carried from its cradle at Jerusalem, not only to its secondary homes in Antioch, Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus, and other cities of inferior rank, but also to its throne in the Eternal City, the locality selected for its highest exaltation and its most profound abasement. J. A. A.

But this history of the planting of the Kingdom of Christ in the world stops short of the mighty convulsion which was shortly to pronounce that Kingdom established as the divine commonwealth for all men. The work of Paul belongs to the preparatory period. He was not to live through the time when the Son of man came in the destruction of the Holy City and Temple, and in the throes of the new age. The most significant part of his work was accomplished, when in the Imperial City he had declared his Gospel "to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile." But his career is not abruptly closed. Before he himself fades out of our sight in the twilight of ecclesiastical tradition, we have letters written by himself (the four Epistles to the COLOSSIANS, to PHILEMON, to the EPHESIANS, and to the PHILIPPIANS), which contribute some particulars to his external biography, and give us a far more precious insight into his convictions and sympathies. S.—

From these Epistles we learn that the apostle, though subjected to the restraining and ungenial presence of the Roman sentinel to whom he was chained, was also privileged with the congenial fellowship of long-attached disciples. Among these were *Luke* and *Timothy* and *Mark*; *Aristarchus* of Thessalonica, *Epaphros* of Colosse, and *Tychicus* of Asia; and that *Demas* who for some time "did run well," but concerning whom at the very last Paul was constrained to write the sad words: *Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world*. B.

So long as he lived, whether free to travel or shut up in prison, Paul would not resign the daily "care of all the churches." One means he had of promoting their welfare daily and hourly, the constant and earnest *prayer*, which his Epistles prove to have been a chief occupation of his solitude. But he was not shut out from intercourse with the churches themselves. The four Epistles, which are perhaps but some among many that he wrote from Rome, are linked together by a striking resemblance of tone, thought, and argument, as well as by internal marks which place the time of their composition beyond reasonable doubt. They were all written toward the latter part of his imprisonment at Rome, for all refer to the expectation of his release. There is the best reason to believe the prevailing tradition that, after an imprisonment of two years, Paul's case was heard by the Emperor and decided in his favor. The precision with which Luke specifies the duration of Paul's imprisonment justifies the inference that it came to an end at the close of the "two years," that is, in the spring of A. D. 63. S.

As Luke concludes his history with Paul's abode at Rome, before his journey into Spain, we may infer that he wrote both his gospel and the Acts while the apostle was still living, of whose actions he was himself an eye-witness, and by whom it is very probable this book was revised, as the ancients also say his gospel was. D.

The apostolic period we regard as closing about A. D. 100; as the life of John, according to reliable tradition, reached over into the reign of Trajan, A. D. 98-117. This space of seventy years may be again divided into three subordinate periods: 1. The founding of the Christian Church among the Jews, or the labors of Peter. 2. The founding of the Christian Church among the Gentiles, or the labors of Paul, who took the lead in the work of missions during the years 50-64. Through his instrumentality Christianity becomes gradually more independent of Judaism; until, by the destruction of Jerusalem, the last cord that bound the Christian Church to the Mosaic economy is broken. 3. Then follows the final *summing up* and organic *union of Jewish and Gentile Christianity* in one fixed, independent whole. This is the work mainly of John, who outlived all his colleagues, and accompanied the Church through the threatening dangers and errors of the last thirty years of the first period to the threshold of the second, thus forming the connecting link between the two.

These three stages in the development of the apostolic church have their local centers in the cities of *Jerusalem*, the mother church of Jewish Christianity, *Antioch*, the starting-point of the heathen missions, and *Ephesus*, the later residence of John and the principal seat of the process of amalgamation, which he completed. At the same time *Rome* witnesses a similar amalgamation, and becomes a center for Christianity in the West. P. S.

Probable Interval of Five Years between the First and Second Imprisonment of Paul.—It is now generally admitted, first, that the historical facts mentioned in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus can not be placed in any portion of Paul's life before or during his first imprisonment in Rome; and, secondly, that the style in which these Epistles are written, and the condition of the Church described in them, forbid the supposition of such a date. C.

From these Epistles, without encroaching upon the domain of conjecture, we draw the following conclusions: 1. Paul, at some time after leaving Rome, must have visited Asia Minor and Greece, for he says to Timothy, "I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I was setting out for Macedonia." On his way to Macedonia, it is reasonable to suppose that he made a circuit like those of former days—by Antioch and Asia Minor, staying at Colosse, where he had asked Philemon (22) to prepare him a lodging. After being once at Ephesus, he was purposing to go there again (Tit. 3 : 12), and he spent a considerable time at Ephesus. The First Epistle to Timothy proves the magnitude of his work in this city which had been so long the scene of his former labors. The Gentile churches, of which that of Ephesus may be regarded as a type, had begun to feel the want of a more perfect organization. Beginning this work himself, and carrying it out through the ministry of Timothy here, as of Titus in Crete, he had occasion to place on permanent record, in the Epistles written to direct their action, the great principles of ecclesiastical order. 2. He paid a visit to Crete, and left Titus to organize churches there. He was intending to spend a winter at one of the places named Nicopolis, probably the celebrated city in Epirus. 3. He traveled by Miletus, Troas (where he left a cloak or case and some books), and Corinth. 4. He is a prisoner at Rome, "suffering unto bonds as an evil-doer," and expecting to be soon condemned to death. At this time he felt deserted and solitary, having only Luke, of his old associates, to keep him company; and he was very anxious that Timothy should come to him without delay from Ephesus, and bring Mark with him.

Accused no longer merely about questions of the law, but as a common malefactor (for so the Christians were regarded in the Neronian persecution), with no Julius to recommend and no Burrus to protect him, Paul's state may be inferred from the words, feebly rendered in our version, "wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer" (or felon), "even unto bonds" (2 Tim. 2 : 9)—bonds more like those at Philippi than his former chain at Rome. But even now, as well as then, he could add, "but the word of God is not bound"; and the converts, whose names appear for the first time in this Epistle—Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, and Claudia—derive a special luster from their profession being made amid such dangers, and from its contrast to the falling away of older friends.

The interval, whether longer or shorter, exhibits the apostle to us in one of the most interesting aspects of his life, as "a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Christ to life everlasting." An attentive reader of the Second Epistle to Timothy will observe how the glorious principles which sustained the apostle in the prospect of martyrdom are stated for the very purpose of fortifying the dis-

ciple. And how these principles sustained the apostle's own mind, and put the climax to the moral grandeur and spiritual glory of his career, can be told in no words except his own. S.

The Martyrdom of Paul.—The privileges of Roman citizenship exempted Paul from the ignominious death of lingering torture, which had been lately inflicted on so many of his brethren. He was to die by decapitation; and he was led out to execution beyond the city walls, upon the road to Ostia, the port of Rome. Through the dust and tumult of a busy throng, the small troop of soldiers threaded their way silently, under the bright sky of an Italian midsummer. They were marching, though they knew it not, in a procession more truly triumphal than any they had ever followed, in the train of general or emperor, along the Sacred Way. Their prisoner, now at last and for ever delivered from his captivity, rejoiced to follow his Lord "without the gate." The place of execution was not far distant, and there the sword of the headman ended his long course of sufferings, and released that heroic soul from that feeble body. Weeping friends took up his corpse, and carried it for burial to those subterranean labyrinths where, through many ages of oppression, the persecuted Church found refuge for the living and sepulchres for the dead.

Thus died the Apostle, the Prophet, and the Martyr, bequeathing to the Church, in her government and her discipline, the legacy of his apostolic labors, leaving his prophetic words to be her living oracles, pouring forth his blood to be the seed of a thousand martyrdoms. Thenceforth, among the glorious company of the Apostles, among the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, among the noble army of Martyrs, his name has stood preëminent as the great teacher of a universal redemption—the herald of glad tidings to all mankind. C.

THE ACTS AS A DOCTRINAL LINK BETWEEN THE GOSPELS AND EPISTLES.

BETWEEN Gospels and Epistles there is need for a connection of a more internal kind. During the intervening time the doctrine was not only spreading, it was clearing and forming itself, or rather was being cleared and formed by the hand of its divine author. This was effected through a certain line of events and through the agency of particular persons. With these events and persons the Book of Acts is occupied. It begins at Jerusalem, it ends at Rome. Between these two points questions have been settled, principles carried out, and divinely implanted tendencies disclosed. Especially have the relations of the gospel to Jew and Gentile been fixed for ever. But the rejection of Jews and admission of Gentiles were not the only result of this long history. Another result has been involved in it: Christianity itself has been finely drawn out of Judaism, the delicate and intricate relations of the two systems being dealt with in such a way, that (so to speak) the texture of living fiber has been lifted unimpaired out of its former covering, leaving behind only a residuum of what was temporary, preparatory, and carnal. In fact, the doctrine of the gospel has been cleared and formed; cleared of the false element which the existing Judaism would have infused into it, and formed of the true elements which the old covenant had been intended to prepare for its use. T. D. B.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

(Basis of Conybeare and Howson.)

A. D.	Biography of Paul.	Contemporary Rulers in Rome and Judea.
36	(?) Paul's conversion [supposing the three years of Gal. 1 : 18 Judæally reckoned].	
37	(?) At Damascus.	Death of Tiberius and accession of CALIGULA (Mar. 16)
38	(?) Flight from Damascus to Jerusalem; thence to Tarsus.	
39	(?) During these years Paul preaches in Syria and Cilicia, making TARSUS his headquarters, and probably undergoes most of the sufferings mentioned	Death of Caligula and accession of CLAUDIUS (Jan. 25), Judea and Samaria given to Herod Agrippa I.
40	(?) at 2 Cor. 11 : 24-26, viz., two of the Roman and	
41	(?) the five Jewish scourgings, and three shipwrecks.	
42	(?) He is brought from Tarsus to Antioch (Acts 11 : 26), and stays there a year before the famine.	Death of Herod Agrippa I. (Acts 13). Cuspius Fadus (as procurator) succeeds to the government of Judea.
43		
44	He visits Jerusalem with Barnabas to relieve the famine.	
45	{ At ANTIOCH.	Tiberius Alexander made procurator of Judea (about this time).
46		
47		
48	His "First Missionary Journey" from Antioch to Cyprus, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, and back through the same places to ANTIOCH in Syria.	Agrippa II. (Acts 25) made king of Chalcis. Cumanus made procurator of Judea (about this time).
49	Paul and Barnabas attend the "Council of Jerusalem."	
50	His "Second Missionary Journey" from Antioch to Cilicia, Lycaonia, Galatia,	
51	Troas, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and CORINTH—Writes 1 Thessalonians.	Claudius expels the Jews from Rome (Acts 18 : 2).
52	At CORINTH Writes 2 Thessalonians.	
53	(Spring)—He leaves Corinth, and reaches	The tetrarchy of Trachonitis given to Agrippa II.; Felix made procurator of Judea.
54	(Summer)—Jerusalem at Pentecost, and thence goes to Antioch.	Death of Claudius and accession of NERO (Oct. 18).
55	(Autumn)—His "Third Missionary Journey." He goes to Ephesus.	
56	{ At EPHESUS.	
57	(Spring)—He writes 1 Corinthians.	
58	(Summer)—Leaves Ephesus for Macedonia,	
59	(Autumn)—Where he writes 2 Corinthians, and	
60	(Winter)—To CORINTH, where he writes Galatians.	
61	(Spring)—He writes Romans, and leaves Corinth, going by Philippi and Miletus	Nero murders Agrippina. Felix is recalled and succeeded by Festus.
62	(Summer)—To Jerusalem (Pentecost), where he is arrested, and sent to Cesarea.	
63	At CESAREA.	Embassy from Jerusalem to Rome, to petition about the wall.
64	(Autumn)—Sent to Rome by Festus (about August).	
65	(Winter)—Shipwrecked at Malta.	Albinus succeeds Festus as procurator.
66	(Spring)—He arrives at Rome.	
67	At ROME.	
68	(Spring)—Writes Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians.	
69	(Autumn)—Writes Philippians.	
70	(Spring)—He is acquitted, and goes to Macedonia (Phil. 2 : 24) and Asia Minor (Philem. 22).	Great fire at Rome (July 19), followed by persecution of Roman Christians. Gessius Florus made procurator of Judea. The Jewish war begins.
71	(?) He goes to Spain.	
72	(?) In Spain.	
73	(Summer)—From Spain (?) to Asia Minor (1 Tim. 1 : 3).	
74	(Summer)—Writes 1 Tim. from Macedonia.	
75	(Autumn)—Writes Titus from Ephesus.	
76	(Winter)—At Nicopolis.	
77	(Spring)—In prison at Rome. Writes 2 Tim.	Death of Nero in the middle of June.
78	(Summer)—Executed (May or June).	
79	Destruction of Jerusalem.	

THE EPISTLES:

THEIR CHARACTER, AND THEIR RELATION TO THE GOSPELS.

Section 235.

OBSERVE the point at which we have arrived, by the time that we finish the book of Acts, and open the Epistle to the Romans. The facts of the *manifestation of Christ* have been completed, and have been testified in all fullness and certainty by the witnesses chosen of God. They have not only testified of the facts, they have summed them up; have announced their scope and purpose in the counsels of God, as effecting the redemption of the world, and have called men to partake in the fruits of that redemption by believing and being baptized. They have given this testimony, not as of themselves, but with the *Holy Ghost* sent down from heaven, whose witness is united with their own, and whose indwelling presence is given also to those who receive the testimony, in order to open its meaning and to seal its truth. Thus a *holy Church* is formed, which gradually proves itself *catholic*, and shows at once its power of expansion and its spirit of unity; and within its protecting framework there exists a *communion of saints*, a common participation in the same spiritual possessions by all whom a union with Christ has separated and sanctified to God; and thus men are joined to the Lord and united with each other, and rest in the consciousness that they have found the *forgiveness of sins*, the *resurrection of the body*, and the *life everlasting*. In its fundamental articles the creed is now complete.

To this point the book of Acts conducts us, and at this point it leaves us. The Father revealed, the Son incarnate, the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven—redemption wrought, salvation given, the resurrection of the body, the eternal judgment, the second death, the life eternal—new principles of thought, new standards of character, new grounds of duty, new motives, new powers, new bonds between man and man, new forms of human society, new language for human lips—all coming at once upon men's minds, placed them, as it were, in a different world from that in which they had lived before. At the same time they carried into that world of thought all the tendencies, infirmities, and perversities of our nature, and revealed truth had to settle itself into lasting forms, to find its adequate expression, and to have its moral and social consequences deduced, under a variety of influences uncongenial to itself. So critical a period, on which the whole

future of the gospel hung, would seem to cry aloud for a continued action of the living Word of God; such as might, with supreme authority, both judge and guide the thoughts of men, and translate the principles which they had received into life and practice.

The Lord recognized this necessity. He met it by the living voice of his apostles; and their Epistles remain as the permanent record of this part of their work. They are the voice of the Spirit speaking within the Church to those who are themselves within it, certifying to them the true interpretations and applications of the principles of thought and life which as believers in Jesus they have received. Christ has been received; Christian life has commenced; Christian communities have been formed; and men's minds have been at work on the great principles which they have embraced. Some of these principles in one place, and others of them in another, have been imperfectly grasped, or positively perverted, or practically misapplied, so as to call for explanation or correction; or else they have been both apprehended and applied so worthily, that the teacher, filled with joy and praise, feels able to open out the mysteries of God, as one speaking wisdom among them that are perfect. These conditions of mind were not individual accidents. Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, supplied examples of different tendencies of the human mind in connection with the principles of the gospel—tendencies which would ever recur, and on which it was requisite for the future guidance of the Church that the Word of God should pronounce. It did pronounce in the most effectual way, by those letters which are addressed by the commissioners of Christ, not to possible but to actual cases, with that largeness of view which belongs to spectators at a certain distance from the scene, and with that closeness of application which personal acquaintance dictates and personal affection inspires. Thus the fuller expositions of truth contained in the Epistles are based on what the first principles of the gospel had already wrought in human hearts; and its doctrines are cleared and settled, developed and combined, in correspondence with the ascertained capacities and necessities of believers. T. D. B.

There is a most observable wisdom in that ar-

rangement of the revelation of God to man, by which so large and important a portion of its contents is conveyed in the peculiar form of epistles; of epistles, which, being the exact medium between the familiar flow of ordinary discourse and the methodical precision of the essay, may be said to unite all the characteristic advantages and avoid the peculiar deficiencies of both. Christianity, eminently a practical institute, is taught by practical models; its blessed Founder's precepts live and move embodied in his life; his apostles—like Himself—are not more the deliverers of doctrine than the earnest leaders of action. And just that we may for ever know them as such, we have them with us, not merely in the historical portrait of a contemporary, nor yet in elaborate treatises of their own, where the distinctive personality of the writer might be almost wholly absorbed in his subject—but in letters, that spring out of action and breathe its earnest spirit; in letters, where the soul spontaneously paints its own glowing picture; in letters, the vivid, unconscious transcripts of the inmost heart. W. A. B.

The Epistles resemble the Gospels in their combination of intrinsic unity with extrinsic diversity. As Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, all set before us the same Jesus Christ, so do Paul, James, Peter, John, and Jude, all teach one salvation, one calling, one Comforter, one life, one Church, one hope of the Lord's appearing, one fellowship in faith and love. But, as the evangelists diversify their narratives—each one writing according to his own bent of mind and his own special information, and with adaptation to the persons for or to whom in the first instance he wrote—so do the apostles write variously, in accordance with their intellectual individuality, and with due reference to the state of the churches, or the circumstances of the persons whom they address. The books of the apostles were letters, not decrees; and their directions and commands were accompanied by affectionate persuasions and appeals. They wrote not—"I command you, my people"—but "I beseech you, my beloved brethren." With all his masculine vigor Paul had a wonderful persuasive tenderness. Peter wrote with a beautiful humility. John often used the address of kindness "Beloved," and wrote as a father to his "little children." It is this combination of authority with gentleness, after the manner of Christ himself, which charms us in the Epistles, and makes them so effectual for the inculcation of truth at once on the understanding and on the heart. D. F.

The doctrinal portion of the New Testament consists of thirteen Epistles of Paul, two of Peter, three of John, one Epistle of James, one of Jude, and the anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews, written according to one view by Paul himself, according to another conjecture, by one of his pupils and fellow-laborers, Luke, Barnabas, or Apollos. Most of Paul's Epistles—the two to the Thessalonians, the one to the Galatians, the first to Timothy, the one to Titus, the two to the Corinthians, the one to the Romans—and the Epistle of James, were composed before the Gospels and the Acts, between the years 50 and 60. The Epistles to the Ephesians, to the Colossians, to Philemon, to the Philippians, the second to Timothy, as also the Epistle to the Hebrews and the two Epistles of Peter, and probably that of Jude, belong in the seventh decade, most of them between the years 62 and 64. John's epistles with the fourth Gospel bear all the internal marks of having been written after the destruction

of Jerusalem and toward the end of the first century.

The common subject of the doctrine of the apostles is the person of Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, the true God-man; and the divine life and salvation, which was manifested in Him, was secured to mankind by his self-revelation, death, and resurrection: shaped itself through the Holy Ghost into a church of the redeemed, a means and a fellowship of salvation; is communicated to the individual sinner through faith and the means of grace, the word, and sacraments; works his conversion, justification, sanctification, and eternal blessedness; and will fully develop itself in the glories of Christ's second coming. These are the essential articles of faith, on the living appropriation of which salvation depends, and which the Apostles' Creed (justly called apostolical as to its *contents*) so beautifully arranges under the three divisions of God the Father and the work of creation, God the Son and the work of redemption, and God the Holy Ghost and the work of sanctification, ending with life everlasting. And in all these points James, Peter, Paul, and John perfectly agree. We can not acknowledge the least inconsistency among the various books of the New Testament either in respect to faith or practice. They are all animated by the same spirit, aim at the same end, and form a truly wonderful harmony. All the apostles and evangelists teach that Jesus of Nazareth is the highest revelation of the only true God; that he perfectly fulfilled the Law and the Prophets; by his death and resurrection reconciled humanity with God and redeemed it from the curse of sin and death; by the outpouring of his Spirit has established an indestructible Church and furnished it with all the means for the regeneration and sanctification of the world; that out of him there is no salvation; that a man must repent and believe in him, and express this faith in his entire life, in order to enjoy the benefits of Christ's mission; and that this life of faith develops itself in individuals and in the Church, under the continual direction of the Holy Ghost through much suffering and tribulation; triumphs at last over all its foes; and becomes gloriously complete at the second advent of the Lord. In short, there is in the apostolic church "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." P. S.

The surface criticism of Scripture may vary from age to age, but the main lines of interpretation, like the main verities of the faith, are far less likely to undergo change than is the sun to fail in the heavens or the everlasting hills to melt. The Gospel, as it was taught by the Apostles, was a final and perfect revelation. Statements of doctrine may vary in different ages; new statements may be necessary to meet new modes of thought, or fresh forms of evasion, or virtual denials of the original truth, but the number of Christian doctrines can not really be added to, nor can the area of any one Christian doctrine be in any degree enlarged. H. P. L.

We believe these writings to have been intended for what they have since proved, the doctrinal charter of the future Christian Church. Nothing could be less like a *system* than the teaching of our blessed Lord. In these Epistles, the true comments on that teaching, we may expect great steps to be taken toward systematizing it. The Lord's moral precepts, the Lord's mediatorial acts, are the seeds out of

which, under his own direction, by his informing Spirit, the teaching of the apostolic Epistles has grown. The earliest of the Epistles are ever moral and practical, the advanced ones more doctrinal and spiritual. It was not till it appeared that the bulwark of salvation by grace must be strengthened, that the building on the one foundation must be raised thus impregnable to the righteousness of works and the law, that the Epistles to the Galatians and the Romans were given through the great apostle, reaching to the full breadth and height of the great argument. Then followed the Epistles of the imprisonment, building up higher and higher the edifice there consolidated; and the Pastoral Epistles, suited to a more developed ecclesiastical condition, and aimed at the correction of abuses which sprung up later, or were the ripened fruit of former doctrinal errors.

The *Chronological order*, adopted in the common arrangement of the canon, has been chosen without reference to chronology. It proceeds apparently on consideration of the relative length and importance of the Epistles, giving, however, to Paul the preference. After his thirteen was placed the Epistle to the Hebrews, as being, if not by him, an appendix by some hand almost guided by his. Then

followed the "Catholic" Epistles—then the Revelation. This plan has the advantage of something like system, and is, perhaps, for convenience of reference, the best. A.

According to the probable order of time, six were written before Paul's first Roman imprisonment, viz.:

- 1 THESSALONIANS, from Corinth, A. D. 52.
- 2 THESSALONIANS, from Corinth, A. D. 53.
- 1 CORINTHIANS, from Ephesus, A. D. 57.
- 2 CORINTHIANS, from Macedonia, A. D. 57.
- GALATIANS, from Corinth, A. D. 57.
- ROMANS, from Corinth, A. D. 58.

Four were written during the first Roman imprisonment (Acts 28), viz.:

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| PHILEMON,
COLOSSIANS,
EPHESIANS,
PHILIPPIANS, | } A. D. 62. |
|--|-------------|

Three were written after the imprisonment recorded in Acts 28, probably as follows:

- 1 TIMOTHY, from Macedonia, A. D. 67.
- TITUS, from Ephesus, A. D. 67.
- 2 TIMOTHY, from Rome, A. D. 68. B.

Section 236.

ROMANS i. 1-15.

1 PAUL, a servant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,
 2 (which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) concerning his Son
 3 Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and
 4 declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resur-
 5 rection from the dead: by whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to
 6 the faith among all nations, for his name: among whom are ye also the called of Jesus
 7 Christ: to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints: Grace to you and peace
 8 from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. First, I thank my God through Jesus
 9 Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. For God is
 my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I
 10 make mention of you always in my prayers; making request, if by any means now at length
 11 I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. For I long to see
 12 you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that
 is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.
 13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you,
 (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other
 14 Gentiles. I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to
 15 the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at
 Rome also.

THE *Gospel* is as old as the first promise. For, from the beginning, man's sinfulness, atonement through vicarious suffering, God's free and righteous mercy, the efficacy of prayer, the necessity of holiness—all were revealed. But now these truths are set forth with new proofs, are enforced by new motives, amid stronger light and for a wider audience. The Gospel is a THREE-fold message—of *forgiveness* through our Lord, of personal *holiness* through the renewing and ever-gracious help of the Spirit, of *blessedness*, amid all earthly changes, for those who love and serve God. Forgiveness, holiness, blessedness! What more can we need? The Gospel is a two-fold message—Christ's work *for* us, in living, and dying, and pleading, and reigning; and Christ's work *in* us, beginning in grace and ending in glory. The

Gospel is a *SINGLE* message—of Christ as crucified—the concentrated revelation of the divine holiness and love, the Redeemer and Comforter, the pattern and the sanctifier of us all. This Gospel—threefold, twofold, single—Christ came to found, even more than to teach. Yet it is the gospel he taught, as it is the gospel his apostles taught. And so mighty did it prove that the most successful preacher of the apostolic age resolved, from experience as well as from direct inspiration, to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ as crucified. The Jews deemed it no “sign,” no embodiment of power, and the Greeks deemed it foolishness; but he found it to be power and wisdom; nay, more, the power of God and the wisdom of God. J. A.

EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

AT some time during his stay at Corinth for the winter 57-58, he probably wrote the Epistle to the Galatians. The great subject which the fickleness of the Galatian Church had brought into prominence had been much before his mind. “Ye are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus”; this wrought, and was kept fermenting by the Divine Spirit in his thoughts, and, as centuries after in him who was to enforce the great doctrine in ages of corruption, so now in the ear of the Apostle of the Gentiles, “The just shall live by faith,” was ever sounding. Coincident with this engrossing of his thoughts by this one great theme, came news from the now growing and important Church in the metropolis of the world; news that in it, as so often elsewhere, the Jew and Gentile elements were not in Christian accord; that questions of precedence and questions of observance wanted settling among them. What more natural than that the apostle should regard the tidings thus brought as furnishing an opportunity for laying forth the great doctrine of “Life by Faith” for the Church of God? He had long been intending to visit the Roman Church. It was of necessity the most important Christian community in the world. It would be sure to receive the greatest future accessions; it had the advantage of the greatest publicity, and the widest ventilation, for any truth delivered to it. An occasion then having arisen for a letter to explain and settle the misconceptions which had grown up among the Romans, what wonder if the great apostle availed himself of it to lay forth to them the whole dispensation of God’s grace to Jew and Gentile? Phœbe, a deaconess of the Church at Cenchrea, the port of Corinth, was traveling to Rome. She had won, by her acts of beneficence to the Church and to himself, the apostle’s approval and esteem. She therefore (for we can hardly otherwise understand chapter 16:1, 2) becomes the bearer of the Epistle. The letter was most probably sent from Corinth in the spring of A. D. 58. Three years after, in the beginning of A. D. 61, the apostle arrived a prisoner at Rome. A. (Read page 143.)

The history of the Roman community is most remarkable. It grew up in silence, founded by some unknown teachers, probably of those who were present in Jerusalem at the first publication of Christianity by the apostles. During the reign of Claudius, it had made so much progress as to excite open tumults and dissensions among the Jewish population of Rome; these animosities rose to such a height, that the attention of the government was aroused, and both parties expelled from the city. With some of these exiles, Aquila and Priscilla, Paul formed an intimate connection during his first visit at Corinth; from them he received information of the extraordinary progress of the faith in Rome. The Jews seem quietly to have crept back to their

old quarters when the rigor with which the imperial edict was at first executed had insensibly relaxed; and from these persons on their return to the capital, and most likely from other Roman Christians who may have taken refuge in Corinth, or in other cities where Paul had founded Christian communities, the more perfect knowledge of the higher Christianity, taught by the Apostle of the Gentiles, would be conveyed to Rome. So complete, indeed, does he appear to consider the first establishment of Christianity in Rome, that he merely proposes to take that city on his way to a more remote region, that of Spain. The manner in which he recounts in the last chapter the names of the more distinguished Roman converts implies both that the community was numerous and that the name of Paul was held in high estimation by its leading members. It is evident that Christianity had advanced already beyond the Jewish population, and the question of necessary conformity to the Mosaic law was strongly agitated. It is therefore the main scope of this celebrated Epistle to annul for ever this claim of the Mosaic law to a perpetual authority, to show Christianity as a part of the providential design in the moral history of man, while Judaism was but a temporary institution, unequal to, as it was unintended for, the great end of revealing the immortality of mankind, altogether repealed by this more wide and universal system, which comprehends in its beneficent purposes the whole human race. *Milman.*

It seems probable that the Church was composed of Jews and Gentiles in nearly equal proportions. This fact will account for the *general character* of this Epistle, so unlike that of the Epistles to the Corinthians and Galatians, though written at nearly the same time. The Gospel had to contend in Rome, not specially with Judaism, nor specially with heathenism, but with both together. The letter, evidently, was not written to answer any doubts, or to settle any existing controversies then rife at Rome. It has no special character or application, thus differing widely from the other Epistles just referred to. There is only one instance of special application to the Church of the metropolis. The injunction (13:1) of obedience to temporal rulers would most fitly be laid upon a Church brought face to face with the imperial government, and the more so as Rome had been the scene of frequent disturbances, on the part of either Jews or Christians, arising out of a feverish and restless anticipation of Messiah’s coming. In the Epistles to the Corinthians and to the Galatians, recently written, we see the attitude of the gospel toward the Gentile and the Jewish world respectively. They are direct and special, evoked by present emergencies, and are full of personal applications. The Epistle to the Romans is the summary of what he had written before, the result of his dealing with the two antagonistic forms of error, the gathering together of the fragmentary

teaching in the Corinthian and Galatian letters, in a general form. J. B. L.

Throughout the discussion, constant reference is made to law and justice; and this is characteristic of the Epistle. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he gave prominence to wisdom, for the Greeks sought after wisdom. But Rome was the city of imperial law, and the great seat of jurisprudence and government. It was therefore fitting that to Jews and Gentiles residing there, should be addressed this demonstration of the position of mankind, as transgressors condemned by divine law and justice, and unable by deeds to justify themselves. The world centered at ancient Rome; and in a letter sent to Rome was the whole world proved and pronounced to have "been guilty before God." D. F.

1-7. These words are the beginning and end of the long superscription which opens the series of Apostolic Epistles. That superscription forms a close and living union with the preceding book, in which we have known Paul the servant of Jesus Christ, his calling to be an apostle, his separation to the gospel of God, and have left him at its close testifying to that gospel in Rome itself. Here the apostle seems to stand before us as he did in the previous history, firmly holding his ground in the prophetic and historic line of the old covenant, and from that standing-point opening the dispensation of the Spirit, which has its source and its pledge in the resurrection, and claiming "all nations" for the "obedience of faith." T. D. B.—It would seem as if the apostle had before his mind the metropolitan majesty of the imperial city of Rome, and set against it the majesty of the great revelation of the Son of God, the fulfillment of the world-long promise, the temple of the indwelling Spirit poured out upon mankind, the first-born from the dead. He looked upon all the world obedient to the sway of Rome, and he thought upon that wider and grander obedience of faith which should bring under its sway all nations of the earth. There is not a grander thing in literature than this opening of the Epistle to the Romans. A.

2-4. The original and peculiar glory of the Bible is its revelation of the Messiah. Deity must be presented, and not merely in some of his attributes, nor yet as a shadowy form on the distant clouds of his own glory, but as a well-defined personality. God in man, thinking, feeling, speaking, acting in human relations, proposing the recovery of the lost to an immortality of holiness, solving the mighty problem of remitting Law's penalty while adding sanction to its claims, gathering from the apparent weakness of death the resurrection forces of eternal life, and out of the mists of the tomb clothing his redeemed ones with the garments of glory. The Bible utters thoughts that could originate only in Jehovah's breast, pencils the ideal of the man who is his fellow, and reveals the clear impressions of the mold into which was cast the

life of Jesus of Nazareth, who at its close was "declared to be the Son of God, with power according to the Spirit of Holiness by the resurrection from the dead." T. D. A.—Nothing speaks more decisively for the divinity of Christ than these juxtapositions of Christ with the eternal God, which run through the whole language of Scripture, and the derivation of purely divine influences from him also. Ols.

14. We might say, he is debtor to God, to Christ, to the Cross. But these are not now in his mind. It is to Greek and Jew, wise and unwise, men of all nations, the whole fallen world, that he feels himself a debtor. It was when Paul became possessed of the unsearchable riches of Christ that he felt himself a debtor to the world. To God himself he can not pay this debt *directly*, but he can *indirectly*, by pouring out the God-given treasure upon others. His debt *directly* is to God; but then, indirectly, it is to the world. Thus the Christian man feels his debt—his obligation to the world because of his obligation to God. Bonar.—When human knowledge and life are spreading out into ever wider circuits, the Christian ministry must seek to show itself a debtor to men of every class and character, and must endeavor to prove that there is no department of thought or action which can not be touched by that gospel which is the manifold wisdom of God. The more we study the way of God's commandments, the more shall we find it as broad as his other works, and increasingly rich to meet all the developments of human nature. Ker.

If Paul felt himself "a debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians," what has the Church now become to the whole unchristianized world? A debtor indeed, involved in a debt which she will never have done paying till the last of an unconverted race shall, under her leading, have come home to God. When we call on her members for their silver and their gold—ay, for their whole bodies and souls—we do not call on them for *charity*; we call on them to aid in the payment of a *simple debt*—a debt which we most righteously owe. The particular church which will not engage in sending the gospel to the heathen, which perseveringly holds back from this work of *debt-paying*, can not live. Its very spirit, and the measures which that spirit dictates, will, even at home, shut it out from quickening, life-sustaining influences. It will die. J. S. S.

PAUL'S DOCTRINAL POSITION.

PAUL'S doctrine, like his life, centers in the great antithesis of the *want of salvation before Christ* and the *supply of salvation in Christ*. Before Christ and out of Christ is, with him, the reign of sin and death; after Christ and in Christ, the reign of righteousness and life. There he sees the killing letter; here the life-giving Spirit. There, bondage and curse; here, freedom and blessed sonship. There, a powerless struggle between flesh and spirit and a cry for redemption; here, no condemnation, but

wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and the inseparable communion of the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus. Hence he opposes no error so decidedly and vehemently as the Judaizing, which would degrade Christianity to the former level of bondage and death.

Much as Paul insists, however, on the absolute newness of Christianity and its infinite elevation, not only above heathenism, but also above Judaism, he still forgets not its historical and religious connection with the Old Testament. He represents the way as positively prepared for the Christian religion by the Old Testament revelation. He calls the law a schoolmaster to lead to Christ, and describes the gospel as promised before by the prophets. There is, therefore, a connecting link between the Jew Saul and the Christian Paul, between the two stages of his religious experience and views. This link is the idea of *righteousness*, which forms the center and fundamental principle of his system of faith and morals. While a Pharisee, he had striven with all his might after righteousness in the way of obedience to the law of Moses. Even his persecution of Christ, whom he took for a revolutionary opponent of the Old Testament religion, proceeded from this honest effort. But in *faith* in the very One he persecuted he found righteousness, and with it peace and salvation. After his conversion he saw this to be absolutely impossible without faith in Christ and the renewal of the whole man. Now he learned that all men, Jews as well as Gentiles, are by nature without righteousness, and can be made righteous and be saved only through the merits of Jesus Christ. If he had previously laid the chief stress on the law and on works, he now laid it all on free grace, and on living faith, which appropriates Christ and his atoning death. Hence he may justly be called the apostle of faith, or of the righteousness of faith.

Paul accordingly distinguishes two kinds of righteousness: 1. Man's own righteousness, or the righteousness of the law, also called righteousness of works, which man strives after, but in reality can never attain, by his natural power, and which is therefore altogether imaginary. The ground of this impossibility of a self-righteousness, which would stand before God and establish a claim to salvation, is not in the law—for this is good, holy, spiritual—but in the corruption of man, in his carnal nature, which must be regenerated and renewed by the grace of God, before it can perform anything truly good. 2. The righteousness of God or from God, i. e., the righteousness which comes from God and is acceptable to him; or the righteousness of faith, i. e., the righteousness which springs from faith in Christ as the only and all-sufficient Saviour; is vitally apprehended by faith, and is imputed and given to the believer by God, without merit, without the deeds of the law, in free grace. The righteousness of faith also, being of this character, necessarily excludes all boasting, and yields the glory to God alone.

The divine act, by which man comes into possession of this righteousness, is denoted by the expressions: *justification, to justify, to count for righteousness*. This Pauline doctrine of justification is evidently founded on the notion of a judicial process. The holy and just God is the judge; the law of God, the accuser; the sinner or transgressor of the law, the accused; conscience, the witness; Christ the advocate and substitute for the accused; the atoning death and the merits of Christ, the price of re-

demption; faith, the instrument, the spiritual hand of the penitent sinner, by which these merits are appropriated. The justification itself is (1) negative, the judicial sentence of God, in which he pronounces the sinner, for the sake of Christ, free from the curse of the law, from the guilt and punishment of transgression—in other words, the forgiveness of sins, pardon; (2) positive, the imputation and actual communication of the righteousness of Christ to the penitent, believing sinner. The communication on the part of God and appropriation on the part of man take place by means of faith, which is wrought by the Holy Ghost in the Church through the word and the sacraments, and is not, indeed, the objective ground, the efficient cause, yet the indispensable subjective condition and instrumental cause, of justification; since, renouncing all merit of its own, it lays vital hold on the grace of God and the merits of Christ, and receives them into itself. By faith the man is raised out of his sinful state, united with Christ, and wrought more and more into His holy being, so that the old man no longer lives, but Christ lives and moves in him. Of course such a faith is absolutely inseparable from love and good works. An antinomian disjunction of faith from its fruits, as also of justification from sanctification, is a radical and most dangerous abuse of Paul's doctrine, which he himself repelled with horror.

In this comprehensive moral contrast between false self-righteousness, which works death, and the true righteousness of God, which is life and salvation, Paul's whole system centers. It may, therefore, be best presented in two sections. The first part treats of the want of righteousness, or the condition of man before and out of Christ. This is the reign of the first, natural, earthly Adam, or the reign of sin and death, appearing partly in unguided heathenism, partly in the disciplinary institution of legal Judaism; though in the latter case connected with divine promises and significant types and anticipations of the future. The larger, positive section has to do with the gospel, the absolute religion of liberty and divine sonship—setting forth the true righteousness as offered in Christ and appropriated by faith. This is the reign of the second, spiritual, heavenly Adam, or of grace and life.

This plan is not one arbitrarily forced upon the doctrinal system of the Gentile apostle, but lies clear enough on its surface in this, his most methodical and systematic epistle. Here, after the introduction, he first states the essence of Christianity by saying that "it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:16, 17). This is the theme, the leading thought of the Epistle. In unfolding this the apostle first proves that all men, not only the Gentiles (1:19, 32), but also the Jews (2:1-3, 20), are by nature destitute of righteousness, and therefore of salvation and life, and are sinners worthy of condemnation. Then from chapter 3:21 onward he shows that Christ has fulfilled righteousness and procured life and salvation; that these are imparted to us through firm, living faith; that this faith gives the most troubled conscience peace, and reveals itself in a holy life of love and gratitude. P. S.

Every proof that could be made to consist with the rules of evidence establishes the truth of the Christian religion. The *subject* of the Christian religion

is the controversy to which sin has given birth between God and man; the *matter* of the Revelation it contains is the announcement of absolute forgiveness through the mediation of Christ. And what is the complexion or character of this gospel remission? It is not the consequence of the abrogation of law; it is not a repeal of penalties; it is not a disparagement of supreme Wisdom; it is not a deduction from the supposed power of inflicting punishment; and especially, it is not such a *mere act of grace* as, in the nature of the case, must not stretch very far, lest the punishment of any should seem a captious severity, and pardon an unavoidable compromise. The pardon of the gospel is *pardon for a reason*: that is to say, it is pardon granted in compliance with a rule, higher, or more comprehensive, than the law which was broken. The pardon of the gospel, therefore, may be extended without reserve; because the reason whence it flows is greater than all other reasons. Even if it were to appear at the

last that the myriad has received pardon, and the thousand has been left to endure punishment, the principles of administration would not be sullied; because, while the demands of justice are definite, the provision of grace is unbounded. Grace encompasses justice. And yet, if in any manner we surrender the Divine dignity of the Mediator, the *reason of pardon* at once disappears, and the government of God is clouded; or the conscience of man receives no lasting peace. Conscience may indeed remain in its native slumber, or it may embrace flatteries; but when once it is quickened, when once the purity of law, and the impartiality and vigor of the divine government have been admitted, and the thought of standing at the tribunal of God has firmly lodged itself in the mind, the well-founded fear of condemnation is in no way to be allayed, until the *substitute* of the sinner is known to be the *very party* whom the sinner has insulted I. T.

Section 237.

ROMANS i. 16-32.

16 FOR I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to
17 every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the
righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by
18 faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unright-
19 eousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known
20 of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them. For the invisible things
of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that
21 are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because
that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but
22 became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing them-
23 selves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an
image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.
24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to
25 dishonor their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie,
and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever.
Amen.

26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change
27 the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the
natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working
that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which
28 was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them
29 over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with
all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness: full of envy,
30 murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud,
31 boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-
32 breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: who knowing the judgment
of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but
have pleasure in them that do them.

MAN had degraded God, says the apostle, and God degraded man. Man can only degrade God in his conceptions of Him. He may think meanly and poorly of God, instead of investing Him in his ideas with every perfection. And this is just what took place. Man might have learned from Nature (for Nature is a revelation of God to a rational creature) the lesson of God's eternal power and Godhead, had he been so minded; His magnificence, wisdom, benevolence, are written in no obscure characters on the whole

frame of the universe. But man could not, rather he would not, rise to those lofty conceptions of God's character which Nature, studied with a simple and docile heart, furnishes. Man *would* not think of God as a Being infinitely raised above even the noblest works of His hands; he confounded Him with the creatures that were derived from him, and allowed the religious instinct—the instinct of worship—to fasten upon them instead of the Creator. In a word, idolatry (or the surrounding the creature with the attributes of the Creator) is the original, fundamental sin of man—the point of departure from which man started on his downward course until he reached the lowest depths of wickedness. Man debased God in his conceptions of Him. And God, as the meet recompense of such dishonor done Him, really and actually debased man by abandoning him to the dominion of vices, the very mention of which freezes the blood of an upright man. E. M. G.

17. The words "the just," or "the righteous shall live by faith," might also be understood, "the righteous by faith," "those that are righteous by faith," "shall live." A.—I noticed how the words are connected together, "the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel, as it is written, The just shall live by faith." I saw the apostle's meaning, that by the gospel is made known that righteousness which avails with God, in which God, out of mere mercy, makes us righteous through faith. On this I felt as if I was wholly born anew. The precious Scripture now appeared quite another thing to me. I ran quickly through the whole Bible, and collected all that it says on the subject. And thus, as I had hated the expression, "God's righteousness," I began dearly to love it as the gladdest word in Scripture; and that passage became to me the very gate of heaven. *Luther*.—Like a nail in a sure place this saying sticks in Luther's memory. He wanders through the convent, he trudges it to Rome, he crawls up Pilate's staircase, but still the sentence is sounding in his ear. Through seas of anguish and dismay he buffets his laboring path, no ray to guide him but this tiny spark, till all at once at that little spark Luther's soul is kindled, and the Reformation-beacon flames. *Hamilton*.

18. The origin of the atonement is to be sought in the righteous wrath of God against sin. Paul recognizes the wrath of God as the fundamental fact in which we are to seek for an explanation of that scheme. "Herein," says he (that is, in the gospel), "is the righteousness of God revealed." And then, commencing the explanation necessary to elucidate these words, he adds: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness" (sin against the first table) "and unrighteousness" (sin against the second table) "of men." The idea is perfectly simple. God has given us a law, involving duty to himself and duty to our fellow-men—a law promulgated explicitly to the Jew, and graver in characters, not obliterated, yet dim and confused through the fall, on the hearts of all mankind. God is a Spirit, a searcher of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and, therefore, a mere outward observance of this law, in the letter of it, can never meet his requirements. All mankind

have broken the law either literally or spiritually, or both; and, by the violation, God's displeasure is incurred. E. M. G.

"The wrath of God is revealed from heaven." This saying contains a deep and awful truth. God's punishment is God's wrath against sin; and is not merely the consequence of lifeless laws, but the expression of the feeling of a living spirit. It would be most perilous to do away with these words; for if the wrath of God be only a figure, his love must be but a figure too. F. W. R.—The *revelation* is given on purpose that we may *avoid* that wrath; for the wrath is future, and we are commanded to flee from it; and faith in it is requisite, *before* the experience of it, that we *may* flee from it. The most vivid images of Scripture are but faint and inadequate shadowings forth of the reality; they demonstrate and unveil it as far as possible, but they require belief. Our blessed Lord makes his appeal to our very senses, as far as it can be made. He takes the torture which is most terrible to us, that from which our sensitive nature shrinks back with the greatest horror and repugnance, and constructs a world out of it, and carries us into the midst of that world, as in the tremendous colloquy between Lazarus in heaven and the lost man in hell; so that we see the flames, we hear the wail of souls tormented, we observe the anguish of despair. G. B. C.

20. The apostle says that the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and Godhead, "are clearly seen from the creation of the world" (i. e., God's creation of the world is the source from which true information respecting his lofty attributes may be gained), "so that they" (the Gentiles) "are without excuse," because the lessons which they might have learned of God from Nature are quite sufficient to have condemned their idolatries. E. M. G.—Various as have been God's dealings with the world, there is, after all, a terrible impartiality in his dispensations to his rational creatures. Wherever men possess reason and conscience, they possess in some measure the means of pleasing or displeasing him; whenever they can, in the lowest degree, conceive his law, they are bound to obey it. He can estimate every district and age of the world

by the standards appropriate to each. And as He contemplates the vast prospect, Christian and heathen—as he beholds in the one division those to whom Christ was hidden, but who would perhaps have “received him gladly”; in the other those to whom Christ was revealed, but who despised and neglected the revelation—he doubtless can bring men to a level, balancing their opportunities against their actions to a degree wholly unattainable by our weak and perplexed vision. W. A. B.

21. A man may lose the good things of this life against his will; but, if he loses eternal blessings, he does so with his own consent. Aug.—The more carefully we observe the workings of our own wills, the surer will be our conviction that they can ruin themselves. We shall indeed find that they can not be forced or ruined from the outside. But if we watch the influence upon the *will itself*, of its own wrong decisions and its own yielding to temptations, we shall discover that the voluntary faculty may be ruined from within; may be made impotent to holiness by its own action; may surrender itself to appetite and selfishness with such an intensity and entireness that it becomes unable to convert itself and overcome its own wrong inclination. And yet there is no extraneous compulsion, from first to last, in the process. The man follows himself. He pursues his own inclinations. He has his own way, and does as he pleases. He loves what he inclines to love, and hates what he inclines to hate. Neither God, nor the world, nor Satan himself, forces him to do wrong. It is the most spontaneous of self-motion. But self-motion has *consequences* as much as any other motion. Because sin is a free act, it does not follow that it has no results, and leaves the will precisely as it found it. It is strictly true that man was not compelled to apostatize; but it is equally true that, if of his own will he did apostatize, he could not then and afterward be as he was before. He would lose knowledge; his understanding would become darkened. And he would lose spiritual power; his will would become impotent to holiness. Shedd.

22. The term spiritual folly includes not only those who are in the common sense of the term foolish, but a great many who are in the common sense of the terms prudent, sensible, thoughtful, and wise. It is but too evident that some of the ablest men who have ever lived upon earth have been in no less a degree spiritually fools. And thus it is not without much truth that Christian writers have dwelt upon the insufficiency of worldly wisdom, and have warned their readers to beware lest, while professing themselves to be wise, they should be accounted as fools in the sight of God. T. A.

23-32. Roman society was a living commentary upon the words of John, “All that is in the

world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father.” The principle known to formal theology as “concupiscence,” and to popular language as active selfishness, was everywhere dominant. It was embodied in the whole social and political fabric of the empire. It was displayed in its triple form of unrestricted sensuality, unchecked covetousness, and unbounded self-assertion. As sensuality, it was preying upon the strength and manhood of the people. As covetousness, it was drying up the wealth of provinces and the sources of enterprise. As pride, it was everywhere in active conflict with personal and social liberty. But these effects, outward and political, were harmless compared with the degradation inflicted by unchecked self-worship upon the human soul within. When man is his own center, his own ideal, his own end, his own God; when the indulgence of passion, and the acquisition of income, and general self-assertion are leading and uncontrolled principles of action, the human character sinks to a point of degradation which language can shadow out, but which it can not describe. The Roman Christians must have recognized the society around them, the men and women with whom they had daily dealings as fellow citizens, in the dark and terrible touches of this first chapter. H. P. L.

This picture of the moral state of heathendom is not a whit overwrought. Its truth is confirmed by the astounding representations of the corruption of those times of the empire, which we find in the most celebrated and earnest-minded heathen writers. Wherever Tacitus, the greatest of Roman historians, looks, whether to heaven or upon earth, he sees nothing but black night and deeds of cruelty. He feels that the destruction of the world is near, when she must drink the cup of divine wrath to the dregs. The elder Pliny, too, lost in wonder at the works of nature, could enjoy no rest in contemplating them. He could find nothing certain, but that there was no certainty; and nothing more miserable than man. He could wish for no greater blessing than a speedy death; and this he found in the flames of Vesuvius (A. D. 79). P. S.—Paul’s terrible indictment is not more severe than the indignant assertions of Seneca. He compares society, where every one makes his profit by injuring somebody else, to the life of gladiators, who live together to fight each other. “All things,” he says, “are full of crimes and vices. More is perpetrated than can be removed by force. There is a struggle to see which will excel in iniquity. Daily the appetite for sin increases, the sense of shame diminishes. Casting away all respect for right and justice, lust hurries whithersoever it will. Crimes are no longer secret; they stalk before the eyes of men. Iniquity has so free a

course in public, it so dominates in all hearts, that innocence is not only rare—it does not exist at all. It is not a case of violations of law in individual cases, few in number. From all sides, as at a given signal, men rush together, confounding good and evil." He then proceeds to specify, in a long catalogue, the forms of iniquity, some of them revolting and unnatural crimes, which exhibited themselves on every hand. G. P. F.—Such was the state of things in the days in which Christianity appeared. Pleasure mounted the throne, shame departed from the heart. Religion, long the fruitful source of unbelief, superstition, and immorality, could not offer a remedy. Even philosophy sat down perplexed. The human understanding had run through the circle in which, left to itself, it could move. A Cato and Cesar dared publicly confess that the belief in an eternal existence was fabulous, and that on yonder side of the grave neither sorrow nor joy was to be expected. The elder Pliny makes the undisguised declaration "that all inquiry after a higher truth may be denominated ridiculous, and that it is to be doubted which is more advantageous to mankind, the skepticism of some or the disgraceful religion of others, yea, that this alone is certain, that absolutely nothing certain exists, and that a more wretched as well as prouder creature than man does not exist." *Van O.*

28, 29. If you take away a man's knowledge, you do not bring him to the state of an infant, but

to that of a brute; and of one of the most mischievous and malignant of the brute creation. For you do not lessen or weaken the man's body by lowering his mind; he still retains his strength and his passions, the passions leading to self-indulgence, the strength which enables him to feed them by continued gratification. T. A.—The result of that old idolatry was the indulgence of fleshly lust. And the language of the apostle precisely describes the connection between the cause and the effect. They did not like to retain God in their knowledge. They had supplied to them ever by their conscience a higher ideal; not perhaps the highest, nor even in itself very high, but still higher than could be represented by their gross worship. They felt higher instincts, higher impulses. But they put the lower above the higher, and the end was the downright dominion of the lower nature. F. T.—The teaching here is plain and indisputable. God gave men the means of knowing his perfections and his will. From these they turned away, because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, and chose and worshiped the meanest reptiles, nay, even the images of beasts instead of the Creator. Against such awful impiety he displayed his displeasure, or made known his wrath, by allowing them without restraint to pursue their own course. He gave them over. The consequence was, a condition of the most degraded iniquity and more than brutish sensuality and lust. F. W.

Section 238.

ROMANS ii. 1-29.

- 1 THEREFORE thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.
- 2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit
- 3 such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and
- 4 doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches
- 5 of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God
- 6 leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up
- 7 unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of
- 8 God; who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient con-
- 9 tinuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto
- 10 them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation
- 11 and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew
- 12 first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh
- 13 good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God.
- 14 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have
- 15 sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (for not the hearers of the law *are* just before
- 16 God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not
- the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law
- unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience

also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest *his* will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written. For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he *is a* Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God.

BEHOLD the goodness of God in the same view with the manifestation of his mind against sin—the expressions of denunciation accompanying his holy law, and mingled with all his communications to man—how many they are, how decisive, how solemn, and at the same time just! And yet, notwithstanding, the world around us is not made an unmingled scene of vindictive execution; sinful men are not, in every path and dwelling, crushed under the falling judgments of heaven. There is an immense dispensation of benefits. The series of the divine goodness, too, may be counted by the succession of a man's sins. Not one sin, small or great, but close by it were acts and proofs of this goodness. If this had been realized to thought, what a striking and awful admonition! Each and every sin a testimony, a representative of goodness; and what a wonder that the train of goodness should still persist to go on! So, "*the goodness of God*" is to be viewed in its character of patience and long-suffering. All his lengthened indulgence, his train of favors—what should we in conscience deem it to have been for? What, but that there might be increasing gratitude, devotedness, wisdom, and service?

Conceive the state of a soul hardened under "*the goodness of God!*" No longer even a perception of his mercies as such—a fixed, impenetrable ingratitude; an established, habitual repellency to all his attractions; a cessation, nearly, of regret for not being at peace with him; the man's mind made up, as it were, just to seize and enjoy as much temporal good as God will *permit* him (not *give* him) during the remainder of the brief space of life, and leave all that is to follow to be as it may. Consider, on the other hand, how happily the sentiment of "*repentance*" from a sense of "*the goodness of God*" mingles and harmonizes with all the noblest and most delightful sentiments of religion—with gratitude, humility, holy reverence, and zeal—and with the aspiration to a better life, where there shall be no more sin. J. F.

Chapters 2, 3, and 4.—The apostle goes on to show that, in this matter of sinfulness before God, all are alike; that none has a right to set himself up above and judge another; for that man's unworthiness and God's long-suffering are universal. And so he passes gradually to the case of the Jews, whom by and by he directly addresses, especially with reference to their supposed and real advantages over others in the knowledge of God; contrasting the pride of the Jews in their law and their God with their actual disobedience to both; showing that by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified; and that Abraham's real advantage was his faith, by which he was justified before God without the works of the law. And this justification by faith was not

his alone, but shall be ours also, if we believe the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. This is the state of the main line of argument as far as the end of chapter 4. A.

2, 3. To what in yourself will you ascribe that which in others you ascribe to criminality? Compare yourself with others upon whom you have been sitting in judgment, and wherein are you dissimilar? Be not deceived, God is not mocked. What are you doing, as estranged from him who came to save you, but fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind, and walking in your own chosen way? E. M.

4. Where, if not in Christ, is the power that can persuade a sinner to return, that can *bring home a heart to God*? Common mercies of God, though

they have a leading faculty to repentance, yet the rebellious heart will not be led by them. The judgments of God, public or personal, though they ought to drive us to God, yet the heart, unchanged, runs the further from God. Do we not see it by ourselves and other sinners about us? They look not at all toward Him who smites, much less do they return; or, if any more serious thoughts of returning arise upon the surprise of an affliction, how soon vanish they, either the stroke abating, or the heart, by time, growing hard and senseless under it! Leave Christ out, and all other means work not this way; neither the works nor the word of God sounding daily in his ear, *Return, return*. Let the noise of the rod speak it too, and both join together to make the cry the louder, *yet the wicked will do wickedly*. L.—Sin hath by so much the greater evil in it by how much it is committed against the greater goodness. As good things received bind us stronger unto duty, so good things abused bind us stronger under guilt. Caryl.—God gives us all the mercies of this life as *helps* to an immortal state of glory, and as *earnests* of it. Sensualists know not what a soul is, nor what soul mercies are, and therefore know not the just value of all bodily mercies; but take up only with the *carcase, shell, or shadow*, instead of the *life* of their mercies. No wonder they are so unthankful for God's mercies, when they know not the real excellency of them. Baz.

7. Patient continuance. If duty be not so holy a power as love, yet, as long as we remain here, we need the strength of duty as much as we do the fire of love. The steady discharge of the duties of the day saves our religious life from being a mere weak alternation of fits of joy and fits of depression. The resolute will that allows no mere mood ever to interfere with the appointed work of the present moment is the backbone of the truly religious character. The instinct of love, glorious as it is, yet may degenerate into mere dreamy feeling, into sentimental sorrow for sin, and sentimental longing for a holier life. That which saves it from this degenerate end is the strong, steady sense of duty. And there is no one quality which it is better for us, in every sense, to form, to retain, to cherish in our souls than this. F. T.

Glory and honour. Nothing in all the success of Satan in his management of the world's affairs is so saddening to contemplate as the false direction he has been enabled to give to the enthusiasm of men. Enthusiasm is a beautiful and sacred thing, implanted in us that we might launch forth on sublime enterprises of mercy to man and of glory to God. Enthusiasm would make of a holy man a seraph. Men hardly know what to do with this divine faculty. They thirst for glory, honor, immortality, but limit their conceptions of these things to

what the world, the fallen, doomed world, can give. G. B.

Eternal life. Christ and his apostles seem to have given less space than we might have expected to the particulars of the soul's condition after death. A few great, simple, commanding, comprehensive assurances are made to stand out before us, with outlines that are very sharp and foundations that are very broad and firm. The fact of the Christian's immortality, the fact of the judgment at the entrance, the fact of the separation of the righteous from the wicked, the fact that this judgment proceeds on one principle, and that this separation is determined by one affection or the absence of it, the fact that afterward there are two parted families, each of them a social state, the perfect blessedness of the one consisting supremely in the fully recognized presence and love of the Lord, and the complete wretchedness of the other in absence from Him—these are all. On these the Scriptures lay all the stress. Around and under them they spread out all that immortal land. To the faithful who seek by patient well-doing there shall be glory, honor, and immortality, but tribulation and anguish to every soul that loveth and doeth evil. F. D. H.—When it is told us that the consciousness we inherit is strictly indestructible—that no mutations in the mode of existence, no accidents, no alterations in the laws of nature, not even the upturning of the material universe, not the extinction of all things visible, can bring about the annihilation of man—then, indeed, it becomes a question of unutterable consequence, "What is God?" for we, even we, are to be the companions of his eternal duration! The creatures of a day, of a summer, of a century, might be imagined, when they stand upon the threshold of their term of existence, to make inquiry concerning the attributes and dispositions of the Creator and the rules of his government: for these are to give law to their season of life, and to be the measure of their enjoyments. But with what intenseness of anxiety might the *Sons of Immortality* put such questions, as they come severally to set foot upon a course that shall have no end, and that must always be gathering to itself importance! Apart from the doctrine of immortality, the doctrine of the divine attributes might be tranquilly dealt with, as we deal with any abstruse matters, or with mathematical principles. They are of some moment; but it is bounded by the brief period of our own connection with the material world. How much otherwise is it when every attribute, natural and moral, of the Infinite Being shall for ever concentrate its rays, as in a focus, upon the immortal created spirit; so that this spirit shall draw to itself, in some manner, and without end, a *special consequence* from the omnipo-

tence and the omniscience, from the rectitude and the benignity of God! When once the soul awakes, as from a dream, to the rational consciousness of either truth, with what force and majesty does the other present itself to the mind! The belief of immortality brings God before the soul, as if visibly manifested; the knowledge of God kindles the conception of endless life. I. T.

Faith acts its noble energy forth into righteousness, works by love, bears the fruit of philanthropy, integrity, patience, temperance, emancipation, brotherly kindness, charity. Everlasting life is the result. The soul has reached its period of victory. From the far country it has traveled back till it has come home—home—O word of unspeakable and unexhausted meaning! The door of the Father's house was open, and it has entered in. This is life eternal. Henceforth there shall be labor, indeed, because labor is the best satisfaction of a spiritual being. But it shall be labor in the Master's society—labor under the encouragements of his friendship—labor with the crown on the head, and the seal in the forehead, and the reconciliation in the heart. Faithful continuance in well-doing has brought the disciple to his Lord; and when he looks up, behold! glory and honor and immortality are the spiritual trophies that adorn his dwelling. F. D. H.

8. In the end of this verse "*damnation*" does not mean what we now commonly understand by it, and would be better, therefore, expressed by "*condemnation*." A.

11. *God has no respect to the outward appearance or circumstances of a man in dealing with him.* God takes him for what he is, not for what he seems. The word translated "*person*" means mask or face-covering; that which disguises a man, and makes him look different from what he is. God regardeth not the *person* or *appearance* of a man. To God the man is *just what he is*, exactly, and neither more nor less. An.

12-16. The whole world is under a solemn economy of government and judgment. A mighty spirit of judgment is in sovereign exercise over all, discerning, estimating, approving, or condemning. Now, it was requisite there should be something in the soul to recognize this; that it should not be as some vague, unperceived element around us; and something more and deeper than the mere simple understanding that such is the fact; a faculty to be impressed, to feel obligation and awe and solemn apprehension; something by which the mind shall be compelled to admit the indwelling of what represents a greater power. Conscience is to communicate with something mysteriously great, which is without the soul, and above it, and everywhere. It is the sense, more explicit or obscure, of standing in judgment before the Almighty. And that which

makes a man feel so is a part of himself; so that the struggle against God becomes a struggle with man's own soul. Therefore conscience has been often denominated "*the God in man*." J. F.—Conscience is a very busy faculty of the soul, and it hath many offices. It is a register, to take notice of and record what we do. It is a witness against us when we do amiss. It is a judge, and gives sentence; it sits upon a throne as God's deputy to award life or death. It has the office of a tormenter; it is that worm which dieth not and a fire that never goeth out. The lost shall feel the sting of conscience for ever, though here they have bribed it and blinded it that it might not trouble them. Caryl.

Men who have not the revealed law of God do have in their consciences the sense of obligation to the self-same duties which that law commands; and even when they disregard truth, justice, honor, purity, fidelity, in their own actions, they exact these virtues from others toward themselves. But he who condemns another for theft, fraud, lying, murder, shows that he has in his own heart a law, a standard of right and wrong; and by that law he himself shall be judged. God deals with men according to their light; but all men have light enough to know the difference between right and wrong. God is patient toward sinners and seeks to win them by his love; but, if they will not repent, the warnings of conscience shall be followed by the judgment of the last day. J. P. T.—These acts of conscience, in the present life, have a final respect to God's tribunal; and, though the accounts are so vast, there shall be an exact agreement between the books of God's omniscience and of conscience in the day of judgment. It will be one of the miracles of that day, to enlarge the view of conscience to all sins. Now the records of conscience are often obliterated, and the sins written therein are forgotten; but then they shall appear in so clear an impression, that the wicked shall be inexcusable to themselves, and conscience subscribes their condemnation. And oh the formidable spectacle, when conscience shall present to a sinner in one view the sins of his whole life! Bates.—Conscience! it will cry amen to every word that the great God doth speak against thee. It will hold pace with the witness of God, as to the truth of evidence, to a hair's breadth. The witness of conscience is of great authority; it commands guilt and fastens it on every soul which it accuses. Bun.

16. The thought of the coming of Christ to judgment almost inevitably leads the mind to the two great revelations which will then be made: the revelation of the secrets of the hearts of men and the revelation of the true substance and nature of things. At present there is a perpetual contradiction between faith and experience; justice does not rule the world,

and obedience to the Law of God, which ought to be the one supreme force in the world, is thrust aside by what is plausible, by what is resolute, by mere accident even and blind chance. But on that day the higher harmony which rules all these discords shall be revealed; the wrong shall either be set right before our eyes, or shall be shown never to have been wrong, but only to have been misunderstood. So, again, at present we live with good and with evil, which none knows except the man himself, and even he but imperfectly and fitfully. But then we shall be seen and known of all men; for

the judgment will be a public judgment, and all will acknowledge its justice. F. T.—All sins, whether secret or open and visible, shall be accounted for. Those sins that have been acted in the most secret retirement, so that no eye of man could take cognizance of them, shall then be made manifest. Nay, the sins of the thoughts and affections, of which Satan could not accuse men, when the inward fire of lust or malice is not discovered by the least smoke or sparkles, by no expressions—all those shall be brought to judgment. God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. *Bates.*

Section 239.

ROMANS iii. 1-31.

1 WHAT advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit *is there* of circumcision? Much
2 every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. For
3 what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?
4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest
5 be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. But if our un-
6 righteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? *Is* God unrighteous
7 who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man.) God forbid: for then how shall God judge
8 the world? For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory;
9 why yet am I also judged as a sinner? And not *rather*, (as we be slanderously reported,
10 and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is
11 just. What then? are we better *than they*? No, in no wise: for we have before proved
12 both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous,
13 no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They
14 are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth
15 good, no, not one. Their throat *is* an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used
16 deceit; the poison of asps *is* under their lips: whose mouth *is* full of cursing and bitter-
17 ness: their feet *are* swift to shed blood: destruction and misery *are* in their ways: and the
18 way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes.
19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the
20 law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.
21 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the
22 law *is* the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is mani-
23 fested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God *which is*
24 by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:
25 for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace
26 through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitia-
27 tion through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that
28 are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness:
29 that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where *is* boasting
30 then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. There-
31 fore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. *Is he* the
32 God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yea, of the Gentiles also: seeing *it*
33 *is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.
34 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

If God is to be honored and loved by human beings, he must present himself in the light of those qualities which we may call by the name of justice, and of those to which we give the names of goodness, kindness, tenderness; or mercy. Christ united these two sides of character in their due mixture in his one person. This is remarkable in regard to our Lord, that one who should have become acquainted only

with his traits of love, as forbearance, patience, mildness, pity, and forgiveness, would be apt to suppose that he had seen the whole framework of his character; while another person who heard his awful rebukes of the Pharisees, and saw with what zeal he defended the rights of God, and observed what he thought of sin and what were his threatenings against it, would take him for a man made out of iron justice alone. But he united in unrivaled harmony both these aspects of character. The strength of his holiness and justice proves the depth of his love, and his love was the stronger, because it rested on the fixed rock of justice and holiness. Christ then, with such a nature, would be *the loving Saviour, the friend of sinners*, but he would be also *the wise law-giver and the just judge*. He is thus *like God* and fitted to represent God; *he embodies that idea of God, which, with the help of the noblest passages of the Old Testament, our minds, in their best frames of thought and feeling, are able to form*. And if, in a larger sphere, the Son of man shall judge the world he came to save, it will not be in a new character, but only in a new office. T. D. W.

2. Oracles of God. Good men have ever felt that the words must be living oracles, ever flowing forth freshly from the seat of God's majesty, yesterday, to-day, and for ever the same; addressed to them as to their fathers, to their children as to them. T. A.

3. The faith of God without effect. By *faith* of God is meant *faithfulness* of God. The word has not only the objective sense of *faith, belief, confidence* in another, but also the subjective sense of *faithfulness* to an agreement, promise, or pledge. We may read, "Because that unto them were *intrusted* the oracles of God. For what if some were unfaithful? Shall their unfaithfulness make the faithfulness of God without effect?" *Crosby*.

5. Is God unrighteous? This objection was leveled against that grand pillar of a sinner's hope, justification by faith only; as if it were a doctrine tending to licentiousness, and to the overthrow of morality and good works. This, the apostle says, some did not scruple to affirm; but he adds that the report was slanderous. *Hill*.

9. The Greek word, which we here translate sin, signifies *to fail of an end; to lose one's way*. The sinner is a being lost; he is a traveler, with a destination before him, but misled to a route which does not lead to it. Or, putting in place of the figure what it signifies: the sinner is one who ought to follow a certain moral direction, and who takes the opposite. *Monod*.

10-18. The world over, in its serious hours the heart longs, sighs, groans, and travails with sorrows that can not be uttered, to be delivered from the bondage of sin and death. The Scripture has no other doctrine of the matter on any of its pages; and scarcely one page where this is not. Read the burning confessions of the fifty-first Psalm, and of many another before and after it, where the fire of remorse, which is only the lurid reflection of sin, almost visibly scorches the Psalmist's heart; read the terrible descriptions of that state of man with out his Redeemer written by Paul to the Romans; or the tragic picture of Paul's own fearful struggles

with the law of his members; or the awful prophecies of a society forgetting its Lord, given in Jude. Recall the narratives of depravity in Scripture history, and the denunciations upon it by prophets, and the thrilling exhortations against it by apostles. Remember that the Bible begins with the first inroad of sin, and finishes with warnings of its punishments. Above all, remember that the first word of the new dispensation was "Repent," and its consummation was the Cross built on Calvary to assure forgiveness to "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ"; and you will hardly need to multiply these convincing tokens that all the ministrations of our religion to the human soul presuppose that we all have sinned, are sinners still. F. D. H.

There is a vast, immortal want stirring on the world and forbidding it to rest. In the cursing and bitterness, in the deceit of tongues, in the poison of asps, in the swiftness to blood, in all the destruction and misery of the world's ruin, there is yet a vast insatiate hunger for the good, the true, the holy, the divine, and a great part of the misery of the ruin is that it is so great a ruin; a desolation of that which can not utterly perish, and still lives, asserting its defrauded rights and reclaiming its lost glories. And therefore it is that life becomes an experience to the race so tragic in its character, so dark and wild, so bitter, so incapable of peace. The way of peace we can not know, till we find our peace, where our immortal aspirations place it, in the fullness and the friendly eternity of God.

18. If sin is weak, if it is mean, little, selfish, and deformed, and we are ready to set humanity down as a low and paltry thing of nothing worth, how terrible and tragic in its evil grandeur does it appear, when we turn to look upon its defiance of God, and the desperate obstinacy of its warfare! There is no fear of God before their eyes. In one view there is fear enough, the soul is all its life long haunted by this fear, but there is a desperation of will that tramples fear and makes it as though it were not. H. B.

19. This is the genuine voice of the law, "Do

and live"; "but the soul that sinneth shall surely die." It knoweth no middle sentence between these two; it doth not whisper one word of mercy; but the smallest deviation subjects the transgressor to the justice of God, and to all the fatal effects of his indignation. This being the case, it is easy to discern the use of the law to lead men to the Saviour. The law discovers sin, and at the same time demands an unsinning obedience. None of us can plead innocence, and the law admits of no excuse for guilt. Nay, it is not only silent as to the doctrine of forgiveness, but in plain and awful words pronounces the sentence of death. Thus the sinner's *mouth is stopped*, and nothing remains for him but to continue in misery, and bear the curse of God, or else to appeal from the law to the gospel, and to claim the benefit of that indemnity which Christ hath purchased with his blood. R. W.—Alas! he who boasteth himself in the works of the law, he doth not hear the law. When that speaks, it shakes Mount Sinai, and writeth death upon all faces, and makes the Church itself cry out, A Mediator! else we die. The law out of Christ is terrible as a lion; the law in him is meek as a lamb. *Bun.*

20. Justified. We seem by the Scriptural language to be introduced to a court: there are a law, a sanction, a tribunal, a judge, an accusation, a condemnation, an advocate, a surety, an acquittal. But there is not a syllable about changing the character; it is only a *change of standing*, or relation to law. To justify is not to make just, in the sense of making holy, but to *declare* just. When the judge justifies a man, he does not by that act render him any better than he was before: he simply adjudges him to be innocent. Justification, therefore, is an act of God, whereby he remits our sins, and accepts us as righteous. J. W. A.

21-24. All that *merits* salvation for sinners is in *Christ*; and faith *accepts* Christ as God offers him, and so makes his merit the believer's own. If there be any worthiness, then, in Christ, any sufficiency in his precious blood-shedding for the removal of sins, any glory in his righteousness and obedience to the law, for man—faith, giving the sinner a *personal interest* in all these, brings *at once* a full and finished salvation into his soul. This blessing belongs not, indeed, to the thousands who *say* they believe, while their whole walk gives the lie to their assertion; but to all who *do* believe, and that simply *because* they do. The chief of sinners is a justified person, "justified" eternally "from all things," that instant that he brings his sins, in humble confession of them, to God, and *believes* God's testimony of his Son, that *he* is indeed the Lamb, the sacrifice provided of God, which "*taketh away* the sins of the world." In this way, the *vilest* may be saved—freely pardoned, through the tender

mercy of our God, who has laid our trespasses upon Jesus. "Being justified *freely*, by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." And as this is the *first* hope of a sinner, so it is the *only* hope *to the last*, by which any man, though holy as Paul himself, can draw nigh unto God. In the pilgrimage of life, in the hour of death, in the day of judgment, his only acceptable plea is summed up in this: Christ my atonement, Christ my righteousness. *Goodie.*

25. God hath set forth. If there is a necessity of justification for God's pardoning the guilty, there is also a necessity of justification for God's offering up his own Son. How could he do it without an infinite and eternal reason? How could he do it for any expediency or necessity short of infinitude? How could he do it, but under the sanction, which indeed he has revealed to us, of the power of an endless life for guilty creatures on the one hand if redeemed, and the power of an endless death inevitable on the other hand if *not* redeemed? G. B. C.—**To be a propitiation through faith in his blood.** Here behold the significance and the life of those bloody sacrifices instituted when man fell and flaming up to heaven for four thousand years! Here see the grand fulfillment of the law and the prophets, as all down the ages they point with unerring finger to this divine man who is to bear sin by the shedding of his blood for the world! Where now are the bloody altars? the priestly sacrifices? the hierarchy of Aaron? the temple service? They heard the cry from the Cross, "It is finished!" The real sacrifice for sin is offered and bled for ever. Altar, priest, temple, all crumbled to dust, while the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world, proclaims to all men free forgiveness and eternal life for every one who in humble faith will receive and obey him as the Redeemer. Now a spiritual, universal kingdom is possible; for humanity is redeemed, and faith, repenting, receiving, loving him, is the sole condition of citizenship. S. W. F.

If the apostolic doctrine of justification through faith be clearly held and cordially admitted, it will occupy the foremost place in our regards; for it is the ground of all our hopes, and the relief of every fear: it is the luminous center of all religious truth. It is the sun in our heavens; it is the source of light and the source of vital warmth. We do not, therefore, hesitate to affirm that it is scripturally held only by those who do assign to it this prominent position; who recur to it ever and again with delight; who never feel it to be an exhausted theme; who build their own hopes upon it firmly; who invite others to do the same with confidence; who neither distrust it in theory nor dishonor it in practice; who enounce it freely and boldly;

and of whose piety it is the spring and reason. I. T.

27. It was "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" which separated you from an ungodly world and made you laborers for heaven. It is the same grace that keeps you from forsaking the work which you have begun. You are working out your salvation, solely because God in his mercy continues to "work in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." "Where is boasting then? It is excluded." The pride of your hearts can find nothing to rest in. The simple question, "Who made thee to differ?" lays it low. And what a crowd of feelings rise up one after another in its place! Wonder, joy, love, praise, and perhaps, stronger than all, self-abasement and shame! C. B.

29. The truth that God is not a national God, not the God of any one tribe or people, but the God and Father of all men, and that the gospel is designed and adapted to all mankind, however little it may affect us, filled the apostles with astonishment and delight. They were slow in arriving at the knowledge of this truth; they had no clear perception of it until after the day of Pentecost. Before that event, they were Jews; afterward, they were Christians; before, they applied all the promises to their own nation; the only Jerusalem of which they had any idea was the city where David dwelt; the only temple of which they could form a conception was that in which they were accustomed to worship. But when they received the anointing of the Holy Ghost the scales fell from their eyes; their nation sank and the Church rose on their renovated sight; the Jerusalem that now is disappeared when they beheld the New Jerusalem descending out of heaven; the temple on Mount Zion was no longer glorious, by reason of the excelling glory of that temple which is the habitation of God by his Spirit. C. H.

31. We establish law. Grace, in its turn, leads back to the law. Grace, as it is manifested in the gospel, is the most splendid homage, the most solemn consecration, which the law can receive. This grace is of a peculiar character. It is not the soft indulgence and the easy indifference of a feeble father, who, tired of his own severity, shuts his eyes to the faults of a guilty child. It is not the weakness of a timid government, which, unable to repress disorder, lets the laws sleep, and goes to sleep along with them. It is a holy goodness; it is a love without feebleness, which pardons guilt, and executes justice at the same time. It is not possible that God, who is the supreme sanction of order, should tolerate the shadow of disorder, and leave unpunished the least infraction of the holy laws he has given. Thus, in the work of which we speak, condemnation appears in the pardon, and pardon in the condemnation. The same act proclaims the compas-

sion of God, and the inflexibility of his justice. God could not save us without assuming our nature, nor assume our nature without sharing our misery. The Cross, the triumph of grace, is the triumph of law. A. V.

Man must "die, or justice must." Divine Justice becomes man, and dies to meet the obligation. In the stains of holy blood upon the ignominious tree, upon the accursed earth, and upon the fair, cold body of the lovely Redeemer, the believing sinner reads, as in letters of crimson, Obligation, Obligation. This is a matter of experience. All true penitents find it so. Who shall affront my deepest sensibilities and holiest apprehensions of generous love, by charging that this my view of gratuitous redemption by the blood of the Cross tends to diminish my conscientious sense of duty to him who died! What spectacle in heaven, earth, or hell, so magnifies the law as the spectacle of Christ expiring in the tortures of law, and of vicarious suffering? J. W. A.

The gospel is called the *law of faith* and the *law of the spiritual life*. This law of grace is very different from the law of nature that required entire innocence, and for the least omission or accusing act passed an irrevocable doom upon the offenders; for that strictness and severity is mollified by the gospel, which accepts of sincere persevering obedience though imperfect; accordingly it is called the *law of liberty*. But the *law of faith* is unalterable, and admits of no dispensation from the duties required in order to our being everlastingly happy. Bates.

28. First in systematic order as well as in magnitude is the doctrine of the propitiation, effected by the Son of God—so held clear of admixture and evasions as to sustain in its bright integrity the consequent doctrine of the *full and absolute restoration of guilty man to the favor of God*, on his acceptance of this method of mercy; or, as it is technically phrased, "*justification through faith*." A doctrine this which in a peculiar manner refuses to be tampered with or compromised, and which will hold its own place or none. It challenges for itself not only a broad basis on which it may rest alone, but a broad border upon which nothing that is human may trespass. This doctrine, when unadulterate, not only animates orthodoxy, but shows us why it was necessary to lay open the mystery of the divine nature so far as it is laid open in scriptural Trinitarian doctrine; for we could not have learned the method of salvation without first learning that he who "bore our sins" was indeed able to bear them, and was in himself "mighty to save."

Whatever belongs to the divine nature must be incomprehensible by the human mind, and therefore the incarnation is incomprehensible; and

therefore the atonement involves a mystery incomprehensible; but not so the consequent doctrine of justification through faith. This doctrine turns upon the well-understood relations of a forensic substitution; and as to transactions of this order, they are among the clearest of any with which we have to do as the subjects of law and government. A forensic act, authoritatively announced, and in consequence of which the condemned stands exempt from the demands of law, must be in its nature absolute. It is not an undefined indulgence; it is not a weak connivance; it is not a timid compromise; it is not an evasion which must be held to condemn, if not the law, its administrators.

In the justification of man through the mediation of Christ, man, individually, as guilty, and his divine sponsor, *personally competent to take upon*

himself such a part, stand forward in the court of heaven, there to be severally dealt with as the honor of law shall demand; and, if the representative of the guilty be indeed thus qualified in the eye of the law, and if the guilty, on his part, freely accept this mode of satisfaction, then, when the one recedes from the position of danger, and the other steps into it, justice, having already admitted both the competency of the substitute and the sufficiency of the substitution, is itself silent. Now, in the method of justification through faith, God himself solemnly proclaims that the rectitude of his government is not violated, nor the sanctity of his law compromised. It is he who declares that, in this method, he "may be just while justifying the ungodly." After such a proclamation from Heaven has been made, "who is he that condemneth? It is God that justifieth!" I. T.

Section 240.

ROMANS IV. 1-25.

- 1 WHAT shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?
- 2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God.
- 3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for
- 4 righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.
- 5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is
- 6 counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto
- 7 whom God imputeth righteousness without works, *saying*, Blessed *are* they whose iniquities
- 8 are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord will not
- 9 impute sin. *Cometh* this blessedness then upon the circumcision *only*, or upon the uncir-
- 10 cumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How
- 11 was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circum-
- 12 cision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the right-
- 13 eousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of
- 14 all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed
- 15 unto them also: and the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision
- 16 only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had* be-
- 17 ing *yet* uncircumcised.
- 18 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, *was* not to Abraham, or to his
- 19 seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of
- 20 the law *be* heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: because the law
- 21 worketh wrath: for where no law is, *there is* no transgression. Therefore *it is* of faith,
- 22 that *it might be* by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that
- 23 only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the
- 24 father of us all, (as it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him
- 25 whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be
- not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the
- father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And
- being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an
- hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the
- promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being
- fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore
- it was imputed to him for righteousness.
- 26 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also,

24 to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the 25 dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

EXPIATION is provided by Christ, in his vicarious obedience, suffering, and death on the Cross. In the mystery of his divine condescension, of his unspeakable love for sinners, he voluntarily was made a human subject of the law which he had given. He obeyed it as a man. He expressed in all his life its purity. He even met that death of a strange anguish, unspeakable, unsearchable, with the hiding of the face of the Father himself attending and crowning it, when standing in the sinner's place. And so he honored and magnified the law, and showed most clearly God's infinite regard for it; and made it possible for the penitent to be pardoned. He made the law as clearly supreme in God's administration as it would have been if every man had been perfectly holy, or every sinner had been for ever condemned. R. S. S.

Strikingly in the instance of Abraham are the nature and value of faith made evident; that in its foundation and essence it is through all eternity the same, whether directed toward the promises of salvation of a yet hidden or of an already revealed and accomplished gospel. *True faith is an immovable trust in the promises of salvation.* Faith dwells specially in the heart; it does not rest on our insight, but on the foundation of God's word and testimony; and even "hoping against hope" it holds fast this testimony, because it looks away from seen and temporal things up to the unseen, concerning whom it is persuaded that he is faithful and almighty. Let it be often with us as though we heard the voice: "Look up now to heaven." The stars we can count even less than Abraham; but beyond them lives the author and finisher of the faith, which even Abraham practiced imperfectly. His light disappears not from your gaze; his fidelity guards you here, his love awaits you yonder. *Van O.*

1-12. Jewish objections met by appeal to the Old Testament and the example of Abraham. Abraham's belief in God's promises foreshadows Christian faith, Christians being by virtue of their faith the spiritual children of Abraham, and heirs of the promises. C.

3. Faith is not that which constitutes the ground of our acceptance with God, but which places us upon that ground; it is not our justifying righteousness, but that which unites us to Christ, and appropriates his righteousness to ourselves. "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him 'to,' 'in order to,' or 'toward,' his justification." It is not, then, *for* our faith, but by it, that we are justified: faith, as an act of ours, is no more the meritorious ground of our justification than any other of our performances; for, if it were, we should still be justified by works, as faith is as much a work as penitence. J. A. J.

5. I do not say that the Spirit of Christ gives the least liberty to sin; God forbid; but his convictions are of a more saving and refreshing nature than the convictions of the law, and do more constrain the soul to holiness than that: the law saying, Work for life; the Spirit saying, Now to him that worketh not (for life), but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. One saying, "Pay me that thou owest"; the other, "Thou art freely forgiven all." *Bun.*—*Believing* is the most wonderful thing in the world. Put anything of thine own to it and thou spoilest it; Christ will not esteem it *believing*. When thou believest and comest to Christ, thou

must leave behind thee thine own righteousness (that is hard), all thy holiness, sanctification, duties, tears, humblings, and bring nothing but thy sins, thy wants, and miseries, else Christ is not fit for thee, nor thou for Christ. Christ will be a perfect Redeemer and Mediator, and thou must be an undone sinner, or Christ and thou can never agree. It is the hardest thing in the world to take Christ alone for righteousness; that is, to acknowledge him Christ. *Wilcox.*

6-8. The New Testament idea of pardon is not merely the forgiveness of sin, nor even its virtual annihilation so that the sinner may be deemed innocent, but it is *justification*—something by which he may be deemed "righteous." And Paul says that this was the Psalmist's idea, though he only appears to express the half of it. "Even David," he affirms, "described the blessedness of the man unto whom the Lord imputeth righteousness, without works." So that, according to Paul, the non-imputation of sin is either to be regarded as the same thing as the imputation of righteousness, or that with God the one act implies and is always accompanied by the other. One thing is certain, that the whole transaction is based upon, and springs out of, the redemptive work of Christ; that in that work, whatever may have been its precise nature, there is a reason presented to the divine eye, on the ground of which God can look upon the sinful man who trusts in Christ as so identified with him as to have his faith counted for righteousness, and thus, in Christ, or for *his* sake, to be accounted *justified* as well as forgiven. T. B.

8. The term, "*to impute*," or "put to the ac-

count of," is a term borrowed from pecuniary transactions among men; and, as applied to sin, contemplates it in the light of a *debt*, which is *put by consent* of all parties to the account of a surety, and is thus *made his own* and discharged by him for the debtor. This state of a sinner wherein God lays no sin to his charge is called a state of *justification*; which as a term of law signifies *the declaring a person righteous*. It supposes the arraignment of the criminal before God at the bar of conscience. The case is tried. The charge of sin and desert of wrath is brought home to the soul by the Holy Spirit. The convinced man *admits it all*; sets up *no defence* of works done, or to be done; thou art "just," saith he, in "judging, and clear in condemning"; but, Lord, thou hast thyself provided me with an all-sufficient plea—the atonement and righteousness of Christ: thou hast assured me of my personal interest in them, when I take them as meant for me, on the faith of thy own word. Lord, I believe. I plead with thee to do as thou hast said; to deal with me as righteous, seeing I present to thee that perfect righteousness of Christ, which is mine by believing acceptance of him as thy gift to men. This plea God admits. The debt (to look again at sin in this light) is hereupon "blotted out." The sinner is declared righteous. *Goode.*

9-11. We are justified by believing. In accepting God's testimony to the righteousness—in crediting his word concerning this justification—we are justified at once. The righteousness becomes ours; and God treats us henceforth as men who are righteous, as men who, on account of the righteousness which has thus become theirs, are entitled to be dealt with as righteous, out and out. Of Abraham it is said, "His faith was counted for righteousness"; that is, God counted this believing man as one who had done all righteousness, just because he was a *believing* man. Not that his *act* or *acts* of faith were substituted as equivalent to work, but his *believing* brought him into the possession of all that *working* could have done. Thus, in believing, we get the righteousness. *Bonar.*

16. Of faith . . . by grace. Man, the disinherited, is brought back and reestablished in that for which he was made; or, his lost and forfeited inheritance is restored. All is done, too, as originally planned. The divine purpose is accomplished, the divine promise fulfilled. It is "of faith," and "by grace." It is the one, *that it may be* the other. T. B.

17. God quickeneth the dead. First in the *resurrection* this great declaration of Paul comes to its full accomplishment. Death still reigns here below, although for the Christian his terror is vanquished; we expect, however, the arrival of the hour in which the song of triumph, "Death is swallowed

up in victory," shall no more lack one note. Sin's last word is death, but the last word of God Almighty is life; and what matters it though the eye of sense at times can see nought else but dissolution and decay? This earth is passing away with all that is subject to death, but the great Resurrection morn is coming, of which at once the hallelujah and amen shall be this word, that God, and God alone, is he who quickeneth the dead. *Van O.*

20. Strong in faith. What did Abraham believe? What God was pleased to reveal. That Abraham should become the father of many nations, was but a small part of what was revealed and of what he believed. The sum of what God revealed to him was, that one of his descendants was to be the promised Saviour of men; and that both he and his spiritual seed were to be saved by faith in him. *Why* did he believe this? Just because God had said it. He had no other ground for it. Everything else would have led him to doubt or disbelieve it. His faith was *firm* and *hopeful*, and no seeming impossibilities could shake it. J. B.

A gracious soul knows that if he is rich in faith he can not be poor in other graces; he knows the growth of faith will be as the former and latter rain to all other graces; he knows that there is no way to outgrow his fears but by growing in faith; therefore his cry is, "O Lord, whatever I am weak in, let me be strong in *faith*; whatever dies, let *faith* live, whatever decays, let *faith* flourish." *Brooks.*—Faith is faith, whether it be as a grain of mustard-seed, or like the tree in whose branches "the birds of the air lodge." Faith must grow in strength. At its birth it is only as a little child, but, by the training grace of God, it grows up to the strength of youth and of manhood. As faith is, so also is the soul. The soul is strong when faith is strong. A. C.

24. Imputed. The union of believers with Christ is the ground of their receiving his righteousness. That is set to their account which has become theirs by this gracious connection. This, and no more, is what we mean by the imputation of Christ's righteousness. Instead of an arbitrary ascription to us of something contrary to fact, it is God's beholding us as intimately connected with the Great Surety. The obedience which he rendered was rendered by him in our nature, in our name, and as our covenant head. It was in its very intention that it should be regarded as ours. It had no other intention. Faith completes the union, long contemplated in the covenant, and thenceforth God regards the believer no longer in himself, but in Christ, and the Church of elect saints as the body of Christ, invested with his righteousness. J. W. A.

25. My sin is gone; for it is forgiven. The righteousness of Jesus is mine; for he has given

me faith in him. The separation from my God and Saviour is ended by the forgiveness of sins in the blood of Jesus; the union between me and my God is restored by Christ, the Crucified and Risen One. He is my righteousness; and, since I have him, my sins can no longer terrify me. This is what Paul saith: "Christ was raised again for our justification." A. C.—It was impossible Christ should be holden by death. It was naturally impossible upon the account of the divine power inherent in his person; and legally impossible because divine justice required that he should be raised to life; partly to vindicate his innocence, for he was reputed and suffered as a malefactor, and principally because he had fully satisfied God. Accordingly the apostle declares, he died for our sins and rose again for our

justification. Briefly, our Saviour's victory over death was obtained by dying, his triumph by rising again. He foiled our common enemy in his own territory, the grave. *Bates.*

How amazing that there should be found in all the wide world a single being reluctant to avail himself of the expiation thus made for sin. The utmost eloquence of men, the most terrible warnings in providence, the profoundest experience of the misery springing out of their league with sin, all fail to obtain for this wondrous gospel of the grace of God entrance into the hearts of men. They say unto God, day by day, hour by hour, "Thou holy God, impute unto us all our offenses. Let it be with us as though Christ had not died. Let there be no Gethsemane or Calvary for us." G. B.

Section 241.

ROMANS V. 1-11.

1 THEREFORE being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus
2 Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice
3 in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing
4 that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and
5 hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the
6 Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time
7 Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradven-
8 ture for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward
9 us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now
10 justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were
enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled,
11 we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord
Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

THE one thing which meets man's great want, which alone fits him to live and prepares him to die, without which he is orphaned from hope, and with which no calamity can more than temporarily depress him, the one thing which leads him to live with a right purpose, which consecrates all his aims, which gives him a constant refuge, which gilds with light the darkest cloud, which brings relief to fear and foreboding, which makes the weary journey of life a pilgrimage to heaven, and which alone teaches the triumphant song, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?"—the one thing that does all this is religious faith, the faith by which being justified we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. E. H. G.

Amid all the accusations of the past the believer enjoys permanent *calm*. He has peace literally, as regards God in the way of atonement, by which all that lies behind him is wholly covered, and the filial relation completely restored. If the conscience is yet wounded at every turning, the balsam of consolation pours forth in streams. God beholds us in Christ; and he who is really one with Him, however much by nature a child of wrath, is in the sight of the Most High unspeakably well-pleasing. Thus has also the redeemed sinner in regard to the future a well-founded *hope*. Can it be more forcibly expressed than in the heart-elevating passage: "We stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God?" Verily it might sound too high, were it not preceded by this testimony regarding Jesus Christ, "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace." Hitherto the entrance had remained closed, no hope, but miserable fear could alone be ours; there could be no mention of standing, but rather of the sinking of despair;

of no vaunt of hope, but of an endless lamentation over disappointed expectation. On the other hand, where peace from above has descended into the heart, it can not be otherwise than that the hope of salvation should also come to dwell there; he who sees his sullied past obliterated, knows at the same time his eternal future to be safe. *Van O.*

WITH this chapter begins the general statement, for Jew and Gentile alike, of the blessed consequences of this justification by faith; of the nature and extent of the blessings bestowed on us by the death and resurrection of Christ; their extent being as wide in their saving influence as Adam's sin was in ruining; yea, wider, because the nature of a free gift is of itself wider and more spreading than that of a prescribed and limited condemnation. And the very use of the law was this, to make abundant and multiply the grace of God, by creating sin, over which grace might triumph.

In verse 2, render, "we glory in the hope of the glory of God." In verses 3, 4, for "*patience*," "endurance," and for "*experience*," "approval," both *twice*. A.

1-5. Faith is the door of the heart by which peace enters. Love is the tender shelter beneath which peace reposes. The essence of peace consists in the inward assurance of salvation. This assurance brings us the confident hope that we have the love of God, and that we enjoy friendship with him. A. C.—*A cordial reception of the two great truths of spiritual Christianity, justification through faith, and the sovereign, indwelling influences of the Holy Spirit, brings with it a settled and affectionate sense of security, or peace and joy in believing, which becomes the spring of holy tempers and virtuous conduct.* Through the knowledge of the gospel, and the hearty reception of its promises, we are "made partakers of the divine nature." But God is "blessed for evermore." Shall we then be drawing near to this nature continually, without a happy consciousness of the felicity we are approaching? Shall we come up to the fountain of light, and receive thence no illumination? Those do not appear to know much of human nature who are jealous of happiness as an enemy of virtue; or who suppose that virtue on earth will not show whence she has descended and whither she is going. I. T.

1. **Justified by faith.** If a man believes, he is saved. Not as if in faith itself there was any merit. We often hear belief in the gospel of Christ spoken about as if *it*, the work of the man believing, was, in a certain way and to some extent, that which God rewarded by giving him salvation. What is that but the whole doctrine of works come up again in a new form? It is Christ's life, Christ's blood, Christ's sacrifice, Christ's intercession, that saves. Faith is simply the channel through which there flows over into my emptiness the divine fullness; or,

to use the good old illustration, it is the hand which is held up to receive the benefit which Christ lays in it. A living trust in Jesus has power unto salvation, only because it is the means by which the power of God unto salvation may come into my heart. On that side is the great ocean, Christ's love, Christ's abundance, Christ's merits, Christ's righteousness; or, rather, that which includes them all, there is the great ocean, Christ himself; and on this is the empty vessel of my soul—and the little narrow pipe that has nothing to do but to bring across the refreshing water—that is the act of faith in him. There is no merit in the dead lead, no virtue in the mere emotion. It is not faith that saves us; it is Christ that saves us, and saves us through faith. A. M.

Peace. The peace, which by simple faith in Christ the conscience obtains, is the first step in sanctification. And still through our whole course Christ's blood of atonement and his life of perfect righteousness are the great fountains of peace which travel with us, just as the stream, which flowed from the smitten rock, followed Israel in the pilgrimage. E. M. G.

2. **Access by faith.** Thou hast done away with the barrier by thy fulfillment of the law, and we have now free access to God. Thou art our access, our way; for thy fulfillment of the law is ours; thy righteousness is ours. The divine satisfaction which rested on thee now rests on us. A. C.—**Rejoice in hope.** Faith, upon the authority and credit of the divine promise, persuades the heart that there is such a glorious state of things reserved for the saints, and so serves instead of eyes in the divine light to view those glories; or it presents them to view, whence *hope* reaches forth to them and possesses them; gives the soul an early anticipated fruition of them for its present support and relief—so that it rejoices in the hope of the glory of God. *Howe.*

Faith looks to Christ as dead, buried, and ascended; and hope to his second coming. Faith looks to him for justification, hope for glory. Faith fights for doctrine, hope for a reward; faith for what is in the Bible, hope for what is in heaven. Faith purifies the heart from bad principles, hope from bad manners. *Bun.*

3-5. "And not only so, but we exult also in our [present] sufferings; for we know that suffering gives the steadfastness of endurance, and steadfast endurance gives the proof of soundness, and the proof of soundness gives strength to hope, and our hope can not shame us in the day of trial; because

the love of God is shed forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who has been given unto us." C.

We have here the genealogy of hope. The experience we have of God's power and mercy in saving us out of former troubles begets and nourishes hope against future times of trouble. Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. *Caryl.*—**Tribulation.** It is derived from the Latin *tribulum*, which was the threshing instrument, or roller, whereby the Roman husbandmen separated the corn from the husks; and "*tribulation*," in its primary significance, was the act of this separation. Sorrow and adversity being the appointed means for the separating in men of whatever in them was light, trivial, and poor, from the solid and the true, their chaff from their wheat, therefore these sorrows and trials are called "*tribulations*," threshings, that is, of the inner spiritual man, without which there could be no fitting him for the heavenly garner. T.—It is one of the mortifying proofs what stubborn and unteachable pupils of the Divine Master we are, that no way could be found of bringing us to our immortality but through such a system of checks and penalties. We must be baffled, smitten, scourged; we must ache, and weep, and die; we must suffer the stripes of misfortune, of disease, of mortified ambition, of bleeding affections, of mortal separation. The very word "*tribulation*" predicts the result, as well as describes the process. The flail (*tribulum*) in the hand of the thresher is to bruise the sheaves and break out the wheat from the straw. In every threshing-floor there is tribulation; and that is the world over. Blows of pain have to divide the spirit and flesh. The pure fruit of goodness does not come from us but by breaking off the worldly crust. F. D. H.

Patience. Patience is the endurance of any evil, out of the love of God, as the will of God. There is nothing too little in which to approve ourselves to God; nothing too little in which, without God, we should not fail; nothing too great which, with the help of God, we may not endure. The offices of patience are as varied as the ills of this life. We have need of it with ourselves and with others; with those who love us and those who love us not; for the greatest things and for the least; against sudden inroads of trouble and under our daily burdens; disappointments as to the weather or the breaking of the heart; in the weariness of the body, or the wearing of the soul; in our own failure of duty, or in others' failure toward us; in every-day wants, or in the aching of sickness or the decay of age; in disappointment, bereavement, losses, injuries, reproaches; in heaviness of the heart or its sickness amid delayed hopes, or the weight of this body of death, from which we would be free, that we may have no more struggle with sin

within, or temptation without, but attain to our blessed and everlasting peace in our rest in God. In all these things, from childhood's little troubles to the martyr's sufferings, patience is the grace of God, whereby we endure evil for the love of God, and keep ourselves still and motionless, that we offend not God. *Pusey.*

Experience. Faith, in its reproductive power and process of growth, may be compared to the great Oriental banyan tree. It springs up in God, rooted in God's Word, and soon there are the great waving branches of experience. Then from these very branches the runners go down again into God's Word, and thence spring up again, new products of faith and new trees of experience, till one and the same tree becomes in itself a grove, with pillared shades and echoing walks between. So experience just grows out of faith, and then a greater faith grows out of experience, the Word of God being all the while the region of its roots, and again a still vaster, richer experience grows out of that faith, till every branch becomes not only a product, but a parent stock, set in the same wood. Thus it is that experience is founded in faith, not faith on experience. Faith is *from* God and *in* God, and so produces the *work* of God, a holy experience of God in the soul. G. B. C.

5. This love of God which is poured out in our hearts, and is here declared to be our ground of confidence in him, is *his love to us*, and not *ours to him*. T.—Observe how constantly the Scripture word looks to the love of God, for the ingeneration of love in men, and so for their salvation. The radical, everywhere present idea is, that the new love wanting in them is to be itself only a revelation of the love of God to them, or upon them. Thus the newborn life is to be "the love of God, shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost." The gospel plan proposes the unbosoming of God's love to man, that it may be shed abroad in him by the Holy Ghost, and become a salvation, as it begets, by the Spirit, an answering love. H. B.—It is through the intimate personal operation of the Spirit of God, by his indwelling light and grace shed abroad in the souls of them that believe, that the heart is discharged of selfishness and sin, and is filled with the holy beauty and triumph of a supreme virtue. The truth is his instrument, but only the instrument. The essential power by which this amazing change is wrought, is that same energy of the Holy Ghost by which prophets and apostles before were inspired, which in the Lord was ever revealed. It reaches the inmost springs of life; turns gloom to gladness, passion to peace; till the soul becomes a temple alight with love, ringing with praise, the breath of constant supplication filling it as with incensed air. R. S. S.

6. **Without strength.** The old system is

right in laying so urgent a stress on conviction of sin. The grand significance of the gospel is help. The measure of man's eagerness to receive help, is it not his feeling of helplessness? It is no secret, probably, that in most of the persons we meet in the streets, and even in our meeting-houses, it would be difficult to find any such thing as a vital consciousness of sin at all. F. D. H.

Died for the ungodly. He assumed our nature expressly that he might be able to suffer in our stead; for the distinct and deliberate object of pouring out his blood, and of making his soul an offering for sin. He planted a cross, and presented to the world a prodigy of mercy of which this is the only solution, that he "so loved us." He took our place in the universe, espoused our interest, opened his bosom, and welcomed to his heart the stroke which we had deserved. J. H.—Christ is not a critic on the soul's frail steps, as it comes tottering home to him, a prodigal from the far country, or a penitent from the sinful ways of the city. Every promise of his gospel is a pledge to accept sinners, *not after they have ceased to be sinners*—for when would that be?—but while yet they are sinners. This is the glory of the Cross. The dying is for the ungodly. The Physician is for the sick. The scarred shoulders of the Shepherd are for the sheep that was lost. F. D. H.—*He died for the unrighteous, the enemies, choosing to be an exile from heaven, that he might carry us back to heaven; a tender Friend, a wise Counselor, a strong Helper. "What shall I render to the Lord for all that he has rendered to me?" I have but two little things, yea, very little, to give—a body and a soul: or rather, one little thing, my will; and shall I not give up that to his will, who, being so great, was the first to visit one so little as I with such great benefits, and bought all that I am with all that he is?* Bernard.

7. "*Righteous*" here is a man who righteously fulfills the duties of life, and "*good*" is the good and benevolent man with whom we ourselves have been brought into contact. C.—The whole strength of our affections can be elicited only when goodness is manifested toward us individually. That which should call forth our strongest affections would evidently be a being of perfect moral excellence, putting forth effort and sacrifice on our behalf. M. H.

8. **Commendeth his love.** The very causes, and the only causes, which could check that love, have not checked it, have only served to draw forth its most abundant stream. All our guilt, instead of drawing forth the thunders of the Almighty and sinking us in the flames of his wrath, has only furnished the occasion for the triumph of his mercy. It was in view of this that angels sang with raptures of wonder and joy, "Glory to God in the highest!"

Here is the love of God in meridian brightness and glory. N. W. T.—There has never yet been found an intellectual or moral or social condition too high or too low for this doctrine. No debasement has been too vile, and no natural purity has been too refined, for it. The explorations of Christian missionaries have found no nation or tribe on the face of the earth—even where the very idea of any deity was most nearly extinct—in which this simple message, "Christ died for us," has not been apprehended, seized, rejoiced in, and lived upon, as the opening eye welcomes light. F. D. H.

10. The first argument is: "If God did so much for us when enemies, what will he do for us when friends?" The second is: "If Christ's death has done so much for us, what will his life do?" He loved and blessed us when enemies; will he not much more love us when friends? He loved us when we hated him; will he not love us more when we return his love? When subjected to the dominion of him who had the power of death, he yet conquered for us, and won glorious spoils; what will he not do now when he has led captivity captive, and completed his mighty victory? If the Cross and the tomb have done so much for us, what will not the throne secure? Here, then, are two truths which, in assuring us of pardon, assure us of everything. "Jesus died, and Jesus liveth"—these are the truths which contain everything for us. "Jesus died!"—that contains everything that we need for reconciliation and peace: "Jesus liveth!"—that contains everything pertaining to the promised inheritance. "Jesus died—Jesus liveth!" The simple knowledge of these simple truths is salvation, forgiveness, peace, eternal life. All that can come forth from his grave, or down from his throne—all that a dying and a living Saviour can do, is ours! Joy, glory, dominion, royalty, priesthood, and a boundless inheritance—all these are ours, and all of them made irreversibly sure to us from the fact that "Jesus liveth." He was dead and is alive; yea, and he liveth for evermore. This is our pledge for the perpetuity of our possession. Bonar.

Saved by his life. The powerful influence of the life of Christ upon everything that belongs to complete salvation is manifest in the justification of believers, which, purchased by the death of Christ, is rendered sure and permanent by his restored life. The life of Christ is no less available to insure the sanctification of all who believe on him. For this end did he enter into the heavenly sanctuary, that from thence he might send forth his conquering Spirit to cleanse and purify the hearts of those whom he had washed with his blood; that, as no guilt might be left to provoke the justice of God, so neither should there be any defilement to offend his holiness. Further, the life of Christ doth effectual-

ly secure an honorable issue to all the *afflictions* and *temptations* of his people. He carried his pitying nature to the throne, and is still touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and disposed to help us in every time of need. Lastly, the life of Christ secures to his people the resurrection of their bodies, and the happiness of the whole man, in the full and everlasting enjoyment of God. Therefore praise and magnify that compassionate Saviour, and faithful high priest over the house of God, who ransomed us with his blood; and amid all the splendors of his exalted state is not unmindful of his charge upon earth, but continually appears in the presence of God for us; whose ear is always attentive to the voice of our supplications; whose mouth is ever open to plead in our behalf; and, as if it had not been love enough to die for us, still lives and reigns for us. R. W.

11. By whom we have atonement. If an atonement were necessary, and for that we must trust the express warrant of Scripture, we know not *where* the vicarious victim was to be sought without insuperable objections on the score of justice and of goodness, except in the offended Judge himself. Our atonement appears to demand, from the very nature of the case, a Person not less than divine. And thus, hidden in the depths of justice and mercy, is found the solution of this astonishing coalition of glory and of woe. Essential happiness thus embraces essential misery, because the God of happiness is also the God at once of infinite purity and

infinite love. We first start aside at the impossibility; we gaze longer and deeper, and the conviction slowly rises that it could not be otherwise, and God be what he is. The sacrifice, strange as it is, is but the natural growth of this being; it is but the child of eternal mercy wedded to eternal truth; and *their* spousal home is in the heart of God. Hence it is that the life and happiness of the universe, in its love at once of justice and of us, comes, through the medium of the inferior nature, in direct contact with misery and death. W. A. B.

Before going into another division of the discourse, instituting his immortal parallel between the first Adam and the second Adam, between the offense and the grace, between condemnation and salvation, he utters a burst of satisfaction, as he surveys the goodly prospect, and thus expresses the joy of a soul which accepts Christ: "And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the atonement." The same Greek word is elsewhere translated reconciliation. The joy here spoken of is that high exulting joy, when the soul is lifted up with complacency in the blessing possessed. This is a summing up of all the bright and stupendous things contained in the foregoing verses. And so all the gospel, the good news, the glad tidings, is in this one word, *Reconciliation*. This is the message sent by the word of preaching to be believed, that God is reconciled; and he that believes this is saved. J. W. A.

Section 242.

ROMANS v. 12-21.

12 WHEREFORE, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death
13 passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (for until the law sin was in the world: but
14 sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses,
even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the
15 figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if
through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by
16 grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as *it was* by
one that sinned, *so is* the gift: for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation, but the free
17 gift *is* of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by
one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness
18 shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore, as by the offence of one *judgment came*
upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon
19 all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sin-
20 ners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered,
that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:
21 that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto
eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

We can not hesitate to perceive that the powers of evil consist of two great detachments, which speculative men have called physical and moral evil, which plain people are familiar with under the titles of pain and guilt—pain, which seems naturally to tend to weakness and death; and guilt, which, by a process as natural, descends into habitual and irremediable sin. Distinct as are these two forms of evil, even in our own experience we detect traces of a connection between them; but it is to Revelation that we are indebted for the clearest intimation of their secret but indissoluble association; to Revelation, which announces that physical infirmity and death entered our human creation in the footsteps of willful sin, that willful sin is the forerunner of pains eternal. To these powers, then, the two great engines of the adversary, Christ is revealed as the counteracting agent. He came to triumph over both; his work is respectively directed to each. In relation to sin, he is a mediator of justification and holiness; in relation to death and pain, he is the author of endless life and glory. W. A. B.

12-21. Whatever else this important and somewhat difficult Scripture may contain, it contains at least these things: that Adam was a type of Christ, in the extraordinary sense of the latter's being set over against the former in all moral relations to our race; that as Adam brought sin and death upon all, so Christ brings righteousness and life to all; that as Adam, by one act of transgression, brought condemnation, so Christ, from many acts of transgression, brings justification; and that, while the evils of Adam's sin are unconditional, absolute, the benefits of Christ's righteousness are conditional, contingent. By his sin Adam actually, positively brought death, temporal and spiritual, upon all men. By his righteousness Christ brings life, spiritual and eternal, conditionally, under terms, to all men. By his first disobedience, Adam opened and spread the broad roll of a flying curse over the whole race of man. His act, which was one of rebellion, cut the race off from God; and, thus cut off, the whole fell into a state of moral separation from him: a state which rendered it certain that every individual would, on reaching years of moral action, commit actual sin. That state of the race, including this attendant certainty, constitutes original sin. It is a state over which "God's wrath and damnation" rest; and, at the same time, one which includes every individual of the race, from Adam to the last of his stock. Thus much of the fall. In the recovery, Christ, the second Adam, by his obedience unto death, brought in a blessing, which, in the possibilities of its application, is co-extensive with the primal curse. He threw the reach and embrace of mercy around the entire race. He "tasted death for every man." He opened the door of the kingdom of heaven to all mankind. He made eternal life possible to the whole race, from Adam to the last of his stock. And thus much of the recovery. J. S. S.

The doctrine of the apostle is that as all men are, in certain points, treated as if they were sinners, entirely on account of the first sin of the first man, Adam, so all men who are justified are treated as if they were righteous entirely on account of the obedience to death of him of whom the first man was an image—the Lord from heaven. All the evil that befalls mankind, either in the present or the future world, may be considered as originating in the first sin of the first man, directly or indirectly. Some of these evils are realized, however, only through the individual, in his own person, becoming an actual violator of the divine law, and are realized by him in the degree in which he does so. There are others that come directly on the race, as the manifestation of the displeasure of God at the first sin: Death,

including a life longer or shorter, it might be, but liable to disease, doomed to death; and the greater loss of that divine influence which is the soul of the human soul, the principle of its true excellence and highest happiness. These—mortality and destitution of spiritual goodness—come equally on all men, without reference to personal acts of guilt; and these are the evils, the manner of incurring which the apostle employs as an illustration of the manner in which the great blessing of justification is obtained for man. This seems plain from the apostle's object, for evils not resulting entirely from Adam's sin would not have corresponded with blessings resulting entirely from our Lord's obedience; and further, it appears from his obviously contrasting the judgment of the one offense, which is executed, with the judgment of the many offenses, which is graciously removed in justification. J. B.

The meaning of the latter part of this chapter, as Augustine loves to draw it out, is as follows: The apostle had spoken in what went before of Christ's death, and the fruits of that death; but the question might well present itself: How should the death of one have such significance for all? Paul answers the question. This one is not merely one; he stands in a relation to all men which can only find its analogy in the relation in which Adam stood to all. He may be rightly called a "second Adam." In Adam the whole natural development of man was included; the entire human race is but the unfolding of that first, that one man. Exactly so Christ is a spiritual head. The whole race of regenerate men was shut up in him, is unfolded from him. As the huge oak with its trunk and all its spreading branches is rudimentally wrapped up in the single acorn; so the world, or mankind natural, in Adam, and the Church, or mankind spiritual, in Christ.

Only from this point of view, of the race, namely, as included in Adam, do we attain any right apprehension of the significance of Adam's sin. The injury which by that sin Adam inflicted on himself, he did not inflict on himself alone. It was a flinging of poison into the fountain head, and thus an infecting lower down of every drop of the stream. And only so do we attain any right apprehension of the significance of Christ's righteousness; for that other is but one side, the sadder and the darker side, of the same truth. That which held good for death held good also for life. The same law of intimate union between the members of the race and their head, which made one man's sin so diffusive of death, has made one man's obedience or righteousness so diffusive of life. Christ shall diffuse himself no less effectually than Adam, as the one by generation, so the other by regeneration. Nay, there shall be, as

there ever must be, a mightier power in the good than in the evil ; for while the one sin was sufficient to ruin the world, the righteousness of one did not merely do away with that one sin, but with all the innumerable others which had unfolded themselves from it. T.

The dogma of original sin implies and affirms these propositions: 1. That God, in creating man, has created him an agent, moral, free, and fallible. 2. That the will of God is the moral law of man, and obedience to the will of God is the duty of man, inasmuch as he is a moral and free agent. 3. That, by an act of his own free will, man has knowingly failed in his duty by disobeying the law of God. 4. That the free man is a responsible being, and that disobedience to the law of God has justly entailed on him punishment. 5. That that responsibility and that punishment are hereditary, and that the fault of the first man has weighed and does weigh upon the human race. The authority of God, the duty of obedience to the law of God, the liberty and responsibility of man, the heritage of human responsibility are, in their moral chronology, the principles and facts comprised in the dogma of original sin. *Guizot.*

Most evangelical divines are divided between the Augustinian or realistic, the federal or forensic, and the Arminian theories. It should be remembered that the main difficulty lies in the *fact* itself—the undeniable, stubborn, terrible fact—of the universal dominion of sin and death over the entire race, infants as well as full-grown sinners. No system of philosophy has ever given a more satisfactory explanation than the great divines of the Church. Outside of the Christian redemption, the fall, with its moral desolation and ruin, remains an impenetrable mystery. But immediately after the fall appears, in the promise of the serpent-bruiser, the second Adam, and throws a bright ray of hope into the gloom of despair. In the fullness of the time, according to God's own counsel, he appeared in our nature to repair the loss, and to replace the temporary reign of sin by the everlasting reign of superabounding grace, which never could have been revealed in all its power without the fall. The person and work of the second Adam are the one glorious solution of the problem of the first, and the triumphant vindication of divine justice and mercy. This is the main point for all practical purposes, and in this, at least, all true Christians are agreed. P. S.—We offer a summation of the whole subject:

1. The vast majority, not only of Calvinists, but of Christians, hold that the race so had its probation in Adam's first trial, that it fell in his fall, and the consequences of his sin to himself passed over to his posterity. 2. The majority hold that his descendants did not sin in him really and literally. 3. A great majority hold that death is the penalty of sin, and includes every kind of penal evil. 4. A great majority hold that death thus extending to soul and body was visited upon Adam and his posterity by sin. 5. A great majority hold that Adam's sin was so reckoned to the account of (imputed to) the race, that its loss of the divine favor and communion with God, and, by consequence, its lapse into sin, was a visitation in judgment for that sin. 6. A great majority believe that evil inflicted on moral beings for sin, in support of law, is punishment, and that the present degradation of our race came in this way. 7. A great majority believe that Christ bore our sins, only as he bore their penalty,

became a curse for us, and had the chastisement of our peace laid upon him, and hence that sin may be so imputed to or reckoned to the account of those who did not personally commit it, that they shall bear its penalty. If this is possible in one extraordinary case, it may be in another. 8. A great majority believe that Christ is the second Adam, of whom the first was a type, inasmuch as, being condemned for the sin of the first Adam, we are justified by the righteousness of the second. "As by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Herein are found the elements of the true doctrine of original sin. These pregnant words of Pascal can not be gainsaid. "It is astonishing that the mystery which is farthest removed from our knowledge (I mean the transmission of original sin) should be that without which we can have no knowledge of ourselves. It is in this abyss that the clew to our condition takes its turns and windings, inasmuch that man is more incomprehensible without this mystery than this mystery is incomprehensible to man." C. H.

12. By Jesus we have received the reconciliation (v. 11); by one man sin entered into the world. In stating this similarity, the apostle draws the attention of his readers from Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, of whom they boasted, and through whom they inherited many blessings, to a more remote ancestor, from whom both Jews and Gentiles were descended, and through whom they both inherited the same dismal legacy. In ascending to Adam, the distinction between Jews and Gentiles is lost, and the necessity of a Saviour is laid in that condition, which is common to all mankind. *G. Hill.*

13, 14. The 12th verse states that all mankind are exposed to death in consequence of the first sin of the first man. The proof of this fact is contained in the 13th and 14th verses, which refer to infants. These die entirely on account of the sin of the first man, without reference to their own personal violation of the divine law. J. B.

17, 18. Sin is death's parent. Had there been no sin, no one would have died. The first man received God's commandment on condition that if he kept it he should live, if he violated it he should die. By not believing that he would die, he did what caused him to die; and found that to have been true which the Giver of the law had affirmed. Thence came death, thence man became mortal, thence came labor, thence misery, thence the second death after the first, that is, after temporal death, death everlasting. This tradition of death, this law of destruction, binds every man who is born, except that one Man who became Man that man should not perish. For he came bound by no law of death; therefore he is called in the Psalm, "Free among the dead"; who lived without sin, who did not die because of sin; sharing in our penalty, not in our offense. Death is the penalty of offense; our Lord

Jesus Christ came to die, did not come to sin; by sharing in our penalty without our offense, he annulled both our offense and penalty. What penalty? That which was due to us after this life. So he was crucified, that on the Cross he might show the dying out of our old man; and he rose, that in his own life he might show our new life. *Aug.*

Verse 18 should stand, "Therefore as through one trespass the issue was unto all men to condemnation: even so through one righteous act the issue was unto all men to justification of life." *A.*

19-21. When our unrighteousness was consummated, and full proof was given that punishment and death were to be looked for as its reward, and the time was come which God had preordained for the manifestation of his own loving-kindness and power (for the love of God, which proceeds from his transcendent benignity, is peerless), he did not hate us, nor repel us, nor did he remember evil, but showed his long-suffering, bore with us, himself took upon him our sins, gave up, of himself, his own Son as a ransom for us, the Holy for the lawless, the Innocent for the wicked, the Just for the unjust, the Incorruptible for the corruptible, the Immortal for the mortal. For what else but his Son's righteousness was able to cover our sins? Wherein was it possible for us, the lawless and impious, to be justified, save in the Son of God alone? O that sweet substitution! O that unsearchable plan! O those unexpected benefits! That the transgression of many should be covered by one righteous, and the righteousness of one should justify many that were unrighteous. *Epistle of 2d Century.*

How by one man's obedience could many be made righteous? The answer is not far to seek. The transcendent worth of that obedience which Christ rendered, of that oblation which he offered, the power which it possessed of countervailing and counterbalancing a world's sin, lay in this, that he who offered these, while he bore a human nature, and wrought human acts, was a divine person; not indeed God alone, for as such he would never have been in the condition to offer; nor man alone, for then the worth of his offering could never have reached so far; but that he was God and man in one person indissolubly united, and in this person performing all those acts: man, that he might obey and suffer and die; God, that he might add to every act of his obedience, his suffering, his death, an immeasurable worth, steeping in the glory of his divine personality all of human that he wrought. *T.*—The obedience of Christ is expressly declared to be the ground of our acceptance, and the sufferings of Christ are but a part of that obedience. Taken together, the active and the passive obedience constitute that one righteousness which is the sole

meritorious ground of our acceptance. What he did, and what he suffered, are but one object in the sight of the law; a glorious righteousness, with which we are graciously invested; wrought out by our head, in our nature, but deriving infinite value from the hidden fountain of the Godhead. *J. W. A.*

CONDITION OF THE INFANT DEAD.

WHAT the Scriptures teach on this subject, according to the common doctrine of evangelical Protestants, is, *all who die in infancy are saved*. The Scriptures nowhere exclude any class of infants, baptized or unbaptized, born in Christian or in heathen lands, of believing or unbelieving parents, from the benefits of the redemption of Christ. *C. H.*—In the case of those who die in infancy, with original sin only affecting their natures, Christ, it would seem, stands to them for good, over against Adam for evil. As they are brought under the condemnation of original sin through Adam, so they receive remission of it through Christ. And the condition (involuntarily enjoyed, indeed, on their part, but voluntarily secured to them on God's)—the condition on which they receive this remission is, that they have committed no actual sin. Being taken away from the ordinary conditions of the gospel, they need no other. For if, in receiving this grant of remission, their relation to *Christ* be involuntary, so, in becoming subject to the sin forgiven, was their relation to *Adam* involuntary. Is it not reasonable, therefore, that, on the condition named, Christ, the greater, should remove what Adam, the less, entailed? It is the great law of the Church under the gospel that—while, in the case of those who live to commit actual sin, the death of Christ can be rendered effectual only by being applied in the exercises of faith and repentance, or of that inward renewing which is the work of the Spirit in the use of truth—in the case of all who die in infancy and without actual sin the death of Christ itself is effectual, *without being so applied*. As they have not become *voluntary* in following the first Adam's sin, so need they not be *voluntary* in relying on the second Adam's righteousness. Had it not been for Christ, the whole race had perished. But since he "hath tasted death for every man," they only perish who, to the fact of *original* sin, as an infection from our common head, add the guilt of *actual* sin, as the intelligent and voluntary issue of their own minds; and who, thus guilty and defiled, never become renewed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost unto repentance, faith, and holiness; but, on the contrary, either by an *actual volition*, or by cherishing tempers which would *prompt* such an act, reject the offer of pardon and life through the Saviour, and thus seal, beyond reversal, the sentence of their own condemnation.

This view of the effects of Christ's death and sacrifice accounts for the fact that so little is said in the Bible of those who die in infancy. Toward infancy and childhood as states of life, the Bible is full of the tenderest regard. The language of Christ to those who would have kept the little children from him may be taken as the best expression of that regard in summary; while it shows that between original sin in infancy and actual sin in subsequent years there is a broad and important difference. But the case of those *who die in infancy* the Bible leaves in almost unbroken silence. The comforted mourning of the penitent David over his dead

child, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Sam. 12 : 23), is the plainest and loudest if not the only word ever uttered to break that silence. But, in the remarkable silence which it generally observes, it plainly intimates that this is a case to which the ordinary conditions of the gospel do not apply; that, as "what the law says, it says to them that are under the law," so what the Bible anywhere says, it says to them that are under the Bible, and can understand its elementary and fundamental teachings; that dying infants not belonging to this class are in God's hands; and that, as he sees good to take them away from the ordinary lot of sinful men, so he probably takes them to that bosom of mercy, to that freeness of pardon for Christ's sake, to which the actual transgressor can be admitted in no other way than that fully prescribed in the gospel. This leads to bright and blessed views of their future lot; views full of the sunlight of hope, and rich with the blessedness of anticipated glory, to all whom God, in his chastening goodness, is pleased to beckon away ere the stain of actual sin has rested on their spirits. If they can not *have*, neither do

they *need*, that specifically renewing and sanctifying change which God demands of all others. If they do not live to receive that gift of a renewed mind which Christ came to bestow, neither do they live to feel that voluntary breaking out of the disease of sin, the workings of which Christ came to destroy. Through Christ's sacrifice, the fact of *original* sin is, it may be believed, forgiven them; through God's intervention, the stain of *actual* sin is not contracted. The pains of temporal death come upon them, not in punishment of *voluntary* guilt, but as that only part of the original penalty which follows *involuntary* infection. In them, *Adam* still *dies* for his first offense. In them, *Christ* now *lives*, through his satisfying obedience. The first Adam plunged them into the peril of original sin. The second Adam travailed for them in bloody pain, and delivered them out of their peril. The former left them to a state of misery, as the inevitable consequence of introducing sin into the world. The latter wins them to a life of blessedness, as part of his promised reward for becoming a *sacrifice* for sin. J. S. S.

Section 243.

ROMANS vi. 1-23.

1 WHAT shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God for-
2 bid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so
3 many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we
4 are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the
5 dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we
6 have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of
7 *his* resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of
8 sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is
9 freed from sin.

8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing
9 that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over
10 him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto
11 God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God
12 through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye
13 should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of un-
14 righteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the
15 dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have
16 dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God for-
16 bid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are
17 to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But
18 God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that
19 form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the
20 servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your
21 flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto
22 iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For
23 when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye
then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things *is* death.
22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto
23 holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is*
eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE rich contents of this chapter may be summed up in this single proposition: the believing Christian can not possibly be a minister of sin. The true Christian *can not* live in sin, because the love of sin is destroyed in his heart since he really entered into fellowship with Him who died through sin and for it, that we might live through Him. The courage to strive against sin is enkindled by the union of faith with Christ; this faith awakens love to the Lord Jesus, and it is impossible that love and sin should permanently subsist together. Nay, through this courage is procured strength to obtain the victory, since he is indissolubly united, not merely with the dead, but also with the risen Christ: the spirit of life is in the Christian; and wherever He dwells and works, he must necessarily manifest himself as a purifying fire, consuming all unrighteousness. We may go yet a step further, and maintain that the true Christian *will not* serve sin, just because he feels himself free and happy under the dominion of grace. Experience testifies that the stumbling of true believers is really something different from the iniquity of the wholly unregenerate; the last live in sin, the first feel with deep pain that sin yet lives in them, and the history of centuries shows that the power of sin is most thoroughly broken by living faith and free grace where these have subjugated the life. *Van O.*

Our bodies—our natural bodies—will die alike in all of us. This is one death; but besides this shall all die another, the death of our sins or the death of our souls. Remember that one of these two deaths, both painful, we must die, every one of us. Which shall it be then? Shall it be the death of our sin or the death of our soul? The death whose pain comes at first most, yet even then, by Christ's grace, it is endurable; but afterward the suffering and the struggle lessen, and there comes the rest of death, and the vigor and the freshness and the glory of that divine and eternal life which the death of our sins has given birth to; or shall it be the death whose first strokes are silent and painless, which pours in its poison and we feel it not—more and more triumphant, and we more and more insensible; till behold, its work is accomplished, and then the agony is neither to be uttered nor conceived, and Christ is gone from us for ever, and life and death are become one for our destruction; a death of all good, a life of all evil. T. A.

1-23. There are two aspects in which the religion of Christ may be viewed, and we should never magnify the one at the expense of the other—as a Principle of Life and Happiness, and as a Principle of Subjection and Obedience—life that quickens obedience, obedience that manifests life—life that makes obedience delightful, obedience that makes life visible and practical. In the sixth chapter, you will find this representation a clew to the involutions of its rapid eloquence. This chapter is composed of the answers to two objections, and the objections and their respective answers (so often hastily confounded) are specially directed to special and distinct views of the gospel. The former objection speaks of life, and it is answered out of the nature and characteristics of spiritual life and death; the latter objection speaks of subjection, and it is appropriately answered by citing the characters and contrast of the sinful and the righteous service. The one asks (v. 1), Shall we abide—or “live” (v. 2) in sin, that grace may abound? and the answer is that we are *dead* to sin, that the old nature is *crucified* (v. 6), and that therefore it is unnatural, in the nature of things incompatible, that we should *live* to it. This death to sin is declared to be publicly solemnized in the expressive rite of baptism; and in it, as well as in the resurrection that follows it, we are declared to be copyists and partakers of Christ—“baptized *into* him,” into his death, his resurrection, and his eternal life (vs. 3-11). The consequence drawn from this (vs. 12-14) is that sin should not “*have dominion* over us,” that it should not be suffered any longer to intrude its foreign tyranny upon the purchased possession of God: and this forms the transition to the topic of the second objection, which turns upon the cardinal idea of *subjection*, and asks, “Shall we sin because we are not *under the law* but *under grace*?” The course of animated appeal that replies to this

interrogatory (vs. 16-20) is fitted to it with exact and exclusive propriety. We are declared to be no longer “the servants of sin,” but “the servants of righteousness”; that, whereas in the bitter bondage of nature and the law men were “free from righteousness” (v. 20), they are under the dispensation of grace “free” (or rather *freed*)—emancipated—from sin, and formally articulated to that holy servitude of godliness and love, whose “gift is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (v. 23). Having thus concluded his double course of illustrative exposition, Paul passes (v. 21) to a further consideration, which results from both, and manifestly is framed to allude to both. He speaks of “the fruits,” or consequences, of the ways of nature and grace; and to each he applies the notions, before so copiously treated, of *service* and of *life*. Now, the “fruit” of bondage is properly its “wages,” the fruit of God's service is “a gift.” And therefore it is that, binding the whole argument and all its topics—life and freedom—death and bondage, and the fruits of each—into one summary, he declares that, “being *freed* from sin, and *servants* to God, ye have your *fruit* unto holiness, and the end everlasting life; for the *wages* of sin is *death*, but the *gift* of God is eternal life.” W. A. B.

3. His argument is briefly this: The abounding of grace in the free pardon of sin by Jesus Christ neither encourages nor tolerates sin, because, in accepting by faith that covenant of grace which is sealed in baptism, we come under the most solemn obligations to abstain from all sin; while at the same time, if we are not *hypocrites*, we have that inward principle of the new life which the Spirit quickens in us through the truth, and which ultimately works the utter death of all sin in our

natures. So far, therefore, as his language in the third verse is concerned, there is no need of seeking for anything *more*, or for anything *else*, than the idea intimated in the paraphrase, that "as many as are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ are baptized with a *profession* of that inward renewing which makes us dead *unto* sin, even as Christ once died *for* sin." J. S. S.—Christians are here said to be baptized, as in another Epistle they are said to be circumcised, by their union to Christ (Col. 2: 11). As the one expression describes a state of mind, represented by an outward act, but never produced by it, so does the other. Both ceremonies were useful, as other means of religious instruction, and other ways of religious profession; but that they had any peculiar power to change the spiritual condition of men, is nowhere taught in the Bible. This is now universally admitted of circumcision, and it is equally true of water-baptism.

4. Buried. The resemblance of the Christian to his Lord, which is here described, must be moral and spiritual, and not corporeal. As the death referred to is a state of mind, and the crucifixion which precedes death, and the life which follows, so must the burial be. It is nothing outward and formal. The mention of burial connects the death with the resurrection spoken of; and it shows more fully the separation of the Christian from the world. He is crucified, he dies, and he is buried. These are figurative representations of the spiritual state of all who have faith in Christ, and follow him. The same figure is repeated by the apostle in another Epistle, where they who have the circumcision of Christ are said to be buried with him in this baptism (Col. 2: 11). The interchange of these terms shows that both denote simply a spiritual purification and consecration. J. H. G.—The Spirit is not tied to baptism, but he may act out of the sacraments as well as in them. Understand this of the bare want of baptism, not of the contempt or willful neglect of it. How did the thief upon the cross enter into Paradise which Christ promised him? Without baptism. So that one may enter into heaven without baptism by water, though not without the baptism of the Spirit. *Charnock*.

Walk in newness of life. Not by merely trying not to sin, but by entering farther and farther into the new life, in which, when it is completed, sin becomes impossible; not by merely weeding out wickedness, but by a new and supernatural cultivation of holiness, does the saint of the New Testament walk on the ever-ascending pathway of growing Christliness, and come at last perfectly to Christ. This is the true difference between law and grace; and the New Testament is the book of grace. Oh, that the richest, and liveliest, and most personal word in all the language did not sound so meager, dead,

and formal! In its fundamental character the New Testament is a book not of prohibitions but of eager inspirations. P. B.

5. Literally, *have become partakers by a vital union* [as that of a graft with the tree into which it is grafted] *of the representation of his death* [in baptism]. The meaning appears to be, *if we have shared the reality of his death, wherof we have undergone the likeness.* **C.—6.** In our inward renewal, professed and sealed in baptism, our old man is crucified with Christ for the very purpose that henceforth we should not serve sin. **7.** For he who has thus died to sin is Christ's free man, and no longer a slave to sin.

8, 9. The sense of the passage is as follows: "If, as we *profess* at baptism, we be really '*dead with Christ*,' really penitent for sin, thoroughly determined to renounce it, and inwardly deadened to its power, '*we believe* we shall also *live with him*'; shall continue to cherish and cultivate and enjoy the spiritual life which our repentance and faith imply; and not only so, but shall ultimately rise, like Christ, from the dead, and live with him for evermore. '*As death hath no more dominion over him*,' so shall it have no more over *us*, either in the tyranny of sin in this life, or in the abiding power of the grave over us, when this life shall have ended." It is probable that, at baptism, the early converts to Christ professed their *faith* in the great doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, *based on the fact of the resurrection of Christ.* J. S. S.

Faith looks so steadfastly on its suffering Saviour, that it makes the soul like him, assimilates and conforms it to his death, as the apostle speaks. That which Papists fabulously say of some of their saints, that they received the impression of the wounds of Christ in their bodies, is true, in a spiritual sense, of the soul of every one that is indeed a saint and a believer. It takes the very print of his death, by beholding him, and *dies to sin*; and then takes that of his rising again, and *lives to righteousness*; as it applies it to *justify*, so to *mortify*, drawing virtue from it. Thus said one, "Christ aimed at this in all those sufferings that, with so much love, he went through; and shall I disappoint him, and not serve his end?"

10. He that is one with Christ by believing is one throughout in death and life. As Christ rose, so he that is dead to sin with him, through the power of his death, rises to that new life with him, through the power of his resurrection. And these two are our sanctification, which whosoever do partake of Christ and are found in him do certainly draw from him. All they that do really come to Jesus Christ come to him as their Saviour, to be clothed with him and made righteous by him; they come like

wise to him as their Sanctifier, to be made new and holy by him, to die and live with him.

11. No sinner will be content to *die to sin*, if that were all; but if it be *passing* to a more excellent *life*, then he gaineth, and it were a folly not to seek this death. It was a strange power of Plato's "Discourse of the Soul's Immortality," that moved a young man, upon reading it, to throw himself into the sea, that he might leap through it to that immortality. Were this life of God, this *life to righteousness*, and the excellency and delight of it, known, it would gain many minds to this death, whereby we step into it. L.

12, 13. The real seat of sin is in the will, alienated from God, and set upon the gratification of self. The motives to sin, and its agents also, are the passions and desires of our lower nature—the flesh as acted upon by the enticements of the world. The senses and members of the body become the occasions and the instruments of unrighteousness. But, through yielding to these, the will itself becomes their slave; and the *man* who should rule the body and have dominion over the world by his spiritual nature, which is the image of God, subjects that nature to the body, and is ruled by the world, the flesh, and the devil. J. P. T.—The divine laws are the rule of duty to the entire man, and not to the soul only. And they are obeyed or violated by the soul and body in conjunction. The soul designs, the body executes; the senses are the open ports to admit temptations. Carnal affections deprave the soul, corrupt the mind and mislead it. The love of sin is founded in sensible pleasures: "And the members are the servants of iniquity." The heart is the fountain of profaneness, and the tongue expresses it. And the body is obsequious to the holy soul in doing or suffering for God, and denies its sensual appetites and satisfactions in compliance with reason and grace. The "members are the instruments of righteousness." Bates.

Yield yourselves. The gospel binds us to the service of a God of truth and purity, and only in this way can its blessings be enjoyed. When we accept the gospel, we not only receive something from God, we give something to him. In the language of the apostle, "we yield ourselves unto God." Where this is forgotten altogether, where service is passed by, it is what the apostle terms "receiving the grace of God in vain," and where it is put into the background, it produces a weak, sinewless Christianity, which seeks a comfortable home for itself, and does small work for the cause of either God or man. Ker.

14. The believer is not still struggling, trying sorrowfully to get faith enough, any more than works enough, to be saved by. He is up on the heights of spiritual liberty, no longer under law,

but in grace. He knows whom he has believed, and is assured that he is "saved already" in that he does believe—"passed from death unto life." And thus, being emancipated from the hindrance of self-interest, he obeys from love, brings his body more and more under, for the pure Master's sake, goes from grace to grace, and has "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." F. D. H.

15. Where, in the New Testament, can we find a single word that should lead us to suppose ourselves less debtors to the law, because Christ became our ransom? He pardons the criminal, he has paid the debt, but he does not abrogate the law. Nay, how he "magnified" it, by himself becoming a perfect example of obedience! R. Hill.

16. The living belief which has really been implanted in the soil of thought and feeling can not but bear its proper flower and fruit in the moral and intellectual life of a thoughtful and earnest man. H. P. L.—In all the articles comprised in the Creed, my belief is unclouded by doubt. Would to God that my faith, which works on the whole man, confirming and conforming, were but in just proportion to my belief—to the full acquiescence of my intellect, and the deep consent of my conscience! S. T. C.—Remember that so many waking hours as we have in every day, so many hours have we of sin or of holiness: every hour delivers in and must deliver its record; and everything so recorded is placed either on one side of the fatal line or on the other; it is charged to our great account of good or of evil. Yes, all that countless multitude of unremembered thoughts and words and deeds take their places distinctly, and swell the sum for condemnation or for glory. In themselves, like ciphers, there is a little figure to be placed before them which gives to them an infinite value; there is faith on the one hand to give them all a virtue for good, there is carelessness on the other hand to make them all count for evil. For whatsoever is not of faith is sin; but whatever is sanctified by a holy and careful general intention, is done, even though it be so common a thing as eating and drinking—is done to the glory of God, and therefore to our own salvation through Christ Jesus. T. A.

17-19. "But God be thanked that you, who were once the slaves of sin, have obeyed from your hearts the teaching whereby you were molded anew; and when you were freed from the slavery of sin you became the bondmen of righteousness. I speak the language of common life, to show the weakness of your fleshly nature (which must be in bondage either to the one or to the other)." C.

18. *Sin* itself is an element of discipline; and as for the affections enthralled by its despotism, they are sinful, not in themselves as affections, but in their depravation; they are meant to be, not the

'bond-slaves of evil, but the liberated "servants of righteousness"; they are born for eternity and for God! W. A. B.

19. The body has changed its master. It always serves, but instead of serving the mind it serves the flesh. Yes, the *body* serves the *flesh*, for the flesh and the body are not the same thing. They are often distinguished from each other in the gospel; and here Paul shows us the partisans of a fictitious holiness, treating the *body* with harshness for fear of flattering the *flesh*. The body or the members, which we ought, according to Paul's expression, to make the servants of righteousness and holiness, are, under the orders of the flesh or animal principle, the servants of impurity and unrighteousness. The body, then, is a servant to be restored to its true master, who is the Spirit; but the true enemy of the Spirit is the flesh; and, accordingly, in the gospel it is not the body but the flesh which is condemned; for, as Paul says, it is with the flesh, not with the body, that we serve the law of sin (Rom. 7 : 25). Jesus Christ, clothed mysteriously with this thoroughly and universally tainted flesh, has condemned sin in the flesh. A. V.

20. Much discourse and much ink hath been spilt upon the debate of *free will*, but truly all the liberty it hath, till the Son and his Spirit free it, is that miserable freedom the apostle speaks of here: *While ye were servants to sin, ye were free from righteousness*. And as we are naturally subject to the drudgery of sin, so we are condemned to the proper wages of sin, which the apostle tells us is *death*, according to the just sentence of the law. But our Lord Christ was anointed for this purpose, *to set us free* himself, both to work and to publish liberty, *to proclaim liberty to captives, and the opening of the prison-doors to them that are bound*. Having paid our complete ransom, he sends his word as the message and his Spirit to perform it, effectually to set us free, to let us know it, and to bring us out of prison. L.

21. God has not intrusted these sensitive souls to us to be experimented upon by a vain curiosity or a headstrong self-confidence. They are to be guarded at every point from all that blights and all that defiles. They are to be surrounded with blameless associations, with companions that act and speak no guile. Every hour while contamination is postponed, and corruption kept away, is so much saved for virtue. The powers of right in the soul are strengthening. Good habits are getting formed and confirmed. The currents of desire, of

thought, and of emotion, are learning to run in fixed and lawful channels. F. D. H.

The end is death. Not the dissolution of the body, not extinction of being, but that final separation from all that is holy and blessed; that hopeless abandonment to all that is evil and tormenting; that unutterable anguish of a mind in perpetual conflict with itself and with God, which constitute most truly the death of the soul; a death to be endured, not for a few years, not for a single century, not for thousands of ages, but for eternity. And shall not he, who beholds the sinner slumbering on the verge of perdition, warn him of his danger? Shall he be censured for preaching terror, and for attempting unduly to move the passions of his hearers, who tells them, in the language of inspiration, the end of these things is death, they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever? *Tappan*.—

23. The wages that sin bargains with the sinner are life, pleasure, and profit; but the wages it pays him are death, torment, and destruction. He that would understand the falsehood and deceit of sin, must compare the promises and the payment together. R. S.

Eternal life through Jesus Christ. Oh that we might feel our dear obligations to him who has "delivered us from the wrath to come," and purchased for us a felicity perfect, and without end! How engaging is the love of Christ, who raised us to the bosom of God, the seat of happiness! *Bates*.—Undeterred by anticipated sorrows, undismayed by evils from which every other being in the universe would have shrunk, he gave himself to win the prize of life eternal for you—will he, think you, withhold, or be reluctant to bestow, that prize upon you now that his pains and toils are ended, now that he has only to speak the word, and it is yours? The salvation of your soul was an end so glorious, that he was willing to reach it though the way to it led through blood and darkness and death—can you entertain any doubt that he is willing to secure it now when nothing intervenes, when every difficulty has been overcome, when he has but to stretch out the hand of mercy, and the consummation of all his sufferings is attained? No, it can not be. It is impossible to exaggerate the certainty and freeness of that salvation that is in Christ for all who will but lay hold of it. It is impossible that anything in the universe can lie between you and eternal life, if you but accept it as "the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." *Caird*.

Section 244.

ROMANS vii. 1-25.

1 Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath
 2 dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is
 3 bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is
 4 loosed from the law of *her* husband. So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married
 5 to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free
 6 from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Where-
 7 fore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should
 8 be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth
 9 fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the
 10 law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered
 11 from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of
 12 spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

13 What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by
 14 the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin,
 15 taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For
 16 without the law sin *was* dead. For I *was* alive without the law once: but when the com-
 17 mandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which *was ordained* to
 18 life, I found to *be* unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me,
 19 and by it slew *me*. Wherefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and
 20 good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it
 21 might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the command-
 22 ment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am
 23 carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not;
 24 but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law
 25 that *it is* good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I
 26 know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with
 27 me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do
 28 not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no
 29 more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do
 30 good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I
 31 see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into
 32 captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall
 33 deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So
 34 then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

WHEN the divine law, as interpreted and applied by Christ, reaches to the very depths of man's consciousness of sin; when it sets before him its inviolable sanctity and its irreversible obligations; when it forces him against his will to test himself by its solemn and searching light; when it reveals the depths of his sin and guilt, far, far below the careless, worldly thoughts and feelings that usually engross and blind the soul; when sin by the commandment becomes exceedingly sinful, and is pictured in all its blackness upon the vivid, stainless background of the imperial rule of rectitude; and when this supernal light is flashed into all the recesses of the quivering and guilty soul with a brightness clearer than that of the noonday's radiance—then, then it is that man comes to know himself, to know himself as a sinner not only against a holy law, but also against a holy God—to know the terrible power of his depravity and guilt as clinging to the very roots of his being. H. B. S.

When the aspiration after a purer, nobler life begins to rise within the breast, and the long-passive spirit rouses its energies to check the pride of evil, to force back and stay the current of unholy desire and passion; when the softening principle of divine love and grace begins to thaw the icy coldness of a godless heart, then it is that the soul becomes aware of the deadly strength of sin. Nor is it only in the first struggles of penitence that sin is revealed in its true character to the soul. With every increase of spirituality, whatever of evil remains in it becomes more repulsive to its keener sensibilities, more irksome to its aspiring energies. Faults and errors, unapparent or venial to its former consciousness, become in the

higher stages of the spiritual life more and more odious; and in the purest and best actions more of evil is now discerned than formerly in the basest and worst. The quickened conscience feels the drag of sin at each successive step the more heavy; and as the believing spirit yearns with an intenser longing for the life of God, with a more indignant impatience does the cry break from the lip: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" *Caird*.

PAUL's view of the Christian life, throughout the sixth, seventh, and eighth chapters, is that it consists of a death and a resurrection; the new-made Christian dies to sin, to the world, to the flesh, and to the law; this death he undergoes at his first entrance into communion with Christ. But no sooner is he thus dead with Christ, than he rises with him; he is made partaker of Christ's resurrection; he is united to Christ's body; he lives in Christ, and to Christ; he is no longer "in the flesh," but "in the spirit." C.

1-6. The illustration obviously describes a great change—a dissolution of old connections and a formation of new ones; the government of the law and the espousal to Christ are manifestly contrasted, and the readers are pointedly warned of the duties that belong to that great and blessed engagement. Paul has established the two great characteristics of the new dispensation—the *death* to sin which heralds the life to righteousness, and the *emancipation* from sin which gives the Christian freedom to the service of his God. With both these great ideas—prominent and governing ideas in his view—he enters upon the passage under consideration. In reaching it, however, his mind passes through, and takes the tincture of, an important *connecting* notion, the notion of the "fruits," the results in heart and habits, of the dispensations of law and grace. In the fourth and fifth verses it is said that we are "to bring forth *fruit* unto God" instead of "bringing forth *fruit* unto death"; and this blessed result is declared to follow upon the espousal in the allegory, upon our being "married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead." This passage, then, confirms, repeats, all that has gone before; it does not alter its bearings or displace its relations. Like it, it speaks of a soul that once lived to sin and lived to bondage; like it, of a death which exalts the same soul to righteousness and to freedom. How then shall we dispose the personages of the allegory, to harmonize perfectly with itself and with all that precedes and follows it? Shall we not say that *the Wife* indeed, the subject of the mighty change, represents the Soul; that the *deceased Husband*, whose claim or power expires, symbolizes, not the Law, but the Principle of Sin to which the Law ministered, and to which so much of the preceding chapter describes the regenerate soul as "dead"—dead to sin because sin is dead? And when Paul describes the woman as "loosed from the law of the husband," "free from that law," and "answerably *dead to the law*," shall we not plainly perceive that "the law" in the parable is not represented by the dead husband, but by "the law of the husband," the *matrimonial obligation*, which kept the soul in bondage as long as sin was alive, but which ceases for ever when sin, the soul's gloomy consort and tyrant, has expired? Under this interpretation all is complete and consistent. The law, by the universal principle of law, has dominion over the woman, as it has over all, as long as life lasts. But with death the obligation terminates; over her that is mystically dead the condemn-

ing law looses its stern control. How then is this death produced? The second and third verses purposely tell us, with a view to preparing the way for the new connection that is to follow that mysterious death. It is itself a result or necessary accompaniment of the death of the husband. Here is the momentous peculiarity of this case: the husband is the principle of sin, and the death of sin in the soul is the death of the soul unto sin. In this way, conformably to the apostle's assumption in the first verse, the power of the law—that is, in the allegory, the old matrimonial bond—expires; in point of fact, by the simultaneous death of both the parties, but mainly (for this is the chief scope of the whole) by the death of the wife, as he had said above (so exquisitely harmonious is the management of the figure all through), "the one that is *dead* is freed from sin." Thus is she freed from the obligation of her miserable bondage; she is enfranchised by him who has slain her accursed companion; through his victorious sacrifice, she is "dead to the law by the body of Christ." The death of sin and unto sin liberates from the law and opens the way for the new and celestial union. The law bound the wretched soul in servitude to sin, for "the strength of sin is the law"—it gave sin its sinfulness and gave no power to escape it; nor could this terrible espousal to evil be broken in the nature of things and God's providential dispensation, except by that decease of sin, which left the soul correspondingly "dead to sin," "dead, then, to the law" (which can only govern the living), and free to form the new and sacred union. The main subject of the allegory, then, is not the death of the law, but the death of the soul to sin and the law; it is this which assimilates it to the reasoning it follows, and incorporates it in the mass and current of the apostle's discourse. The interpretation which considers the deceased husband to be the conquered principle of sin is strongly confirmed by the form of expression in the fifth verse; while the sixth verse furnishes a proof that the two great subjects of life and service were never out of the apostle's calculation through all this comparison, and hence as a proof how closely it is connected with the entire. Summing up the past discussion before he proceeds to a new one, he recalls again the two main characteristics of the gift of God which he had bound together in the illustration—the death to sin and the new service to Christ. "We are delivered from the law, that—namely, sin—being *dead* (or, 'we being dead to that') wherein we were held; that we should *serve* in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter." Surely this, a professed *inference* from the passage we have discussed, evidences that that passage itself must contain these elements; must embody in one forcible example the fundamental doctrines of the spiritual death to sin as the great initial step in the Christian course, and the fruits of *obedience* to God as the manifestation of the spiritual resurrection.

4. You are dead to the law as a sole covenant of life, for it is "the ministration of death"; you

are dead to it as a *principle* of life, for "the letter killeth" and "the flesh profiteth nothing." To this law you are "dead" in being dead to sin; you stand in the same relationship to it as those whom men call dead, but who indeed are "alive unto God"—who, "through the grave and gate of death," have passed into another world and a higher form of existence. The law—solitary and terrible—was as such an element in the old world of sin and weakness; it was the curse suspended over the head that could not stir to escape it. All perfect indeed, for it was a copy of the mind of God; but dreadful to behold, for it was above the strength of man. It was the presence of Jehovah in a world unworthy of him; and it consumed where it shone. To this frowning and fearful avenger you are dead, "the body of Christ" has wrought this glorious decease, the lightnings of heaven have fallen on Calvary and expired there, and you can now triumph by *death* as He has done! W. A. B.

6. "We are delivered from the law, that we should serve in newness of the spirit, not in oldness of the letter." The spiritual man acts, not from the thought of external command or of external denunciation. He is a law unto himself. The impulses and instincts of "the divine nature," of which the saved are "partakers," make duty a necessity, labor a delight, obedience a spontaneous service, conformity to the law a privilege and a joy! T. B.

7-11. He gives an actual experience of his own; he states what none can deny, and what finds an echo in the history of a thousand souls. "The law is *not* sin"; far be the thought. Yet (not "*nay*," which obscures and blunders the whole) so near is the law to being sin, that the law first introduced me to sin—first made me acquainted with it. But how? I was in the habit of coveting. I did it, unconscious of any fault. But the law *came* in, became heeded by me, with its voice, "Thou shalt not covet"; and my coveting started up into sin, became sinful to me, and in my esteem. And, as we are ever prone to enjoy that which is forbidden, sin thus got life and zest for me, and I indulged in all manner of coveting, just because stolen waters were sweet, and sin wrought upon my human perverseness. Before this forbidding voice spoke within me, before the commandment "*came*," I lived; was alive and well; enjoyed a kind of innocence and free will of my own; but after this, not I, but sin in me, lived and wrought its will. And the very prohibition which was for life, by waking up the sense of sin and the desire for sin, killed *me*, set me lusting for that evil which is death, and slew my free will and my former peace and joy. Yet notice that it was not the commandment itself, but sin, the sinful principle in me, awakened into life by the commandment,

that thus killed me: and the commandment only brought out that which was there before, but latent and dormant: brought it out for good, and for the behalf and the life of the better and worthier "I," the "I" in conflict with sin, the complex man, the "I Paul" of the time present. A.

9-11. Paul himself rested contented with his pharisaism and outward righteousness, until, by a serious application of the rule, he found *that* to be a *merit of death* which he had formerly reckoned upon as a *plea for life*. Not until the law came with its spiritual power did Paul look upon himself as a doomed and devoted malefactor, thankful for the offered pardon of the gospel, and humbly acquiescing in its proposals, and its ways for his acceptance with God. T. M.

Amiability of natural character, correctness of moral deportment, strict integrity in our dealings with our fellow-men, are not the holiness which the law requires. In the believer these acts are the fruit of supreme love to God, entire submission of spirit to his sovereign authority, and apprehension of the beauty and blessedness of holiness. In the natural mind the *very same* acts are the fruit of self-love, desire of esteem, pride of character, self-righteousness. Hence these actions, good in themselves and wisely ordered for the preservation of the frame of society, are so far from being holiness in the eye of the heart-searching God, that they are often *direct evidences of enmity* to him, in those who perform them; and when the defects of all such obedience are exposed in the light of the holy law of God, the enmity will instantly discover itself. *Good.*

Law constantly keeps in advance of our performance, and yet condemns us for not keeping up with it. With the august and awful splendor of its purity, it frowns upon our pollution, shames our inconsistencies, threatens our guilt. The farther we go in complying with its demands, the keener our sense of its perfection grows; the higher the standard rises, the clearer the command sounds, and the more hopeless our self-disgust and our agony become. There is no satisfaction there. Just in proportion as we come consciously under law, and *law alone*, we are wretched. It is warning, and nothing but warning. Paul's wondrous spiritual insight saw that; and so he says, in his energetic phrase, that sin comes by the law; the strength of sin is the law; when the commandment came, sin revived. That is, by the law, the rule of right, comes a knowledge of transgression. No law, no violation of law—and so no accusing conscience. And the more law, that is, the more clearly you see the command, the more sin. This is logical; and it is experimental. F. D. H.

12. The Christian hath now nothing to do with the law as it thundereth and burneth on Sinai, or as

it bindeth the conscience to wrath and the displeasure of God for sin; for from its thus appearing he is freed by faith in Christ. Yet he is to have regard thereto, and is to count it holy, just, and good; which that he may do, he is always to remember that he who giveth it to us is *merciful, gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.* *Bun.*

13. In what we call the *moral* world there is an element which is absolutely, intrinsically, wholly, and always *bad*. Its very name is, with emphasis, *EVIL*; we call it also *vice, depravity, wickedness*, and, in Scriptural language, it is named *SIN*. It is the *Divine Law*, amply and spiritually apprehended, that must expose the malignity of sin—displaying the essential nature and principle of “*that abominable thing*” (to make the true devil stand confessed), while it names or defines, generally and in detail, the things that are sin—the practical forms which it takes in doing its mischief among the creatures of God. It is this law, clearly and solemnly manifested and apprehended, that exposes the true quality of sin—shows it to be exceedingly *sinful*—its own name being the worst word that could be found to express its quality. J. F.

Sin is not something which has penetrated into our nature from the outside; it is not learned like a lesson of evil, nor caught like an infectious disease. It has its springs in the very sources of our being. It can not be torn up by the roots. It can not be treated by any medicine which discipline, or education, or example can supply. There is one power, and one only, which can lay hands on the enemy with whom we are contending; and that power is the power that first made the soul itself. He who stands as it were behind the secret fountains from which our being issues, he and he alone can deal with this awful disease by which we are all afflicted; he and he alone can attack sin in the very citadel of its dominion, and win the victory which we could never win. Our justification must come from him, and therefore must begin with that which he puts into us, that movement of the heart and conscience, which we call faith; and can not come from the regulation and discipline of our habits and our deeds, which is what is meant by works. The regulation of the deeds is excellent, but it is still absolutely and always subordinate. F. T.

15, 16. Those sins shall never be a Christian's bane that are now his greatest burden. It is not falling into the water, but lying in the water, that drowns. It is not falling into sin, but lying in sin, that destroys the soul. If sin and thy heart are two, Christ and thy heart are one. *Brooks.*—Every child of God knows that he is justified by faith only: and that true faith necessarily begets holiness and good works. Yet in the knowledge of this

truth many a gracious soul goes to work quite at the wrong end, and thereby loses both the privilege and comfort of looking as a sinner directly at Christ. The Scripture exhortations show us more what we ought to be than what any attain to. But try the secret workings of thy heart. Dost thou consent unto the law that it is good? Is sin thy grief and burden; and though it prevail again and again, dost thou strive and pray against it? If such be the workings of the heart, be assured that it proceeds from the blowings of the sweet Spirit of grace upon thy garden; and though the fruits and blossoms may be blown off by the nipping blasts of sin and temptation, yet there is life in the root, which will surely sprout out again, and endure unto everlasting life. *Hill.*

19. The godly man hates the evil he possibly by temptation hath been drawn to do, and loves the good he is frustrated of, and, having intended, hath not attained to do. The sinner, who hath his denomination from sin as his course, hates the good which sometimes he is forced to do, and loves that sin which many times he does not, either wanting occasion and means so that he can not do it, or through the check of an enlightened conscience possibly dares not do; and though so bound up from the act, yet the habit, the natural inclination and desire in him, is still the same, the strength of his affection is carried to sin. So, in the weakest sincere Christian, there is that predominant sincerity and desire of holy walking, according to which he is called a righteous person: the Lord is pleased to give him that name and account him so, being upright in heart though often failing. L.—The Christian has within him both flesh and spirit, yet he is not a double-minded man; he is often led captive by the law of sin, yet it never gets dominion over him; he can not sin, yet he can do nothing without sin. He does nothing against his will, yet maintains he does what he would not. *Bacon.*

20. It is one great work of the Spirit of God to make us feel this distinctness between us and the evil which is in us. The good and the evil are no longer in a state of blind contradiction, but of distinct, self-conscious opposition. The renewed man knows that he has an adversary, but, for his comfort, he knows also that this adversary is not his very self, but another, so that, if he resist him, he will flee from him; he knows that the power which that other exercises over him is a usurpation, and that it will be a righteous thing for God to cast out him who obtained that power by fraud and violence. T.

21, 22. Whoever he may be that is speaking, he says in one verse, “I would do good”; in another, “I delight in the law of God”; and surely these are expressions which never yet came with truth from

unhallowed lips, that never could come from any but a renewed heart. Besides, this complaint itself marks the character of him who uttered it. It designates one hating sin in a very extraordinary degree, and striving against it with every power of his soul; and Paul himself was a man of this class. We infer, therefore, that the apostle is describing his own feelings in this passage, and consequently right feelings, exactly those feelings which in a world like this we should expect to find in a partially renewed mind. And he speaks here not merely as a Christian, but as a very experienced Christian; as one arrived at a state of rare maturity in grace, a state in which sin appears to the mind, as it appears to the divine mind, an intolerable evil, a thing so hateful that the very remains of it are not to be endured; they must be got rid of, at all events they must be controlled and counteracted, or the heart will break. And the holiest will be the most willing to take this view, and never so ready to look at it in this light as in their holiest hours. C. B.—Was not this Paul's malady, *When I would do good, evil is present with me?* But know once, that though thy duty is to *eschew evil and do good*, yet thy salvation is more surely founded than on thine own good. That perfection which answers justice and the law is not required of thee: Thou art *to walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit*; but in so walking, whether in a low or high measure, still thy comfort lieth in this, that *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*, as the apostle begins the next chapter after his sad complaints. So then mourn with him and yet rejoice with him, and go on with courage as he did; still *fighting the good fight of faith*. L.

It is not to be supposed that Christians ever have any experiences in this world that are wholly pure, entirely spiritual, without any mixture of what is natural and carnal. The beam of light, as it comes from the *fountain of light* upon our hearts, is pure, but as it is reflected thence it is mixed; the seed, as sent from heaven and planted in the heart, is pure, but as it springs up out of the heart, is impure; there is commonly a much greater mixture than persons for the most part seem to have any imagination of. Edwards.

Grace and nature both act in a regenerate man, and both at once. Nature only acts in an unregenerate man. So that, though sin be directly contrary to the Christian's walk, and as regenerate he hates it and can not commit it, yet the old nature in a believer can never love holiness. Hence that continual, never-ceasing war in a child of God between flesh and Spirit, sin and grace, the law in the members and the law in the mind. The law of grace must finally triumph over the law of sin. During this desperate combat all the believer's confidence is in

Christ, in whom he is always "complete," and in whom he has such a righteousness as neither the law, sin, death, hell, nor the grave can sully or find fault with. Paul did not talk about the *remainder of indwelling sin*: his complaints were of "a body of sin," a "law in his members warring against the law in his mind." I feel, by sad experience, that my own nature, which I carry about with me here below, is earthly and selfish; but I know, by infallible truth, that my own nature, which is in Christ, is perfectly pure and holy, "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." A believer is imperfectly a new creature in himself: perfectly a new creature in Christ. Hill.

24, 25. He complains of himself and he rejoices in Christ almost at the same instant. He is comforted in the very midst of his wretchedness. Nay, in one sense, he owes his comfort to his wretchedness. It sends him to his God. It brings him near that blessed Comforter, in whom is treasured up a ready and full relief for all his sorrows. Look on him as he stands alone, he is "of all men the most miserable"; view him as leaning on his beloved Lord, and there is not a being out of heaven so happy. "Sorrowful yet always rejoicing, having nothing and yet possessing all things," his whole life is a glorious paradox. "I thank God," he says, and says it often, and says it joyfully, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ my Lord. He has given me deliverance. Sin lives in me still, but he does not suffer it to reign." Turn then to the blameless Paul, to him of whom, after his conversion to God, the Holy Ghost has not left on record one sin or one folly. What says his experience? It tells you that there may be conflict in a pardoned heart; and it tells you more—that there may be in that very heart, amidst all its conflicts, a sense of forgiveness, a triumphant assurance of pardon. It tells you that a man may groan under a sense of sin, and yet look on himself as an heir of glory. C. B.

The Progress of Grace.—The awakened soul sees the evil of sin, the spirituality of the law, and the holiness of God. In these views he can behold nothing but wrath and condemnation before him. He resolves upon better obedience. The Spirit discovers to him more and more the law's spirituality. His very best actions fall short of its infinite demands: all he does, all he is, all he has, is tainted with sin. Then the Spirit shows him that the gospel looks for no goodness in the creature, and that it gives a free welcome to all sorts and degrees of sinners, without exception; that, as no holiness foreseen in him could move God to love him and give him his grace, so no sins in him could induce God to hate him and to deny him that grace. In proportion as these discoveries are made to him, all the

objections which self-righteousness and unbelief can bring fall, like so many Dragons, before the mighty truth, that "Christ died for the ungodly." From these views spring a sincere desire of obedience, hatred of sin as such, and desire and purpose to forsake it. *Hill.*

Section 245.

ROMANS viii. 1-13.

1 **THERE** *is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk
2 not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus
3 hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that
4 it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and
5 for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in
6 us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do
7 mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.
8 For to be carnally minded *is* death; but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. Because
9 the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither
10 indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in
11 the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man
12 have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead
13 because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him
14 that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead
15 shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren,
16 we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh,
17 ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

TAKE all the guilt of all who believe, past or present, the laver of Jesus' blood avails to cleanse it away. God is *satisfied* for it. "There is *no condemnation* to them that are in Christ Jesus." "Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Mic. 7 : 19). The justification of the believer is not an imperfect work, so that he may be justified to-day and condemned again to-morrow: it varies not with the variations of his feelings: the work on the faith of which justification rests is a *finished* work; and, therefore, if once recognized as mine, it must eternally clear me from all possible charge. The fluctuations of faith will cause fluctuations in my *enjoyment* of Christ's salvation; but the salvation itself is unchangeable. Satan may bring a charge of sin, and succeed in fixing it upon the conscience, through my indistinct apprehension of Christ's sufficiency; but God brings no charge; and therefore the apostle proclaims that triumphant challenge, "It is *God that justifieth*; who is he that condemneth?" Therefore, with the impossibility of *condemnation* of the believer, he declares the impossibility of *separation* from "the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Here, then, let the tempted Christian take his stand, and hold fast this vital truth, when a daily sense of his hated evil, yet warring in his members, oppresses him, and arrays God in terrors. Jesus has *made an end of sin*. When it is brought in penitential acknowledgment to the Cross of Christ, that blood, sprinkled upon the conscience, takes it all away. God remembers it no more. *Goode.*

1. Omit the clause "*who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*" It has probably been interpolated here from verse 4. In sense, at first sight, it fits in well; here, as there, being a distinctive and correct statement of *those in Christ* to whom there is no condemnation; but on looking further, it clearly appears to be out of place here, since at present the assertion is *general*, respecting all those who are in Christ, and afterward the distinction is raised, and their true and spiritual character defined. **A.**

No condemnation. At the blessed moment of justification, the sinner is at once admitted to the favor of God. He is accepted as righteous. The law is as fully satisfied with regard to him as if he had never sinned. The righteousness of Christ is now his righteousness. He can no more come into condemnation than Christ can come into condemnation. He is delivered from the guilt and penalty of all his sins. With regard to sins which he may hereafter commit, he is not indeed pardoned; because it would be incongruous to say that sins are

pardoned before they are committed; but God has graciously accepted the righteousness of Christ even in respect to these, and in process of time pardon is dispensed. The effect of this grace is to remove all condemnation and all punishment. That sin which has been visited on the Surety will not be visited on us. The afflictions of this life are not legal pains, but fatherly trials and corrections. And death itself, being deprived of sin which is its sting, and the law which is its strength, is despoiled of all its punitive force. J. W. A.

2. There are three great forms of law, to which our immortal being bears an inevitable and eternal relation. These are, first, the Law of God for our government; second, the Law of Sin and Death in our depraved nature; third, the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. Under the first we are, as immortal beings, eternally responsible; under the second we are, if not redeemed by grace, eternally in bondage; under the third we are not in subjection naturally, but may, by divine grace, if we will, be brought beneath its blessed power, redeemed by it from sin for ever. **Hath made me free.** The work of grace shall conquer the work of depravity; the law of the Spirit of life in Christ shall set free the soul from the law of sin and death. Nothing else could do it, nothing external to the soul, nothing that did not work within the soul as a principle of life. By this new principle introduced, the man is set at liberty to serve God out of love, no longer bound in slavery to the law of sin and death in an evil nature. This is the great deliverance; this is freedom indeed. G. B. C.

The spiritual and the vitally eternal are united in Scripture phraseology, whenever it has occasion to speak of the "law of the *Spirit of life*," of that "Spirit" which "is LIFE because of righteousness," of that "spiritual-mindedness" which "is LIFE" as well as "peace." The more you rest upon these profound sayings, the more you will feel that they speak of some mystic intimacy of inward connection, which answers to all that we can conceive of an absolute *unity* of nature; and that, had we faculties to see these things, we might perceive that a *deathless* permanence belongs to the spiritual thing inherent in the regenerate mind, if it indeed evidence its genuineness by there abiding and fructifying through the earthly life. W. A. B.

3-5. *The gospel is the heir of the law*; it inherits what the law had prepared. The law, on its national and ceremonial side, had created a vast and closely woven system of ideas. These were wrought out and exhibited by it in forms according to the flesh—an elect nation, a miraculous history, a special covenant, a worldly sanctuary, a perpetual service, an anointed priesthood, a ceremonial sanctity, a scheme of sacrifice and atonement, a purchased

possession, a holy city, a throne of David, a destiny of dominion. Were these ideas to be lost, and the language which expressed them to be dropped, when the gospel came? No! It was the heir of the law. The law had prepared these riches, and now bequeathed them to a successor able to unlock and to diffuse them. The gospel claimed them all, and developed in them a value unknown before. It asserted itself as the proper and predestined continuation of the covenant made of God with the fathers, the real and only fulfilment of all which was typified and prophesied; presenting the same ideas, which had been before embodied in the narrow but distinct limits of carnal forms, in their spiritual, universal, and eternal character. The body of types according to the flesh died with Christ, and with Christ it rose again a body of antitypes according to the Spirit. Those who were after the flesh could not recognize its identity; those who were after the Spirit felt and proclaimed it. T. D. B.

There never was a better law than the moral law, nor was legislation ever attended with circumstances better fitted to secure the perfect love and obedience of men. But in that beautifully simple way in which the Bible relates the thoughts of God as of a man, this is spoken of as an experiment that failed, leading the law-giver to devise another expedient. In the words, For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, we have a striking confession of weakness even in the law of God, on account of strength superior to it in the stubbornness of the human heart. But the law of God still holds its place, only there is a gospel added to make the law efficacious; for the expedient resorted to, for the purpose of reaching the transgressor by the atonement, aims to reestablish the law of God as the rule of duty. N. A.

3. **Condemned sin.** As the crucifixion was not the whole of the sacrifice offered up by Christ for the sins of the world, but only its closing, perfecting act—as the whole of our Saviour's life was one continual sacrifice for sin—so was it one continual warfare against sin, and victory over sin, and judgment against sin. *Hare.*—When Jesus came the Sun of Righteousness arose, darkness was scattered, and the light of God's glory, reflected from the face of his Son, darted its rays through heaven, earth, and hell. The Cross became the center of universal attraction, displayed the perfections of Deity in singular and rare combination, and was the source at once of rapture to angels, of terror to the lost, and of hope to men. The death of Christ is without doubt the sublimest event in the annals of time or the records of eternity. And in what a light does it present the malignity of sin! What a commentary upon its intrinsic demerit and turpitude is furnished in the groans, agony, and anguish of the

Son of God! In the Cross it is proclaimed, in living characters, to be the abominable thing which God hates. J. H. T.

4. The law of the Ten Commandments is still the *rule of life* to the believer. From the law, *as a covenant*, we are *eternally delivered*, through Christ. We may plead our title to heaven on the ground of our perfect fulfillment of its righteousness, inasmuch as Christ's fulfillment of it is imputed to us who believe. We may plead perfect exemption from its curse; for Christ has been "made a curse for us." As a means, therefore, of meriting life, we have *nothing whatever to do with the terms of it*. Eternal life is *given us* in Christ. But we are *therefore* "delivered from the law," "*that the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us*, who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The law of Christ is indeed a law of love; but still, this "new commandment" is the "old commandment which ye had from the beginning." Goode.—The apostle represents the same fact and the same truth which provides for the forgiveness of sin as the source and instrument of deliverance from its dominion. It reconciles to God, and it makes like him. It excites love to duty, and loyalty to law; it renders obedience possible and attractive; it supplies motives, aids, and facilities, grace to help and power to pursue, making work pleasant and service song. T. B.

5. The influence of education may develop in a beautiful symmetry the constitutional excellences. It may repress constitutional excesses and correct constitutional vices. It may cultivate the natural sentiments, refine the tastes, exalt and ennoble the temper and tone of the mind, give dignity and grace to the manners, light and authority to conscience, force and principle to character. It may inspire respect and reverence for the rites and solemnities of religion, form religious habits, and fill the breast with high religious veneration. But there are some things it can not do: it can not shed abroad the love of God in the heart, nor displace our natural enmity to God, nor bring the soul under the power of the Cross, nor diffuse through it the spirit of Jesus, nor teach it to live by faith, nor introduce into it any one of those fruits of the Holy Spirit, without which all virtue is reprobate, all religion a name or a delusion, and all check upon native depravity ineffectual and temporary. T. H. S.

6. For the spiritual being, man, the only real life is in goodness. Only so far as we share in the Father's goodness, are we partakers in *his* life. The measure of our being, as living souls, is precisely the measure of our excellence. In proportion as our actions are in harmony with divine laws, and our familiar frame of feeling with God's will, we live. Herein is the apostolic saying true, "To be spiritually minded is life." F. D. H.

In verse 7, for "*is not subject . . . neither indeed can be*," substitute "doth not submit itself . . . neither indeed can it." A.—While we are saved by believing, yet believing is obeying. We accept Christ by renouncing sin, by subjecting our will to his will, by walking in his steps. The carnal mind, or, more exactly, *carnal-mindedness*—a state of mind in which the affections and aims are fixed upon the things of this world as the chief good—such love of the world is in opposition to the will of God, and can never be reconciled to the law of God. J. P. T.—The object of the gospel is both to pacify the sinner's conscience and to purify his heart, and what mars the one of these objects mars the other also. The best way of casting out an impure affection is to admit a pure one, and by the love of what is good to expel the love of what is evil. Thus, the freer the gospel, the more sanctifying is the gospel; and the more it is received as a doctrine of grace, the more will it be felt as a doctrine according to godliness. This is one of the secrets of the Christian life, that the more a man holds of God as a pensioner, the greater is the payment of service that he renders back again. On the tenure of "Do this and live," a spirit of fearfulness is sure to enter; and the jealousies of a legal bargain chase away all confidence from the intercourse between God and man; and the creature, striving to be square and even with his Creator, is, in fact, pursuing all the while his own selfishness, instead of God's glory; and, with all the conformities which he labors to accomplish, the soul of obedience is not there, the mind is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed, under such an economy, ever can be. T. C.

8. **Cannot please God.** The impossibility arises from the enmity. This is the real secret of man's inability for that which is good: it arises not from original constitution, defect of created capacity thereto, but is the deadly and unconquerable aversion of a corrupt heart from all that is spiritual and godly. So that this inability for good, real as it is, instead of being an excuse for man's wickedness, is of its very essence. Goode.

9. **The Spirit of Christ.** By his sacred signature we are appropriated to Christ, and visibly distinguished from the world. For though the secret and pure influences of the Spirit in the soul are only known to the person that feels them, yet his active inspirations are declarative of his presence and power in the outward conversation. Bates.

The Holy Ghost lives in the soul under this dispensation as the Spirit of Christ; we are not to regard him in the mere simplicity of his infinite deity, but as sent forth by the God and man, Christ Jesus, as his; nor is the abiding presence of this holy principle less essentially divine because bestowed and

operative under special conditions and a special aspect. On this account he is perpetually described by titles which impress how truly his function is transmissory of perfections that dwell in Christ, and are ours only because his. The Spirit is the "Spirit of the Son," the "Spirit of Jesus Christ." W. A. B.

Christ is eminently present with us by the presence of his Spirit. He is with us invisibly, but as truly as he was in the streets of Jerusalem or on the shores of the lake of Galilee; and the children of the Spirit see him, contemplate him, cling to him, as did the disciples of old. H. P. L.—No rich, nor beautiful, nor accepted life can be lived by us, except Christ be its inspiration. Hope will not reach up to immortality, except it climb by the Cross. Let not your lives be dead shapes of outward decency—the carved and gilded wood of an ark and a tabernacle deserted by the Spirit—but vital branches, filled with leaping and vigorous currents of holy feeling, on the living vine! "For if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." F. D. H.

10. If Christ is in us, a great part of our original nature with which we were born must be dead. He uses the expressions, dead unto sin, being crucified with Christ, the body must be dead because of sin, and the like, in order to show us that what he means is very great; that he speaks of a great change in us, a change not to be wrought in an instant, nor by any means to be effected without our feeling it, like the various processes of our bodily growth and nourishment, which go on unconsciously within us. T. A.—**The Spirit is life.** God the Holy Ghost calls us, regenerates us, and sanctifies us in Christ. Christ is his call; Christ is his light; Christ is his justifying sentence. It is in Christ that he creates us as new creatures. He glorifies Christ in our life, and brings us, for the strengthening of our faith, ever deeper into the life with Christ. A. C.

11. The regeneration of the soul in this life, and that of the body in the life to come, are both expressly said to make us "the sons of God," because the one only completes and consummates the other. And hence it is that Paul in the one supernatural gift finds the source of both the blessings. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." The Spirit which gives the

adoption here is the germ of the Spirit which gives the resurrection hereafter; and the resurrection itself is but the adoption made visible in glory. W. A. B.

—The glorious, corporeal life like our Lord's, which is promised for heaven, is great and wonderful, but it is only the issue and last result of the far greater change in the spiritual nature which by faith and love begins here. It is good to be clothed with the immortal vesture of the resurrection, and in that to be like Christ. It is better to be like him in our hearts. His true image is that we should feel as he does, should think as he does, should will as he does; that we should have the same sympathies, the same loves, the same attitude toward God, and the same attitude toward men. It is that his heart and ours should beat in full accord, as with one pulse, and possessing one life. Wherever there is the beginning of that oneness and likeness of spirit, all the rest will come in due time. As the spirit, so the body. The whole nature must be transformed and made like Christ's, and the process will not stop till that be accomplished in all who love him. A. M.

12. Get thou thy soul possessed with the Spirit of the Son, and believe thou art perfectly set free by him from whatsoever thou by sin hast deserved at the hand of revenging justice. This doctrine unlooseth thy hands, takes off thy yoke, and lets thee go upright; this doctrine puts spiritual and heavenly inclinations into thy soul, and the faith of this truth doth show thee that God hath so surprised thee and gone beyond thee with his blessed and everlasting love that thou canst not but reckon thyself his debtor for ever. "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors not to the flesh, to live after the flesh." Bun.

13. *Spiritual quiet is promoted by the mortification of sin.* Sin is the sole cause of all the discord, perturbation, and misery in the universe. The Holy Spirit begins at regeneration a work which is to end in extirpation of all sin. If you catalogue the causes of your discontent, your restlessness, your excitement, your feverish fretfulness, you will find the names to be such as these: Pride, Hate, Envy, Revenge, Anger, Lust, Covetousness, Fear, Inordinate Affection. Till these caged wild beasts are driven out of the soul, there can be no quietness; sanctification drives them out. Therefore, the more a man advances in piety, the more his inward tranquillity ought to increase. The day grows calmer as the sun draws near its setting. J. W. A.

Section 246.

ROMANS viii. 14-27.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have
 15 not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adop-
 16 tion, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that
 17 we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with
 18 Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together. For I
 reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy to be compared with the glory
 19 which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the
 20 manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not will-
 21 ingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope, because the creature
 itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the
 22 children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain
 23 together until now. And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of
 the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the
 24 redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope:
 25 for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, *then*
 26 do we with patience wait for *it*. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we
 know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession
 27 for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth
 what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to
the will of God.

UNLESS we are wedded to Jesus Christ by the simple act of trust in his mercy and his power, Christ is *nothing to us*. Ceremonies are nothing, notions are nothing, beliefs are nothing, formal participation in worship is nothing. Christ is everything to him that trusts him. You can begin upon the low step on which you can put your foot, the humble act of faith, and can climb up. If faith, then new birth; if new birth, then sonship; if sonship, then "an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ." But if you have not got your foot upon the lowest round of the ladder, you will never come within sight of the blessed face of Him who stands at the top of it, and who looks down to you at this moment, saying to you, "My child, *will thou not cry unto me, 'Abba, Father'?*" A. M.

A profound Christian truth may be clothed in the language of a heathen proverb: "A divine spirit is within us who treats us as he is treated by us." We may offer our supplications, with no penetrating sense of the *necessity* of supernatural aid. There may be no childlike consciousness of infirmity which should lead us to cry out for help. The inspired words, often on our lips, may seldom come from the depth of our hearts: "We know not what we should pray for as we ought." We make prayer itself one of the standard subjects of prayer; yet on what theme do our devotions more frequently degenerate into routine than on this? Have we a sense of indigence when we ask for the indwelling of God in our souls? Have we such a sense of need of it, as we have of the need of air when we are gasping with faintness? It is the law of divine blessing that want comes before wealth, hunger before a feast. We must experience the necessity in order to appreciate the reality. A. P.

14. Led by the Spirit. The term here employed refers to an even, constant, unbroken force, acting not less powerfully on the mind because it acts gently and steadily: the leading of a Spirit who abides always at his gracious work on the heart, and does not come and go. Those who are so led, and are willing, in the yielding up and surrender of their hearts, to be so led by this faithful Spirit of God, are called by the noblest of all titles, and share the most exalted of all honors. "They are the sons of

God." F. D. H.—What vaunt of faith more sublime and beautiful than that which is here expressed? and what privilege on earth can be named at the same time as that of being guided by the Spirit of God, and of being in truth his children? *Van O.*

15. Abba. The Syriac term for *father*, the insertion of which here beautifully represents the union of Jewish and Gentile believers in their devotions, which were dictated by a filial spirit. D.—**Father.** The sense of fatherhood, which is in the

Christian's heart and becomes his cry, comes from God's Spirit. This passage and that in the Epistle to the Galatians, which is almost parallel, put this truth very forcibly when taken in connection. "Ye have received," says the text before us, "the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." The variation in the Epistle to the Galatians is this: "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, *crying* (the Spirit crying), Abba, Father." So, in the one text, the cry is regarded as the voice of the believing heart; and in the other the same cry is regarded as the voice of God's Spirit. Every Christian may be sure of this, that, howsoever feeble may be the thought and conviction in his heart of God's fatherhood, *he* did not work it, he received it only, cherished it, thought of it, watched over it, was careful not to quench it; but in origin it was God's, and it is now and ever the voice of the divine Spirit in the child's heart. A. M.—To call God *Father* was rare among the saints in Old Testament times; but now, in New Testament times, he is called by no name so often as this. The Lord Jesus first made this name common among the saints, and taught them in their discourses, their prayers, and their writings, so much to use it. By this name we are made to understand that all our mercies are of God, and that we, who are his children by adoption, may take more boldness to pray for great things. I have often found that, when I can say but this word, *Father*, it doth me more good than when I call him by any other Scripture name. Bun.—A father's love, not content in securing the good of its object, looks for a warm return of the same personal fondness. Is a father satisfied in providing a fortune for his children, and in sending them well abroad, just as a legal guardian might do? A father must have a reciprocity of love or he is not happy. The heart of a father yearns to receive, every day, the undoubted expressions of filial affection. Is then God our Father? The gospel declares it as a fundamental truth; and it shows that this language of sacred affection is to be understood, not in a sense lowered and vague as compared with that which it bears in its ordinary acceptation, but in a sense of incalculably greater intensity and depth. I. T.

18. When the child of God is led to prayer, to the Scriptures, and to Christ—when these become the necessities of his life and soul—then the Holy Spirit bears witness to his adoption. A. C.—The witness of the Spirit is far from being any immediate suggestion or revelation; but that gracious effect of the Spirit of God in the hearts of saints: the disposition and temper of children appearing in a sweet, childlike love of God which casts out fear or the spirit of the slave. The Spirit of God gives the evidence by infusing and shedding abroad the love

of God, the spirit of the child in the heart, and our spirit receives and declares this evidence for our rejoicing. Edwards.—The heart with its love, the head with its understanding, the conscience with its quick response to the law of duty, the will with its resolutions—these are all, as sanctified by Him, the witness of his Spirit; and the life with its strenuous obedience, with its struggles against sin and temptation, with its patient persistence in the quiet path of ordinary duty, as well as with the times when it rises into heroic stature of resignation or allegiance, the martyrdom of death and the martyrdom of life, this too is all (in so far as it is pure and right) the work of that same Spirit. The test of the inward conviction is the outward life; and they that have the witness of the Spirit within them have the light of their life lit by the Spirit of God, whereby they may read the handwriting on the heart, and be sure that it is God's and not their own!

17. Given, the sonship—if it is to be worked out into power and beauty, there must be suffering with Christ. But, unless there be sonship, there is no possibility of inheriting God; discipline and suffering will be of no use at all. A. M.—Along with the dark hours, the days of heavy sorrow, comes the Holy Spirit, whom the Saviour promised to send, and lifts up man's downcast eyes from temporal things to eternal; he raises the fearing heart to prayer, and intercedes for it with unutterable groanings; he purifies, comforts, strengthens it; and through the dark clouds of affliction which surround us, he shows the bright form of the Saviour. Thus in our afflictions is Christ glorified in us by the Holy Spirit. The word of life, which we had so often disregarded or misunderstood, comes suddenly before our soul with wonderful clearness; and the sorrowing heart finds therein, what the glad heart did not seek, a sacred, inexhaustible fountain of life, and that rich, heavenly consolation which this world can not give. Thus, in proportion as a man's temporal life grows dark, his eternal life brightens: through painful experience and bitter grief the Spirit leads him to Him who cries, "Come to me." And he who in his hour of need has once received grace for grace from the Lord's fullness, can not turn away from Him again: he can not but cleave more and more closely to him, and receive his divine life into himself. For he has lost what was perishable, and has gained what is imperishable. His lot is the highest that can befall a man: Jesus Christ is glorified in him. Hossbach.

Together. There are *seven* *togethers* in Scripture which show the wondrous identification of the Lord Jesus Christ with believers. They indicate the everlasting purpose of God in our redemption, and his plan in effecting that purpose. It is affirmed of

us by the Spirit, in the word, that we are *crucified together* with Christ; *quickened together* with Christ; *raised together* with Christ; *seated together* with Christ in heavenly places; *sufferers together* with Christ; *heirs together* with Christ; and that we are to be *glorified together* with Christ. These seven togethers are seven links of a chain which binds us indissolubly to Christ. *An.*

19-23. The expression "*in hope*" should be taken from the end of the twentieth verse and placed at the commencement of the twenty-first; the conjunction should be translated "*that*" instead of "*because*"; and the twenty-first verse, connected with the nineteenth, allowing for the intervening parenthesis, would thus read: "*The earnest expectation of the creature looketh for the revelation of the sons of God, in hope that the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption,*" i. e., death; to which the apostle afterward opposes "*the redemption of the body,*" or the resurrection into the glorious liberty of the children of God. "*For we know that the whole creation,*" or every rational creature, "*groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they,*" i. e., the whole heathen world, "*but ourselves,*" the believers in the gospel of Christ, "*who have received the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, namely, the redemption of our body*"—the resurrection, and consequent full revelation, of our dignity and immortal glory as the sons of God. Such is the meaning of this passage, in which the apostle, to give importance to the subject of future glory, represents it as the object of longing desire to the whole rational creation, the various tribes of which are exhibited as lifting up their heads from beneath the bondage of misery and death, and directing an exploring eye and eager hope toward IMMORTALITY, as that alone which could relieve their sorrows and satisfy their desires. They knew not with certainty that there was such a state; their notions were obscure and fluctuating; it was rather a wish than a belief: but it was that which they may be truly said to have groaned after, as what alone could compensate for the sorrows and the brevity of human life. This most striking and beautiful passage has no reference to the brute creation, as groaning under the effects of man's sin, and from which they will be delivered by a resurrection; no reference to any physical change to be produced during the millennium in the material world, now by a bold figure represented as burdened and pained by human guilt; for what has this to do with the context, or with the design of the apostle, which is to comfort believers under the sufferings of this mortal state? but it relates to that glory, honor, and eternal life, which God has promised to them that love him. *J. A. J.*

19. By the "*manifestation of the sons of God*" is meant *their being arrayed in the glory of their Lord and Saviour*, in the presence of the universe. It is not merely the inherent glory of their perfected humanity; nor the glory of their final triumph over death and hell; nor the glory of the bright abode and the blessed fellowship into which they will have been introduced; but with, and above all these glories, the yet more effulgent glory reflected upon them from their glorified Head and Prince,

himself "*the brightness of the Father's glory.*" This is to be their "*manifestation.*" *H. A. B.*

21. The glorious liberty. It should be "*the liberty of the glory of the children of God*": that liberty which belongs to the state of glorification of God's children. *A.*—This is the liberty wherewith the Son makes free. Liberty indeed, measured and regulated by the royal law of liberty, and which is perfected only in a perfect conformity thereto. There is a most servile liberty, a being free from righteousness, which under that specious name and show enslaves a man to corruption; and there is a free service, by which a man is still the more free by how much the more he serves and is subject to his superior's will, and by how much the less possible it is he should swerve therefrom. The nearest approaches therefore of the soul to God, its most intimate union with him and entire subjection to him in its glorified state, makes its liberty consummate. Now is its deliverance complete; it is under no restraints, oppressed by no weights; it hath the free exercise of all its powers; hath every faculty and affection at command. How unconceivable a pleasure is this! *Howe.*

23. We wait for the adoption, that is, the redemption of the body. When we shall see Jesus as he is and be like him, when, delivered from the body of sin and death, as the children of the resurrection changed into the likeness of the transfigured Saviour, we shall know as we are known; and in perfect union and communion with the head and all the saints shall evermore serve him. *A. S.*

24. Saved by hope. Returning is not the act of a despairing but hoping soul. It is God apprehended as reconcilable that attracts and wins it. This presently draws the hovering soul into a closure and league with him. And thus is the union continued. *Howe.*—Sincere faith is in reality full of hope. The individual who firmly believes that the blood of the new covenant has been shed for him can not deny to himself the faithfulness of God. And if sometimes the ineffaceable conviction of his own unworthiness, the consideration of that law of the flesh in his members which fights against the law of the spirit, may for a moment obscure his hope, these very things make him recur with redoubled fervor to him who, finding nothing in us to make us acceptable in his sight, has been willing to save us through the faith which he has given. *A. V.*

25. There are several infirmities that can not be mastered, if hope be not in exercise, especially if the soul be in great and sore trials. There is peevishness and impatience, there is fear and doubting and misconstruing of God's present hand; and all these become masters, if hope be not stirring; nor can any grace besides put a stop to their tumultuous raging in the soul. But hope in God makes

them all hush, takes away the occasion of their working, and lays the soul at the foot of God. *Bun.*—With patience wait. Though we may not be responsible for moods, we are for the way in which we act under them. When all our endeavor fails, we are to fall back on hope, and when hope begins to faint, there is still left to us "quiet waiting." So full of resources is the grace of God, that, as each lower deep of trouble opens, a new power in the Christian life can be created to meet it. "Quiet waiting" is that which, in other parts of the Bible, and especially in the New Testament, is termed *patience*. It is the part of hope to seek the future; it is the duty of patience to rest calmly in the present, and not to fret—to be satisfied to be where God appoints, and to suffer what God sends. It is fitly placed after hope, because it follows it in the natural course of an educated Christian life. Hope belongs to youth; patience is the lesson of maturity. *Ker.*

26. For "infirmities," read "infirmity," or "weakness." The meaning is not here, that the Spirit helps our infirmities, generally; but that he helps in this particular point our weakness, our inability to wait with patience for that which we hope for. *A.*—The promise of the Father—the culminating gift of the Lord Jesus glorified—the highest of all divine manifestations, he by whom the Father and the Son take up their abode in us—is the Spirit of grace and supplication. In our most languid condition, when the soul cleaves to the dust, he maketh intercession for us, and God knoweth the mind of the Spirit in our sighs and groaning. Conscious of our ignorance and of our utter weakness, we change our very helplessness into a source of comfort; for the Spirit of all knowledge, power, and love is

within us—our Paraclete. *A. S.*—We scarcely utter hyperbole in saying that prayer is the divine mind communing with itself, through finite wants, through the woes of helplessness, through the clinging instincts of weakness. On this side of the judgment, no other conception of the presence of God is so profound as that which is realized in our souls every time we offer a genuine prayer. God is then not only *with* us, but *within* us. *A. P.*

If we are perplexed in our prayers, not knowing what to say, ill able to read our own heart's desire truly; yet if we are really wishing for God's help, then that vague and indistinct desire for help has one who purifies it, and presents it before God; and if we feel beset with the perplexity of our condition, and find no word of utterance, yet the Spirit of God speaks for us in our very silence, and intercedes for us acceptably. *T. A.*—Let prayer rest in the intercession of Jesus and in the sighing of the Holy Spirit. The intercession of Jesus rests in the power of his atoning blood. The intercession of the Holy Spirit has its ground in Christ. *A. C.*—As it is the office of Christ to intercede for us with God, so it is the office of the Holy Ghost to make those intercessions in us which we put up to God. *Caryl.*

27. The work of the Spirit is in exciting the heart at times of prayer to break forth in ardent desires to God, whatsoever the words be, whether new or old, yea, possibly without words; and then most powerful when it *words* it least, but vents in sighs and groans that can not be expressed. Our Lord understands the language of these perfectly, and likes it best; he knows and approves the meaning of his own Spirit; he looks not to the outward appearance, the shell of words, as men do. *L.*

Section 247.

ROMANS viii. 28-39.

28 AND we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them
29 who are the called according to *his* purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among
30 many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he
31 called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall
32 we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not
his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us
33 all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.
34 Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is
35 even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate
us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or
36 nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day
37 long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more

38 than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor 39 life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

IN the experience of the apostle Paul, every child of God will find a description of his own, and also abundant encouragement, guidance, and consolation. Here is a man in Christ Jesus. There is now no condemnation to him. Sin has been judged, condemned, and put away. The Spirit of Christ dwells in him. He is not in the flesh, but the flesh is still in him. He has to mortify the deeds of the body; it is a painful and daily struggle. Besides, he is in manifold afflictions. He is living in a world of suffering. The very creation even groans by reason of bondage. He also groans within himself, waiting for the redemption of the body.

This justified one, inhabited by the Spirit, is thus saved only in hope. He has still the conflict with sin amid the afflictions of this time, and he has to possess his soul in patience. Thus he draws nigh to God. But there he feels his weakness. His infirmities overwhelm him. He knows not what to pray for as he ought. Full of want, he is silent. But the Spirit of God helps him. He creates within him deep and believing longings after the eternal blessings, too deep for utterance, but not too great for the Father's response. And now he has reached the highest point. He sees *God for us*. God loved us from all eternity, and called us according to his promise. All things must work together for good. Beholding this God as he gave up his own Son, he triumphantly asks, "Shall he not with him freely give us all things?" Afflictions and sufferings abound; but in overcoming them we are more than conquerors: not exhausted but invigorated after victory, and perfect in our peace. Nothing shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus! Love of God in Christ Jesus! It continues sounding in our hearts as when silver bells have ceased ringing. Love of God in Christ Jesus! A. S.

28-31. Whom God "forechose," them he predestinated to be conformed to Christ, and in order to the accomplishment of that purpose, he "calls" them. We have the full account of "the called according to his purpose," in the twenty-eighth verse. And now the apostle proceeds to show how that image of Christ in them is brought about. "Whom he calls, them he also justifies." These sins that so burden their souls are taken away by the blood of the Lamb having atoned for, and thereby "blotted them out." And the obedience of the "Lord our righteousness" becomes the sinner's obedience, so soon as hearing the call he accepts it, and by faith is in "Christ Jesus," represented both in His act of obedience and of atonement. And meantime the Holy Spirit, who has made the call effectual, and imparted the new life to the dead soul whereby it puts forth this living act of faith, carries on his work of conforming it more and more to the image of Christ, until with death the body of sin drops off and the spirit becomes like Jesus and sees him as he is—thus "Whom he justifies he also glorifies." Now we can see the power and beauty of the apostle's logic—sorrows and affliction can not do other than good to them that are called under such a purpose of grace. For since God hath such an end in view for them, all things that occur, however afflictive now, must work together to that great end—the glory which shall follow. And we are prepared to accept his triumphant conclusion, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Then spend not

your energies in trying to penetrate the dark cloud that hovers around the lofty summit of this theology, and shrouds from mental view the secret purposes of God. Behold the golden link of the pendent chain that gleams here along the level of time—this *call* of the gospel. Seize hold of that, here and now, that you may be drawn up—justified—to be eternally glorified! S. R.

28: **We know.** It is not merely a devout wish and hope, but a certain conviction. God comforts with realities. The Spirit reveals things freely given to us of God, and then the soul responds, I believe; or, I know; for faith substantiates the unseen. Faith is the most absolute and certain knowledge. Join, oh sorrowful and doubting believers who love God, the great company of your fellow-sufferers, and say, We know! Hear the apostle Paul. Who ever suffered more? and yet there is no hesitation in his voice. A. S.—**Work together.** The bosom of Providence is the great moral crucible in which things work, in which they *work together*. They assimilate, repel, interpenetrate, change each other; and then leave, as moral result, one grand influence in the main for each character, for each man. The innumerable things that mingle in that crucible, if taken separately, would be seen working to separate and diverse results; as, indeed, they still do in a measure, within the sphere of the all-commanding influence. But the one master influence now rules the whole process, and so combines the specific elements as to perpetuate and increase its own sway.

"All things work together," not in an aimless and capricious manner, for this end and for that, now in one way and now in another, as though a stream should one day flow seaward, and the next back toward its fountain among the hills, but in one volume, along one channel, in one direction, toward one end. A. R.—Things *work together* for good, it is said; and work implies time, and a lengthened process, trial and waiting, till, like the harvest from the ground, or the cloth from the loom, the long operation is perfected. To judge hastily of God's dealings, ere his purposes are wrought out, would be like threshing a half-grown wheat-field, and being disappointed at finding no grain. Things now may seem very much against us; disaster may have met all our plans, and they may lie in the dust, though we made them with prayer for divine guidance. But have we seen the end? Wait for God, and satisfying views will break upon our eyes in the better world, when they are opened to see the reason of God's dealings with us, and how he has made all work together for our good. *Leviss.*

If we love God, *this* is the position—surely, although we are not accustomed to apply grand epithets to such things, yet, surely, in sober earnestness, a splendid position—that "all things work together for our good." If we love him, not in any strained or passionate manner, but with simple childlike love, trusting in his kindly providence, looking up in his face, keeping his commandments, talking with him in our busy thoughts and in our daily prayers, filling life with his presence as is the habit of love with its objects, then—all will be well. *Will be? All is well.* Those working "things," the strength and pressure of which we never could resist if we met them simply in our own strength, the mystery of which we never could fathom, the darkness of which is sometimes terrible—let them work together and enter into all possible combinations, and expend their last energies, they can produce nothing but good to us. A. R.—To a believing soul there is something wonderfully sweet in viewing all his trials, troubles, afflictions, temptations, desertions, spiritual conflicts, ups and downs of every kind, as ordered of God for his good; decreed to come upon him just at such a time and place as his heavenly Father's wisdom sees fit and meet! to remain with him just so long, and not a single moment longer than till they shall have answered some salutary purpose for his soul's good; that, however sore and grievous these things may be to flesh and blood, however thwarting to his own will and wishes, yea, however contrary to what he would judge to be for his spiritual welfare, yet he who "ordereth all things after the counsel of his own will" causeth them to work together for his good; and that they are all the effects and emana-

tions of infinite wisdom, infinite love, and infinite power, united to accomplish his salvation in the way that shall be best for him, and most for his heavenly Father's glory. *Hill.*

The called. No one that knows anything aright of the dreadfully alienated state of our nature can for a moment believe that a condition of the soul in which the love of God should prevail can be produced, created, by any less cause than the sovereign operation of the divine Spirit; in other words, by an effectual "*calling*." This, then, is the sacred train and process; the ancient, unalterable intention or "*purpose*," fulfilled at length in "*the calling according to that purpose*," and this "*calling*" being an inspiration of "*the love of God*" into the renewed soul. And this places the soul in a new system of relations with the world and its events, and *that* the most advantageous one that is possible. J. F.

29, 30. Majestic affirmations of assurance, assurance answering to assurance, rising and gathering power as it rolls on, each clause coming with the certainty of a decree, solemn at once and jubilant. F. D. H.—The great perfected mystery of sanctification in Christ itself steps back into the mystery of regeneration and of justification by faith, and that again into the mystery of redemption, and that into the unfathomable depths of the mystery of God's love. These steps are traced in the forward direct order by Paul's logic thus: foreknowledge, predestination unto conformity to the image of God's dear Son, calling, justification, glorification. John in the Apocalypse sets us down at the last step, glorification, *without fault before the throne of God.* G. B. C.

He did foreknow. God's foreknowledge is not *for me*, but *for himself*. While I feel that grace which bringeth salvation and the sanctification of the Spirit in me, I am sealed for heaven; and where is the man who is forbidden to apply for the same blessing? They are quite mistaken who imagine themselves excluded by the divine prescience. I can only know whether I am the choice of God by God's being my choice, and by having the mark of my election in my regeneration, and the proof of my regeneration in the uprightness of my conduct. I do not desire to search into the divine decrees, but I want to see that the Saviour's image is engraven on the tablet of my renewed mind in characters indelible as eternity. R. Hill.—*Effectual calling* is inseparably tied to this eternal *foreknowledge* or *election* on the one side, and *salvation* on the other. These two links of the chain are up in heaven in God's own hand; but this middle one is let down to earth into the hearts of his children, and they, laying hold on it, have sure hold on the other two, for no power can sever them; if, therefore, they

can read the characters of God's image in their own souls, those are the counterpart of the golden characters of his love, in which their names are written in the book of life. Their believing writes their names under the promises of the revealed book of life, the Scriptures, and so ascertains them that the same names are in the secret book of life that God hath by himself from eternity. So, finding the stream of grace in their hearts, though they see not the fountain whence it flows, nor the ocean into which it returns, yet they know that it hath its source, and shall return to that ocean which ariseth from their eternal election, and shall empty itself into that eternity of happiness and salvation. Hence much joy ariseth to the believer; this tie is indissoluble, as the agents are, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. So are *election*, and *vocation*, and *sanctification*, and *justification*, and *glory*. Therefore in all conditions believers may, from the sense of the working of the Spirit in them, look back to that election and forward to that salvation. L.

31. The first eight chapters of Romans embrace Paul's great argument of the epic of redemption. It traces human ruin and human salvation until, at 8 : 30, the whole scheme, crowned with glorification, stands like a grand structure, and the apostle commences a pæan with, What shall we say to these things? *Wheeldon*.—If God be for us. Our divine ally, the King of kings, is our intercessor; the omniscient Spirit is our teacher; and we are invited to counsel with Divine wisdom, and to stay ourselves on the arm of Creative power. Yet how do we narrow down the magnificence of the divine promises, and compress the hopes, large and grand, offered by the gospel, into some petty and pitiful request, that as we imagine bespeaks Christian humility, but in truth displays unbelief. What! when God is for us, is it not most guilty to hesitate and linger in minor and facile enterprises? The greatness of the God we serve demands on our part a large and manly, a far-sighted and far-reaching faith. W. R. W.

32. The boundless extent of his understanding, which comprehended the full dimensions of sin and of wrath, was the sole cause of Christ's deep and unparalleled distress. It was not the shame nor the torment of the Cross that afflicted him; but his soul, if I may be allowed the expression, was *crucified* more than his body; his heart had sharper nails to pierce it than his hands or his feet; in his body he felt the rage and cruelty of his murderers, but in his soul he felt sufferings of a more exquisite nature. Then he bore the griefs and carried the sorrows of all his people; then he felt not the sins only, but the wounds also, of every broken heart; the torments of his martyrs, the reproaches of his saints, the poverty, distresses, and persecutions, which any,

which all of them, have felt, or shall feel, till the last trumpet shall sound, and he shall come again in his glory. Thus *God spared not his own Son*; to these inconceivable sufferings was the Lord of life *delivered*. R. W.—As we are the objects of that love which God hath commended to us in his Son, it follows that no bounds can be set to our happiness—that there is no treasure too rich in the mines of the blessed God, no duration too long in eternity, no communion with the Creator too close, too intimate, too tender, which we have not a right to expect; according to that comfortable, that ecstatic maxim of the apostle: "He who spared not his own Son, but freely delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" *Saurin*.

33. When "the everlasting covenant" was planned between the three persons in the glorious and coequal Trinity, it was "ordered in all things, and sure"; all the spiritual seed were then chosen in Christ, their head; and grace was given them in him as members of his mystical body. All the sins that ever they should commit, with every aggravation with which they should be swelled, were taken into the account: payment was then *virtually* made; and it was *actually* made when Jesus hung on the accursed tree; and all the powers of earth and hell combined can never charge one sin upon the soul for whom it was so paid and accepted. For "who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" *Hill*.—It is Paul's challenge to the universe. Nay, rather, it is the Holy Spirit's challenge. It is unanswerable even now; for from the first moment that we believed, we were entitled to take it up. It is a challenge which God himself puts into our lips, and he will acknowledge it. In our believing we set our *amen* to his testimony; and in his giving us this challenge, he is setting his *amen* to our faith. Nay, not only will he own it, but he will take it up out of our lips, and himself proclaim it through the universe, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of my elect?" *Bonar*.

34. It is Christ that died for us, to take away our sins, and is risen again for us, to clothe us in his righteousness, and sitteth at the right hand of God ever making intercession for us, that we may be supported under every trial and danger, strengthened against every temptation, delivered from the sin of unbelief and all other sins, girt with the righteousness of faith and crowned with all the graces which spring from faith, and at length may be received into the presence of the Father, into which our elder brother has entered before us. *Harc*.—It is a point which should move us to great joy and holy pride, that we are so honored above all creatures, yea, above the angels, that we can now truthfully say with exultation: My flesh and blood sitteth at the right hand of God, reigning with power over all,

and having all in his hand. This honor hath no creature, nor any angel, but my flesh and blood. *Luther.*—Thou shalt find life in his death, and that life further ascertained to thee in his rising again. There is so full and clear a title to life in these two, that thou canst challenge all adversaries upon this very ground, as unconquerable while thou standest on it. In point of justifying before God, there can be no answer but this: What have any to say to thee? thy debt is paid by Him that undertook it. Answer all accusations with this, *Christ is risen.*

35. Is this he that so lately cried out, *Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?* that now triumphs, *Oh, happy man! who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* Yes, it is the same. Pained then with the thoughts of that miserable conjunction with a body of death, and so crying out, *Who will deliver?* Now he hath found a deliverer to do that for him, to whom he is for ever united. So vast a difference is there betwixt a Christian taken in himself and in Christ. *L.*—The question may be termed the strongest possible form of denial, and by it must be understood, not our love to Christ, but his to us. The foundation of such conviction can not rest on the attachment and fidelity of his followers. But a firm basis of tranquillity is offered in the love of Christ himself, which in its nature is a free, unconstrained, eternal affection. From this love nothing can separate us, because it is all-powerful, all-embracing, finally all-conquering. That which would separate from him, namely, the power of the world and of sin, can not permanently keep its ground in the heart and life of the Christian, in whom, indeed, the old man yet lives, but as a dying creature. Can words be found to express adequately the consolation which such thoughts impart? *Van O.*

36. That which makes a man die with true courage and step with holy boldness into the grave is believingly to remember that Jesus Christ died and lay in the grave, not only before us, but for us, and that he hath worsted and conquered that king of terrors upon his own ground, the grave. *Caryl.*

37. Be humble and depend on the strength of Christ; seek to be furnished with much distrust of thyself and much trust in him, with much denial of thyself and much love to him; and this preparing and training of the heart will prove useful when brought to a real conflict. In all, both beforehand and in time of the trial, make thy Lord Jesus all thy strength; that is our only way in all to be conquerors, *to be more than conquerors, through him that loved us.*

38, 39. Remember this for your comfort, that as you are brought unto God by Jesus Christ, so you are kept in that union by him. It is a firmer

knot than the first was; there is no power of hell can dissolve it. He suffered once to bring us once unto God, never to depart again; as he suffered once for all, so we are brought once for all. We may be sensibly nearer at one time than another, yet we can never be separate nor cut off, being once knit by Christ as the bond of our union. *Neither principalities nor powers, etc., shall be able to separate us from the love of God,* because it holds in Christ Jesus our Lord. *L.*—It is plainly the design of the whole section to show that the afflictions of the present time are not inconsistent with the justified state of Christians, or with their being the objects of the peculiar affection of God and of Christ. And there is no trace of the supposed transition from God's love to us to our love to God. The love of God in *Christ Jesus* admits fairly no other meaning than the love of God manifested to us through the mediation of Christ. *J. B.*

AND thus the mighty argument is brought to an end. The remainder of the Epistle is spent in the determination of various points of interest as related to the position of Jew and Gentile, in God's dealings, and in the Church of the time. Meanwhile, however, the great argument is supplemented by the views of God's wisdom and love, and does not reach its final conclusion till chapter 12, where the apostle gathers up all in general exhortations, grounded on this review of God's mercies to Jew and Gentile. *A.*

Paul has shown (chs. 6, 7) that believers are bound up with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection; and that this union, delivering them alike from legal terror and from legal hope, induces new and loving obedience. They become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that in union or marriage to him as their risen Lord and life they may live and bear fruit unto God. So the apostle establishes that sanctification as well as justification is by the grace of God only, not through bondage to the law, but through union to Christ in liberty. Then, in the sublime and animated strain of the eighth chapter, he expatiates on the safety of those who are in Christ, the indwelling and witness of the Spirit of adoption, the hope of glorious resurrection, the security of salvation in the purpose and calling of God, the reality of his act of justification, and the immutability of his love in Jesus Christ our Lord. So ends the first part of the Epistle. Its key-words are those formed from *dike*—right, righteousness, righteous judgment, just, justify, justification. Apprehending these terms, we grasp the cardinal truth of salvation which the apostle inculcates, viz., that while the law of God condemns, God freely justifies us through faith in Christ the propitiation for our sins, and in union with him as our crucified and buried but now risen Saviour. *D. F.*

Section 248.

ROMANS ix. 1-29.

1 I SAY the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy
 2 Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish
 3 that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh :
 4 who are Israelites ; to whom *pertaineth* the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and
 5 the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises ; whose *are* the fathers, and
 of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.
 6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they *are* not all Israel,
 7 which are of Israel : neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children :
 8 but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh,
 these *are* not the children of God : but the children of the promise are counted for the
 9 seed. For this *is* the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.
 10 And not only *this* ; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac ;
 11 (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose
 12 of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth ;) it was
 13 said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but
 14 Esau have I hated. What shall we say then ? *Is there* unrighteousness with God ? God
 15 forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will
 16 have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then *it is* not of him that willeth,
 17 nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the Scripture saith unto
 Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in
 18 thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he
 19 mercy on whom he will *have mercy*, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then
 20 unto me, Why doth he yet find fault ? For who hath resisted his will ? Nay but, O man,
 who art thou that repliest against God ? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*,
 21 Why hast thou made me thus ? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump
 to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour ?
 22 What if God, willing to shew *his* wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much
 23 longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction : and that he might make known the
 24 riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even
 25 us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles ? As he saith also
 in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people ; and her beloved, which was
 26 not beloved. And it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, Ye *are*
 27 not my people ; there shall they be called the children of the living God. Esaias also crieth
 concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a
 28 remnant shall be saved : for he will finish the work, and cut *it* short in righteousness :
 29 because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. And as Esaias said before, Ex-
 cept the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like
 unto Gomorrha.

WHEN once we understand that the Jews are the types of mankind ; when each one of us shall consider what has been done to the Jewish people as if it had been done to himself ; when we shall be able to see ourselves in the person of Israel, delivered from Egypt with a strong hand, crossing the Red Sea, miraculously fed in the desert, introduced by force of arm into Canaan, alternately rebellious and penitent, humbled and elevated, at war with the inflexibility of a perfect law and at the same time the object of ineffable solicitude, it will no longer be possible for us to believe that this people has existed in vain, or that we owe nothing to this people, or that we could have dispensed with it. And then collecting in our mind all these truths at once, each saying to himself : The history of this people is my history, the history of this people is the history of God ; this people carried in its bosom, as a mother does, that other chosen and blessed people whom Jesus Christ on coming into the world found ready to receive him ; the Jewish people foretold the great truths which prepare for receiving gospel truth ; the Jewish people was the first and necessary propagation of the gospel ; the Jewish people at the commencement of Christianity could alone bear witness to Jesus Christ ; the Jewish people choosing or rejecting him, is the immortal witness of the Saviour ; a Christian after having considered all these things will have no repugnance to repeat, Salvation, my own salvation, is of the Jews ! A. V.

1-3. In the close of the eighth chapter of Romans theology reaches its culmination. That is a height where all that the mind can know of God and his ways is seen in the longest perspective and most celestial clearness. But there is flowing in the heart of the apostle a current of sympathy with men, which overbears in another moment all the tide of rapturous anticipation which the view of God's purposes had kindled. "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart—for my brethren." Certainly that is the spirit which all who have the responsibilities of public service for Christ should seek. It is said that Augustine had for his symbol a burning heart. If to a burning there could be appropriately added a suggestion of a bleeding heart, we should have the comprehensive Christian symbol. A measure of the seraphic glow of the eighth chapter of Romans is permitted to us, if our minds are lifted to that; but should not our cry be, that we may never be without the concern, without something of the pang of love for our brother-men, which we see in the ninth chapter? *Karr.*

3. "I could have wished." J. B. L.—I could wish, if such a thing were possible, to be separated from Christ and bear the curse, in order thereby to rescue my nation. That was out of the question, for only Christ could undertake to bear penal sufferings in the room of others. It displays, however, the magnitude of his love. (Ex. 32 : 32, Moses felt the same.) He would willingly have endured anything, however terrible, in order to save them. *Barth.*—Paul saw a cloud filled with wrath—a black cloud of vindictory justice affecting the eternal interests of his countrymen—ready to burst upon their heads; he saw many of them sealed up under the terrible judgment of judicial blindness, and this it was which racked his heart with agony, and drew forth his thrilling expressions of sympathy and grief. He envied not the Gentiles; on the contrary, he makes their calling and conversion matters of solemn doxology and thanksgiving to God; but he did lament, deeply and sorely lament, that so many of his countrymen were cut off from the hopes of eternal life. J. H. T.

4, 5. Judaism is the parent of Christianity. The new system sprang up on the soil of the old, and could spring up nowhere else. There were "the oracles of God"; there were the Messianic promises, and the aspirations kindled by them, in a form that made it possible for the Messiah to arise, with a full consciousness of his calling, and to be recognized by others. The peculiarity lies in the organic relation of the parts of the earlier Revelation to each other, and the collective relation of the whole of them to the gospel. Hence, the earliest adherents of the Christian faith by whom it was first

propagated in the world, its authoritative expounders for all time, were of Jewish extraction. The privilege conferred on the Jews, in the special training to which they were subjected, might, if abused, place them at a disadvantage as to receiving the good news, even in comparison with the nations which had been suffered "to walk in their own ways." "It might be," says Dr. Arnold, "that they were tempted by their very distinctness to despise other nations; still they did God's work—still they preserved unhurt the seed of eternal life, and were the ministers of blessing to all other nations, even though themselves failed to enjoy it." G. P. F. —This people, to whom were intrusted the oracles of God, carries in its mind, solemnizes in its rites, reflects in its manners, the elementary ideas on which the gospel is founded; alone among the nations it believes, seriously and effectually believes, that God is, and that he is the rewarder of them that seek him. These truths, which are the patrimony of this people, it has in its different dispersions carried with it over the world. It has sown them in the land of the heathen. Despised as it was, it has succeeded in accustoming the nations to the idea, the unheard-of idea, of one living and holy God. This was essentially to prepare them for Jesus Christ. And when Christianity, after having collected in Judea all that belonged to it, makes ready to conquer Europe, beginning with the ancient kingdom of that Alexander who conquered Asia, it finds over the whole Roman world advanced posts, citadels, intrenched camps in those portions of Israel, in those Jewish colonies which Divine Providence had scattered up and down upon the earth, and which uniformly became the first Christian Churches. A. V.

5. Who is over all, God blessed for ever. What is that subtle approach of doctrine injurious to Christ which these words of Paul do not bar out? He called him Christ, to show that he had really become man; he called him "of the Jews after the flesh," to show that his existence does not merely date from his incarnation; he called him "who is" that he might proclaim as in thunder his existence without a beginning; he called him "over all," to proclaim him the Master of creation; he called him God, that we might not be deceived by looking to his sufferings and his outward form, and deny his imperishable nature; he called him "blessed," that we might adore him as the Almighty, and not injuriously regard him as a fellow-servant; he called him "unto the ages," that he might show that he who formed them by a word is in them endlessly proclaimed as God. *Proclus.*

7, 8. The Old Testament is the first chapter of the history of man and the history of God. The experience of the Jews is our experience. It is for

us that we see this people alternately gathered together and forsaken, scourged and blest. Not that they are not loved for themselves, and for the fathers' sakes, as Paul says; but in the marvelous guidance of this people God was preparing an immortal lesson for the whole human race. Not only the doctrine preached to the Jewish people, but more especially their history constitutes the treasure of all ages and nations; because as history, it not only *teaches*, it *establishes* what God is and what man is, to what extent God's authority is absolute and his law sacred; and, in fine, it establishes the active, determinate, and paternal manner in which God constantly interposes in human affairs. A. V.

13-17. As all that we are comes from Him, so we belong to him without exception or reserve. The senses of our bodies, the powers of our souls, the successive ages of life, thought, feeling, resolve, all are His. He is absolute master of our health, of our fortune, of our very life, and against him we have neither plea nor remedy. Nay, we are bound by the terms of existence to accept with submission all of his appointments. Paul's illustration of the cases of Pharaoh and Esau, as viewed apart from their responsibility, is strictly in point. God's claims, which begin in time, continue in eternity; the grave does not touch them. Escape him we can not. We must live under a dispensation of his love or a dispensation of his justice. We can nowhere be independent of him. We may now and here choose between a free and joyous service and a punishment which is as certain and as enduring as the being which he has given us. H. P. L.

15. The Israelites, immediately after the giving of the law, had committed idolatry or exposed themselves to punishment. Moses besought their forgiveness. In answer to his prayer, the words quoted here were used. The whole nation deserved punishment. God was determined to inflict it on some and to show mercy to others; and his declaration is, that the reason why any are pardoned, and why these are pardoned, was to be found in his sovereign grace. There was no unrighteousness here. God gave to some what none deserved, and he inflicted on none anything but what all had deserved, and he did this according to the counsel of his own will. J. B.—If God is a sovereign, he is not an arbitrary despot; if he has his purposes in respect to all things—and unquestionably he has—they are formed in view of all-sufficient reasons every way worthy of himself, as a God infinite in his wisdom and his love. He may bless a man who does not deserve his blessing, but he can not punish a man who does not deserve punishment. The sovereign grace of God! What being in the universe does it injure, or what obstacles can it interpose between any man and eternal life? E. M.

16. Many ask questions about election and other doctrines, which do not yet come within their horizon, and therefore can not be explained to them (to a certain extent, true of us all). The ninth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, as Luther said, is the ninth. Learn first the eight chapters which precede it. A. S.—The Bible teaches that man is a free agent, under personal responsibility; that salvation is provided for all, and freely offered to all; that God desires that all men should repent and be saved; that he uses his word, his providence, and his Spirit to bring them to repentance; that he continues his calls to men who resist his grace, though, as in the case of Pharaoh, his very long-suffering may but harden the sinner's impenitence. It is no positive act of God that hardens him, no divine decree that hinders his salvation, but the sinner's own refusal to submit his will in faith to the righteousness of God. In this respect, the stubborn impenitence of Pharaoh, alike unto divine mercies and judgments, is but the type of the heart of man. Again and again we are told that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. J. P. T.—Conversion and salvation must, in the very nature of the things, be wrought and effected either by ourselves alone, or by ourselves and God together, or solely by God himself. The last hypothesis is built on the strongest evidence of reason, Scripture, and experience. It most effectually hides pride from man, and sets the crown of undivided praise upon the head—or, rather, casts it at the feet—of that glorious Triune God "who worketh all in all." But this is a crown which no sinners ever yet cast before the throne of God who were not first led into the transporting views of his gracious decree to save freely, and of his own will, the people of his eternal love. Zanchius.

The great question for me, as one for whom Christ died and to whom the offer of eternal life is made, a being responsible to God and to my own soul for every decision I form and every choice I make in reference to my everlasting interests, is, Am I willing to embrace the offer of eternal life which is placed before me? If I am not, it is not God's purpose, but my own election in opposition to the will and commandment of God, which destroys me body and soul for ever. This is the thought to be distinctly apprehended, and which should be thrown with all its fearful and crushing weight upon the conscience of every man who has not accepted of Jesus Christ. E. M.—In the 16th verse, the showing of his mercy signifies the preventing grace of God in conversion; for in the 18th verse it is said, God shows mercy "to whom he will, and whom he will he hardens." Where it is evident that *showing mercy* is opposed not to condemning but to *hardening*; and consequently the intent of the words

is this, that divine grace overcomes the rebellious will, softens the stiff and stubborn heart, and makes it pliant to obedience. This flows from his pure good will and pleasure, without the least motive from the inclinations or endeavors of sinful men. But the other effects of God's mercy require conditions in the subjects that receive them; for he pardons only penitent believers, and glorifies none but persevering saints. *Bates.*

19-24. The force of the objection (v. 19) seems to be: "Since God can refuse mercy and inflict punishment on whom he chooses to do so, why does he not will to have mercy on all, so as to make them obedient, and thus put finding of fault out of the case? None can resist his will." The objection is answered in two ways: first, by showing the absurdity and wickedness of man's finding fault with what God does or says (vs. 20, 21), and then by showing that the dispensations objected to were perfectly consistent with divine justice and benignity (vs. 22-24). *J. B.*—The objection is founded on ignorance or misapprehension of the relation between God and his sinful creatures: supposing that he is under obligation to extend his grace to all, whereas he is under obligation to none. It is to be borne in mind that Paul does not here speak of God's right over his creatures *as creatures*, but *as sinful creatures*; as he himself clearly intimates in the next verses. It is the cavil of a sinful creature against his Creator that he is answering, and he does so by showing that God is under no obligation to give his grace to any, but is as sovereign as in fashioning the clay.

22. His wrath and his power. The two objects which Paul here specifies as designed to be answered by the punishment of the wicked are the manifestation of the wrath of God and the exhibition of his power. The word *wrath* is used here, as in chapter 1 : 18, for the divine displeasure against sin, the calm and holy disapprobation of evil, joined with the determination to punish those who commit it. Though the inherent ill desert of sin must ever

be regarded as the primary ground of the infliction of punishment—a ground which would remain in full force were no beneficial results anticipated from the misery of the wicked—yet God has so ordered his government that the evils which sinners incur shall result in the manifestation of his character, and the consequent promotion of the holiness and happiness of his intelligent creatures throughout eternity. *C. H.*

All the godly have this to consider: that they *were strangers and enemies to God*; and let each of them think, Whence was it that I, a lump of the same polluted clay with those that perish, should be taken and purified and molded by the Lord's own hand for a vessel of glory? Nothing but free grace makes the difference; and where can there be love and praises and service found to answer this? All is to be ascribed to the mercy, gifts, and calling of Christ. *L.*

25-29. The marked difference between the language used in reference to those whom God treats kindly and those whom he treats severely deserves notice. With regard to the fitting of the vessels of wrath for destruction: they are fitted—how and by whom it is not said, but God did not fit them for the destruction to which he doomed them as fitted for it. In the other case it is divine agency altogether, in fitting them for glory, and bestowing it on them. God dealt with unbelieving Jews as he did with Pharaoh, whom they resembled in their obstinacy. He bore with them long; he offered them mercy, which they contemptuously rejected. When they had fitted themselves for destruction, they were destroyed. On the other hand, God bestows salvation on a portion of men called from the great body of Jews and Gentiles, and fitted by his grace for the enjoyment of it, by being made in faith thankfully to accept it. In withholding saving blessings from certain of the Jews, he does them no wrong; and in inflicting on them severe judgments, he only at last inflicts punishment which had long been incurred. *J. B.*

Section 249.

ROMANS ix. 30-33 ; x. 1-13.

30 WHAT shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness,
31 have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.
32 Wherefore? Because *they sought it* not by faith, but as it were by the works of the
33 law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.
 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.
 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own
 4 righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ
 5 *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth
 the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by
 6 them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine
 heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down *from above* :)
 7 or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)
 8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is,
 9 the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord
 Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be
 10 saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confes-
 11 sion is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall
 12 not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same
 13 Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name
 of the Lord shall be saved.

CHRIST is something and does something to every one of us. He is either the rock on which I build, poor, weak, sinful creature as I am, getting security and sanctity and strength from him, I being a living stone, built upon "the living stone," and partaking of the vitality of the foundation; or else he is the other thing, "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to them which stumble at the word." So the gospel of Christ exercises a permanent effect upon us. It is presented to each of us here individually, in the definite form of an actual offer of salvation for each, and of an actual demand of trust from each. The words pass into our souls, and thenceforward it can never be the same as if they had not been there. The gospel once heard is henceforward a perpetual element in the whole condition, character, and destiny of the hearer. A. M.

Christ is present to his followers as he is not and can not be to the world; present as an all-permeating Spirit; present as the all-quickening Life; consciously, socially present; so that no explorations of science or debates of reason are wanted to find him, no going over the sea to bring him back, or up into heaven to bring him down; because he is already present, always present, in the mouth and in the heart. In this manner he will be revealed in all men, waits to be revealed in all, if only they will suffer it. The word for every loving, trusting heart is, "I will be manifest in you. Lo, I will be with you always." H. B.—This is the way to lessen our distance from God and heaven, by bringing Christ continually to us on earth: the sky is closed, and shows no sign; all things continue as they were from the beginning of the world; evil abounds, and, therefore, the faith of many waxes cold; but Christ was and is among us—Christ crucified and Christ risen—to make us feel that we may live with God daily upon earth, and, doing so, shall live with him for an eternal life in a country that can not pass away. T. A.

33. Christ comes offered to us all in good faith on the part of God as a foundation upon which we may build. And then comes in that strange mystery, that a man, consciously free, turns away from the offered mercy, and makes him that was intended to be the basis of his life, the foundation of his hope, the rock on which, steadfast and serene, he should build up a temple-home for his soul to dwell in—makes him a stumbling-stone against which, by rejection and unbelief, he breaks himself! A. M.

2. Zeal is an element that will combine with any active principle in man; will give its strength and inspiration in any pursuit or interest under the sun; will profane itself to the lowest, will be the glory of the highest, like fire that will smolder in garbage and will lighten in the heavens. A fatal

ignorance in zeal the apostle here speaks of, namely, men's zealously maintaining the sufficiency of a righteousness of their own which God will not accept. A true and divinely enforced knowledge would reveal to them the awful holiness, justice, and law of God—would reveal *themselves* to them—and then their zeal would go another way. J. F.—The zeal which is acceptable is that which aims at the glory of God and which is founded on true benevolence to men, and which does not aim to establish a system of self-righteousness, as did the Jew, or to build up *our own sect*, as many others do. A. B.

3-5. The cause of this rejection of the Jews was that they persisted in a false idea of righteousness, as consisting in outward works and rites, and refused the true righteousness manifested to them

in Christ, who was the end of the law. The Jew considers righteousness as the outward obedience to certain enactments; the Christian considers righteousness as proceeding from the inward faith of the heart. Whoever has this faith, whether Jew or Gentile, shall be admitted into God's favor. C.—**Establish their own righteousness.** Thou art industrious from motives of ambition; thou art faithful in thy calling from motives of pride; thou art patient and lowly from the desire of fame; thou avoidest great sins because thou fearest shame and disgrace, and in order that thou mayest yield thyself unhindered to hidden sin; thou concealest from the world thy anger and bad temper, in order to be praised by the world as gentle. Thou givest to the poor that they may praise thee. All thy patience and humility, all thy gentleness and benevolence, all thy faithfulness and industry, give cords and bonds to thy ambition and pride, that they may bind thee more tightly than they could do otherwise. Thou layest aside sins and boastest of the strength of thy virtue. Seest thou not that all thy self-made piety condemns thee? Seest thou not that it is only with sins that thou, a sinner, releasest thyself from sins? A. C.—Is it no unrighteousness that thy whole life should be nothing else but a contradiction to the very design of Christ's dying, a perpetual hostility, a very tilting at his Cross? Is there no unrighteousness in thy obstinate infidelity that denies belief to his glorious truths, acceptance of his gracious offers, subjection to his holy laws? Is it righteous to live as no way under law to Christ? to persist in actual rebellion against his just government, which he died and revived and rose again to establish over the living and the dead? In a word, is it righteous to tread under foot the Son of God, to vilify his blood, and despise his Spirit? Is this the righteousness that thou talkest of? Are these thy qualifications for the everlasting blessedness? *Howe.*

If thou go to Christ with thy own righteousness he will not have thee; for he will have none but lost things, for he came to seek and save that which was lost. As long as thou lookest but to the righteousness of the law, the spirit of Jesus leaves thee, till thou acknowledge Christ for the Saviour of the lost, the justifier of the ungodly, the gracer of the unworthy, and the healer of the sick. Hence it is that Christ leaves sin in his own to humble them; for if they had righteousness of their own they would misken him and his righteousness. And because they will not quit their own righteousness, he gives them an assay of themselves; and when after a proof of their own naughtiness they will not yet submit to him, then he sends crosses, sicknesses, troubles of all sorts, that they may be forced to despair in themselves and come in to Christ's hospi-

tal, there to lie till they be cured of all their sinful maladies.

4. Christ the end of the law. First take us to Christ, renouncing our own righteousness; then draw strength from him, and in his strength bring forth good fruits, and so be renewed; come and get righteousness from Christ; then crave new strength from him (for thou hast none of thy own) to be holy. Upon this order stands the matter betwixt God and his children: that, not finding their own righteousness, they take Christ's, and take new strength from his resurrection, sufferings, and death, and so get power to slay sin. From once they come to Christ, then holiness begins at the heart's roots, by the new power given by Christ. That self-righteousness they would be at holds aye a man proud, but this righteousness God would have them to embrace holds them humble. D. D.—**That believeth.** A believer is to do nothing for justification, only believe and be saved; though the law be a rule for every one that believes to *walk by*, it is not for justification. Always put a difference between justification wrought by the man Christ without, and sanctification wrought by the Spirit of Christ within. *Bun.*

6, 7. The Christian religion does not require us to perform an impossible work, like going up to the throne of God and bringing the Mediator down. It does not require us to go into the abyss, the grave, the regions of departed souls, and perform a work like raising a man from the dead. It demands a task that lies within the proper exercise of human power: an act of simple confidence in Jesus Christ, and a suitable acknowledgment of him before the world at large. A. B.

9. Believe in thine heart. It is the grand distinction of Christianity that it makes its appeal to faith, and upon that, as a fundamental condition, rests the promise of salvation. It is called (here and elsewhere) *the word of faith*, the disciples are distinguished as believers, and Christ is published as the Saviour of them that believe. What is wanted is a faith that goes beyond the mere evidence of propositions about Christ, viz., the faith of a *transaction*; and this faith is Christian faith. *It is the act of trust by which one being, a sinner, commits himself to another being, a Saviour.* It is not mind dealing with notions or notional truths. But it is being trusting itself to being, and so becoming other and different, by a relation wholly transactional. We commit ourselves to the Lord Jesus by an act of total and eternal trust, which is our faith. The matters *included* in this act are the surrender of our mere self-care, the ceasing to live from our own point of separated will, a complete admission of the mind of Christ, a consenting, practically, to be modulated by his motives and aims, and to live, as it

were, infolded in his spirit. It is committing one's character wholly to the living character of Jesus, so that every willing and working and sentiment shall be pliant to his superior mind and spirit. H. B.

10. With the heart man believeth. Not with the brain but with the heart—with that kind of faith in which love is a larger element than intellect, and trust is more than assent. This is the faith that completes the whole work of regeneration. It carries penitence deeper down among the springs of feeling. It heightens the blush of shame at living a selfish and worldly life, because it is so alien to the disinterested and devout temper of the Master. It makes the new life a reality, because it finds it in the deepest motives. It changes the whole inner man. It works by love. It enters the invisible, and dwells in the secret tabernacle of a most holy joy. F. D. H.—It is the heart which fixes itself entirely on the love that shines forth in the work of redemption; cleaves without distraction to the sacrifice of the adorable victim; lets the natural impression of that unparalleled love penetrate freely, and develop itself gradually, in its interior. Quickly then are the veils torn away, and the shadows dissipated for ever! How little difficulty does he that loves find in comprehending love! How natural to him does it appear that God, infinite in all things, should be infinite also in his compassion! How inconceivable to him, on the other hand, that human hearts should not be capable of feeling the beauty of a work, without which God could not manifest himself entire! How astonished is he at the blindness of those who read and reread the Scriptures without comprehending the central truth; who pass and repass before a love all divine without recognizing or even perceiving a work all divine! A. V.—Whatever else it has or lacks, the soul, to be saved, must obey an honest purpose. Pretense and falsehood must be stripped off it. It must believe with the affections, heartily. With the *heart* man believeth unto salvation, before confession is made with the mouth. Get the conviction, which is the fountain, and it will furrow out a channel, and fill it with a stream. Get the new life, the love of God, and it will shape a body as the juices in the germ shape the tree. F. D. H.

With the mouth confession is made. The

terms of Christian communion are the terms of salvation, and no church has a right to require more for its communion than Christ does for entrance into heaven. C. H.—The things necessary to be believed are reduced in Christ's Church to the smallest possible number and the simplest possible terms. It can not be God's intention, after planting his kingdom on earth by the costly sacrifices of redemption, to keep men out of it by intellectual difficulties. He asks you to believe *in him*, a living, divine Saviour, and in the personal and historical facts of his mediation, with a very few of the more comprehensive truths closely related to his person, his ministry, and its consequences. Whatever is beyond these is doctrine not essential to membership, or to beginning, but may be learned in the discipline, and by doing the will, afterward. Religion belongs in the heart-beat of a man's affections and the breath of his daily desire. But when the heart has taken it in it will not lock it there and make it a prisoner. It must go abroad again, for the blessing of man and the praise of God. It will put its owner into the Church, not to show himself, but that he may the better become one with his brethren, and with their common head. F. D. H.

12. For the same Lord who is over all mankind, the Lord Messiah, *is rich*, full of benefits, and ready to communicate them to *all*, whether Jews or Gentiles, *who*, believing on him, *call upon him*, give him divine homage, acknowledge his Lordship by praying to him. And this is confirmed by another Messianic prophecy (Joel 2 : 32). J. B.—There is a beautiful conception of the character of God involved in the use of the word "rich" in this connection. For he is said to be rich, not in respect of what he has, but of what he bestows. Used of men, the word indicates one to whom much has accrued; but it is used here of God to designate one from whom infinite wealth of blessing accrues to the sons of men. It is for us he is rich; his wealth is ours; we have a marvelous and inexhaustible treasury in him. He is rich unto all that call upon him. They call, and he answers by communications of his wealth. Let us entertain no contracted view of the fullness of blessing that dwelleth in our reconciled God! Let us neither exclude ourselves nor others. G. B.

Section 250.

ROMANS x. 14-21; xi. 1-12.

- 14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?
 15 and how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet

16 of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they
17 have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So
then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and
19 their words unto the ends of the world. But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses
saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by *them that are* no people, *and* by a foolish nation I
20 will anger you. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me
21 not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All
1 day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people. I
say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the
seed of Abraham, *of* the tribe of Benjamin.

2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture
3 saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have
killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my
4 life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thou-
5 sand men, who have not bowed the knee to *the image of* Baal. Even so then at this present
6 time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then *is it*
no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no
7 more grace: otherwise work is no more work. What then? Israel hath not obtained that
8 which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (ac-
cording as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should
9 not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. And David saith, Let their
table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them:
10 let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.

11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but *rather* through
12 their fall salvation *is come* unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the
fall of them *be* the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them *the* riches of the Gen-
tiles; how much more their fulness?

CHRISTIAN people are Christ's instruments for effecting the realization of the purposes of his death. Not without them shall the preaching be fully known. Not without the people willing in the day of his power, and clothed in priestly beauty, shall the Priest King set his feet upon his enemies. Neither the divine decree, nor the expansive power of the truth, nor the crowned expectancy of the waiting Lord, nor the mighty working of the Comforter, are the complete means for the accomplishment of the divine promise, that all nations shall be blessed in him. He has willed that we should make known the unsearchable riches of Christ. God reveals his truth, that men who believe it may impart it. God gives the word, that, caught up by those who receive it into an honest and good heart, it may be poured forth in mighty chorus from the lips of the "great company of them that publish it." Christian men! learn your high vocation and your solemn responsibilities. For what did you receive the word of God? For the same reason for which you have received everything else which you possess—that you might share it with your brethren. How did you receive it? A gift, unmerited, that you might feel bound to spread the free divine gift by cheerful human work of distribution. From whom did you receive it? From Christ, who in the very act of giving binds you to live for him and not for yourselves, and to mold your lives after the pattern of his. A. M.

14, 15. Seriously reflect how bound up with the very vitals of the true faith is the notion of its diffusion—how therefore they have totally misread Christianity, have misapprehended its rudimentary principles, have probably never received it at all except in speculation, who can acquiesce in an easy, self-indulgent life, without effort in any single shape for its propagation. Let them remember that the one great business of the era is the dissemination of God's truth—that, in one form or other, whether by alms and prayers only or by personal exertions, this business must be carried on by all professing the

name of Christ—and that all other works in which man is engaged are only valuable as subordinate agencies, helping more or less remotely toward the end, carrying on that system of things which will result in the establishment of God's kingdom. E. M. G.

What we need for the renovation of the human family is the spread of that life-giving doctrine which we find in the Scriptures, and which challenges the abject and the wretched, universally and unexceptively, as the heirs of immortality, and as individually embraced in the intention of the gospel.

It follows from this doctrine that men, even the vilest, are no more to be condemned, for the Almighty does not condemn them; they are no longer to be forgotten, or despotically abused, or selfishly despaired of, for the Son of God has redeemed them. On the contrary, they must now singly, and at whatever cost, be sought out, instructed, cared for, and succored. I. T.

Man is lost, and the Son of God is seeking him; man is lost, and the Son of God is come to save him; man is lost, and the Church is commissioned to go forth in the might of faith and prayer to his salvation. *To save the lost!* We talk of it, as children talk of the affairs of empires; we see through a glass darkly; our conceptions are low and limited. *To save the lost!* Tell us, ye damned spirits, what it means. Tell us, Son of God, what it means; what stirred thy soul in godlike compassion to seek the lost? Tell us, ye ransomed and ye faithful spirits who never sinned—tell us, eternity—what is this mighty work of gospel missions? Tell us, O Father, tell thy churches; tell thy ministers; until every slumberer awake, every energy be aroused, and the way of life be pointed out to a perishing race! *Kirk.*

19. The passage referred to (Deut. 32 : 21) stands in a wonderful chapter, containing an epitome of the anticipated history of the Israelites, from the times of Moses down to "the latter days"—predicting that God would, for the punishment of their sins, withdraw from them the special favors he had bestowed and confer them upon those who had been destitute of them—"the foolish," the idolatrous—thus making those the objects of their jealousy and envy who had previously been condemned and hated. This threatening was fulfilled when the great body of the Jews, having rejected the promised Messiah, were disowned by God, and when he "visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name." Such was the state of things when the apostle wrote. J. B.

1. Paul, though the apostle of the Gentiles, never cast off his care for his brethren, and always expressed himself on that subject with the warmest affection; and he alone, of all the writers in the New Testament, hath spoken clearly of the restoration of the Jews; he earnestly wishes for that happy day, and saw it afar off, and was glad. G. T.

2-12. This illustrious race, to which pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, the ordinance of the law, divine service, and the promises; this race, from which Christ is descended, is not destined to be for ever among the nations a deplorable monument of the divine anger. After having seen its diminution, the world will see its fullness. If their diminishing, says the apostle, is our riches, what will their fullness be? When the

fullness of Israel shall have returned to the fold, will not Israel again be a prophetic people? Will not the accomplishment of this promise be to itself as a testimony of the divine faithfulness, an admonitor to all nations, and a powerful call upon all to faith and obedience; and will not this people, as marvelous in its restoration as in its fall, be again, and more than ever, a powerful leaven to leaven the mass of humanity? In every case, its fullness will be our joy and consolation. A. V.—The *fullness* of the Jews is the fullness of blessing which shall belong to them when they return to God and embrace his Messiah. The conversion of the Jews will, directly or indirectly, do more for the advantage of the Gentiles than their unbelief has done. J. B.

It was to the Jew the Redeemer came as the Saviour; it was to him those words of life and love had been originally spoken; it was in his villages and cities he had wrought such unparalleled exhibitions of superangelic power in healing thousands of his diseased and dying; it was for him, at first, that incarnate Son had been revealed in his all-perfect life; in his hands were those Holy Scriptures: they described the suffering and the all-glorious Messiah; and it was his rejection of this Christ that culminated in the cry, "Crucify him." From that hour he reaped as he had sown; murder, assassination, intestine war, open revolt, marched through the land, and flooded his cities with blood. Peace, quiet, he knew no more. He ripened in every attribute of evil, until the legions of Rome trod him down beneath their iron heel; the temple lay in ruins, and the remnant of the people, escaped from the edge of the sword, were sent forth as the monuments of divine wrath to fulfill his prophetic words in their dispersion over the earth. To-day men point to the Jew as prophecy fulfilled; to-day this fated and trodden people exist—exist, after eighteen centuries of plague and war, and racks and fire, and disabilities—exist still, distinct from all nations. They have drunk the cup even to its dregs, but there is to dawn—is dawning—a brighter day, the day of the fuller gathering in of the Gentiles, when this long-cursed people shall come forth, no more to shout, "Crucify him," but with a penitent heart and streaming eyes, to cry, "My Lord and my God." The past is seen is known; the Messiah they have longed and hoped for is he, the crucified one; and when this fact dawns upon them, then to him shall the gathering of the people be. Hasten, O Lord, that hour of gladness; that hour when Jew and Gentile, no longer Jew and Gentile, shall with one voice crown Jesus as their king. S. W. F.

Section 251.

ROMANS xi. 13–36.

13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine
 14 office: if by any means I may provoke to emulation *them which are* my flesh, and might
 15 save some of them. For if the casting away of them *be* the reconciling of the world, what
 16 *shall* the receiving of *them be*, but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit *be* holy, the
 17 lump *is* also *holy*: and if the root *be* holy, so *are* the branches. And if some of the
 branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and
 18 with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the
 19 branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say
 20 then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief
 21 they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if
 God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee.

22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but
 toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut
 23 off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able
 24 to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature,
 and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these,
 25 which be the natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not,
 brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own
 conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be
 26 come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion
 27 the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this *is* my covenant unto
 28 them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, *they are* enemies for
 29 your sakes: but as touching the election, *they are* beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the
 30 gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed
 31 God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: even so have these also now
 32 not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath con-
 cluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.

33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable
 34 *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the
 35 Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be
 36 recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things:
 to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.

THE burst of exultation uttered by the apostle in the closing verses is the conclusion of a chain of reasoning which is carried on uninterruptedly from the 9th to the 11th chapter. The exclusion of the Jews from the blessings of God's kingdom, in contrast with the reception of the Gentiles, presents an apparent problem in God's government. By the light of Scripture and experience he gradually comes to the conviction that this mode of action is in no degree at variance with God's faithfulness, since his ancient promises were only to the true, the believing Israel: even less with his holiness, since the rejection of Israel is merely the righteous punishment of their unbelief; and least of all with his truth, mercy, and grace, since the fall of Israel was the receiving of the Gentiles, and should afterward be followed by their rising again. Thus the whole divine scheme passes in broad outline before his eyes. He discovers what men regard as evil brought through a higher hand to good. God has—behold the result of his hallowed meditation!—concluded the whole world, both Jew and Gentile, under sin, in order that he in his own good time may have mercy on all. But now, when the apostle's eye has beheld this light, he can no longer restrain his exultation. From the dazzling summit of faith he gazes into a depth which causes him to sink down in adoration. It is a depth, first of *riches*, that is to say, of grace, which thus has mercy on sinners without distinction; then of *wisdom*, which chooses the best means for this highest aim; lastly, of *knowledge*, which is here determinate prescience, which in the repose of eternity has foreseen and foreordained all, in order that in the fullness of time it may come to pass. The conclusion from this can only be, the origin, the progress, the end of all salvation was foreordained by God in Christ: "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen." Men in

all ages praised this exultant expression of Paul's, as one of the most beautiful and sublime in all his epistles. It is the *epitome of faith*, as often as it glances on God's guidance both of individuals and of all within the sphere of redemption. *Van O.*

AGE has followed age, and the Jews remain to this hour spread over the face of the earth, a fearful and affecting testimony to the truth of God's word. They are without their sanctuary, without their Messiah, without the hope of their believing ancestors. But it shall not be always thus. They are still "beloved for the fathers' sake." When the "fullness of the Gentiles shall come in," they too shall be gathered. They shall discover in our Jesus the marks of the promised Messiah, and with tenderness proportioned to their former insensibility shall cling to his Cross. Grafted again into their own olive-tree, all Israel shall be saved. It was through their fall that salvation came unto us Gentiles. And "if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?" What ecstasy! the Gentile and the Jew taking sweet counsel together, and going to the house of God in company; the path of the swift messenger of grace marked in every direction by the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. *J. M. M.*

17, 18. The Church of God is here spoken of under the figure of an olive-tree, a tree remarkable for its beauty, fruitfulness, and usefulness. This mystical olive is represented as growing out of the root of the patriarchs of the Israelitish people, with whom, as believers, the covenant was made that God would be their God and the God of their seed. The Jews are considered as the natural branches, being descendants of these patriarchs; and, till Christ came, the true members of the Church of God were to be found almost exclusively among them. The rejection of the greater part of that people in consequence of unbelief is represented as the breaking off of a portion of the natural branches, and the conversion of some of the Gentiles as the grafting into the mystical olive of a number of branches of a wild olive so that they become partakers of its root and fatness—so that they are so connected with Abraham as to be blessed with him. The conclusion drawn is (v. 18) that the converted Gentiles should not think contemptuously of the Jews, whether converted or unconverted, for the Gentiles were much indebted to the Jews, and owed everything to that society which had the Jewish patriarch for its root. *J. B.*—The Christian Church was no new thing in the earth; it was the continuation of the one body which began to be formed when first the seed of the woman was announced, and was afterward more fully developed under the Abrahamic promise; and

yet more fully developed when the ascended Christ shed down his Spirit, first on Abraham's sons, and then on the far-off Gentiles. When Gentiles come into the Church they are accounted as Abraham's seed, for "they that be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham"; they are the wild branches grafted into the good old olive-tree, which has never been uprooted nor cast away. The New Testament Church gets its sap, its vitality, from this connection; and New Testament saints are what they are by reason of their being made "partakers of the root and fatness of the olive-tree." *Bonar.*

21. **Lest he also spare not thee.** They were broken off because of unbelief, and thou standest through faith, but yet only because and in so far as thou believest. The loving care of God calls loud and long, but not for ever; a time may come when he must give up nations and individuals to their own blindness, because, however powerfully he urges, he constrains no one to be saved who stubbornly refuses to profit by the work of his redeeming love. *Van O.*

22. **Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God.** The Jews who had so long been a barren branch on the olive-tree of his Church—putting forth, indeed, the leaves of religious profession, but no fruit of true holiness—God had cut off and cast away. The Gentiles—originally "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise"—he had inserted, as a new wild graft, into the cultivated olive-tree. These two contrary dealings are traced up to their source in different attributes of the Most High; the one testifies to his severity, the other to his goodness. It is this essential character of the divine being which forms the basis of the great doctrine of the atonement. God presents us in the atonement with the highest illustration of both his attributes. He may be conceived as standing by the Cross of the Lord Jesus and pointing to it in exemplification of his character, as set forth in the text, "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God." *E. M. G.*—In most cases the *goodness* is illustrated by *one kind of events*, and the *severity* by *another*, but in Christ's work the same event of his death displayed the two sides of God's character alike and at once, and thus pardon was never offered to the guilty without a loud protest against sin. *T. D. W.*

Christ's gospel gives out the forgiveness of sins; and the tone of encouragement, of mercy, of loving-kindness to sinners is ever predominant. But yet

there is another language, which is to be found alike in the Old Testament and in the New; a language not indeed so common as the language of mercy, but yet repeated many times; a language which we also need as fully as it was ever needed, and of whose severity we can no more spare one tittle than we can spare anything of the comfort of the other. T. A.

25-32. God's object has been not to reject any, but to show mercy upon all mankind. His purpose has been to make use of the Jewish unbelief to call the Gentiles into his Church, and by the admission of the Gentiles to rouse the Jews to accept his message, that all might at length receive his mercy. C.

25. Gentiles come in. Let us celebrate the beginnings of our blessed hope with exulting hearts; for from this time forward we begin to enter into an eternal inheritance, and the secrets of Scripture, speaking of Christ, have been laid open to us, and the truth, which Jewish blindness does not receive, has carried its light into all nations. *Leo.*

26-28. The meaning of the prophecy still remains veiled to the unhappy posterity of Jacob; but the time will at length come when, the veil being taken away, they as well as we will clearly comprehend the words. A. V.—Take up a volume of the history of any country, at any age since the fall of Jerusalem, and you find the Jews just as we now find them—dwelling in the seclusion of their own communities. "The restless feet" of this ancient people of God are pressing every inhabitable region of the world. They are met in every city, in every mart of business, in every climate, among people of every language. Amid all their sufferings and wanderings, in harmony with prophecy, they have remained a distinct and peculiar people. With neither a country nor a nation that could be called their own, they have uniformly preserved a distinct nationality. Though they have looked upon the mightiest revolutions among the Gentiles; though they have been moving among extensive migrations, from east to west, and from north to south; though they have been dwellers in different empires while in their ascendant, supremacy, and decline; though we have seen them passing through all those political and civil convulsions which have destroyed every nation around Judea, except the Persians alone, who restored them from their Babylonish captivity—yet for eighteen centuries they have remained, in all essential features, the same. They maintain the same laws, and have continued to preserve their own and their old identity. L. T. T.—The Jews exist not only as a monument and a miracle; Jewish mind has exerted a powerful influence on the world. In money power, the Jews hold in their hands the destiny of kingdoms and empires, whose governments become bankrupt and their sovereigns turn beggars

at a Hebrew's nod. Among the most distinguished scholars and men of science, we find the Jews prominent. The most renowned in astronomy have been Jews, as the Herschels in England and Arago in France. Of Christianized Jews are Hengstenberg, Tholuck, Schleiermacher, Gesenius, Neander, Niebuhr, and others, whose learned treatises, Biblical criticisms, didactic theology, and general sacred literature, are found in the library of every theological student. *As.*

29. Are without repentance. Read "can not be repented of." A.

32. The man who thoroughly understands this single verse has the key to the whole Bible. The doctrine of the Bible has these two fundamental articles: The Misery of Man—The Mercy of God. The text mentions them both, and sets them over against each other. "God hath concluded them all in unbelief"—here is man's misery; "that he might have compassion upon all"—here is God's mercy. *Monod.*—To sinners of every kind, to us all, to the whole world, the man of God cries in the Scriptures, "God hath concluded all in rebellion, that he may have mercy upon all." With him there is no respect of persons, no respect of sins; he stops not at some shades of difference; he does not apply to us our own vain measures; for the original crime is equal in all; and since he has included all in rebellion, he includes all in mercy. The amnesty is for all equally; but it must be accepted just as it is offered; not as a right, but as a gift; not as an abandonment of the principles of the divine government, but as the price of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, as a return for the ransom he has paid and the pledge he has offered. A. V.

33. It was the destiny of Israel, after a brief period of prosperity, to separate into rival dynasties, to run through a course of much iniquity, to despise constant, reiterated warnings, and at length to merge in utter ruin, undestroyed indeed, but preserved only as a monument of God's abiding vengeance. But mark the unsearchable depths of the purposes of Providence! These national misfortunes brought in universal blessedness. Israel fell to prepare the salvation of mankind; and the "rest," which the Lord God denied his people, was denied only that an everlasting rest might be secured to his spiritual people for ever! Well might the apostle, who was chosen as the chief laborer in this extension of the kingdom of God, exclaim when he contemplated that great revolution, "Oh! the depth of the riches, and the wisdom, and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" W. A. B.

34. If none hath been his counselor, it is plain that none can know his mind till he shall be pleased to reveal it; nor even then can it be known any

further than it is revealed. To supply what is concealed, with conclusions drawn from the reasonings of our own minds, would be the height of presumption: We must take his counsel as it lies before us in the record he hath given us, without adding to it or subtracting from it. R. W.

36. The Cross is the center of the world's history; the incarnation of Christ and the crucifixion of our Lord are the pivot round which all the events of the ages revolve. The testimony of Jesus was the spirit of prophecy, and the growing power of Jesus

is the spirit of history. All the generations that went before him, though they knew it not, were preparing the way of the Lord, and heralding the advent of him who was the desire of all nations and the light of men; and all the generations that come after, though they know it not, are swelling the pomp of his triumph and hastening the time of his crowning and dominion. The tangled web of human history is only then intelligible when that is taken as its clew, "From him are all things, and to him are all things." A. M.

Section 252.

ROMANS xii. 1-10.

1 I BESEECH you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies
2 a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not
conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye
3 may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. For I say, through
the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more
highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every
4 man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members
5 have not the same office: so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one mem-
6 bers one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us,
7 whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, *let us*
8 *wait on our* ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on ex-
hortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he
9 that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. *Let* love be without dissimulation. Abhor that
10 which is evil; cleave to that which is good. *Be* kindly affectioned one to another with
brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.

"We offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies"—this is our sacrifice, daily and continually to be offered; our spiritual sacrifice, not of brute creatures which know not God, but a reasonable sacrifice of our reasonable minds, of our fancy, our imagination, our judgment, of all the faculties which God has given us to know truth and to know him; and a holy sacrifice of a penitent heart washed in Christ's blood, of a believing heart, a self-denying, an obedient, and a loving heart; and yet again a lively sacrifice, a sacrifice of *living* powers and feelings and hopes. And our bodies, too, with all their various senses and powers, we sacrifice to God; a living sacrifice, not to be destroyed or dishonored, but to do God active service. Our bodies so fearfully and wonderfully made; our eyes, our ears, our busy tongues, our active feet, that vigor which youth feels in all its frame, and which makes the very sense of life a pleasure—these we offer and present to God. T. A.

The true, divine idea of religion is a life begotten of grace in the depths of the human soul, subduing to Christ all the powers of the soul, and incarnating itself in a patient, steady, sturdy service. It is the doing of the will of the Father which entitles us to a solid assurance of our redemption by the Son. Doing this will, not preaching it, as something which ought to be done; not indolently sighing to do it, and then lamenting that we do it not; but the thing itself, in actual achievement, from day to day, from month to month, from year to year. Thus religion rises on us in its own imperial majesty. It is no mere delight of the understanding in the doctrines of our faith; no mere excitement of the sensibilities, now harrowed by fear and now jubilant in hope; but a warfare and a work: a warfare against sin and a work for God. And so our thoughts, our cares, our aims get shifted away from ourselves to a worthier center. We look not within ourselves, but above us, for the guiding word; while the roots of our Christian hope are nourished more by our duties than our joys. It is character that is required of us; laid,

indeed, in grace, and imperfect at the best, needing to shelter itself behind the perfect righteousness of Christ, and yet a piece of solid moral masonry, to be carried on and carried up by a life-long toil. And this, too, not for our own sake, but for Christ's sake, and because God so wills it. Our own spiritual comfort, the sure fruit of a careful walk with God, though an incident, is not to be the end of our endeavors; but all we do is to be out of simple loyalty to redeeming love. Mere obedience to conscience is but a pagan virtue, which, in the highest sphere, is not a virtue at all. Virtue, for us, is obedience to God in Christ. Painstaking it will be, that there may be no blot upon the life; self-denying, as against our indolence, our appetites, and our passions; asking only for duty, though we knew it were asking for martyrdom—and all for Christ. Such is the will of God concerning us; and only he who does it should reckon himself a child of God. R. D. H.

THE twelfth of Romans, placed at the beginning of the Epistle, would have been as cold and uninspiring as the ten commandments on the tables of stone; standing where it does, every precept is moistened with tears of divine pity and the blood of redemption; and to the soul that has learned with Paul "the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God," every word that expresses the will of the Lord Jesus is richer than gold and sweeter than honey. *AN.*—He that gives rules of life without first fixing principles of faith offers preposterously at building a house without laying a foundation, and he that instructs what to believe and directs not a believer how to live doth in vain lay a foundation without following out the building. But in this Epistle we find our apostle excellently acquitting himself in both these. He first largely and firmly lays the groundwork in the foregoing part of the Epistle; now he adds exhortations and directions touching the particular duties of Christians.

1. The first thing to be done with a soul is to convince it of sin and death, then to address and lead it in to Christ, our righteousness and life; this done it should be taught to follow him. This is Christianity, *to live in Christ*, and *to live to Christ*; to live in him by faith, and to live to him in holiness. The exhortation that begins this chapter hath in it the whole sum of Christian obedience fitly expressed and strongly urged; and in that are all particular rules comprised. One said well, "The best way to understand the mysterious and high discourse in the beginning of Paul's Epistles is to begin at the practice of these rules and precepts that are in the latter end of them." The way to attain to know more is *to receive the truth in the love of it*, and to obey that you know. *L.*—One must first be cleansed, and then cleanse others; first be instructed, then instruct; become light, then enlighten; draw nigh to God, then lead others up to him; be sanctified, then sanctify; have hands, then lead by the hand; have prudence, then give counsel. No one is worthy of our great God, both sacrifice and high priest, who has not first presented himself to God as a holy, living sacrifice, nor exhibited that reasonable service which is well-pleasing to him. *Greg. Naz.*

The whole tone of our New Testament religion

is searching and high. It allows no laxities and no apologies. It is satisfied with nothing less than entire consecration. The piety it asks is both active and ardent, warm and constant, ever burning and ever advancing. It summons into the master's service every power, every energy, every affection, every hour of life. *F. D. H.*—The absolute unselfish oblation of the whole man—mind, heart, and will—as a sacrifice to Christ, out of thankful regard to his dying love, is the living sacrifice, the reasonable service, with which God is well pleased. To keep back anything is to deny our Lord. He asks only the heart, but he asks it all. And in gracious souls he has it. It is his. He has bought it with his Cross and passion, and carries it away in triumph; embracing in almighty arms the ransomed one, who desires no other master, and is happy to be borne away captive by him, whose commandments are not grievous, whose yoke is light, and whose service is freedom. *J. W. A.*

2. Conformity to the world does not consist in joining in the pleasures with which God who made the world has filled it. It does not consist in pursuing the occupations by which the work of the world is done. It does not consist in allowing proper play to the natural impulses. All these things, though they can be made worldly, yet are not worldly in themselves. By being conformed to this world, the apostle plainly means the molding of the life and character by the system which prevails around you, and not by the higher teaching which reaches your heart and conscience. The world has another voice which does not come from God at all, and which speaks to our weakness, to our folly, to our vanity, to our love of popularity, to our fear of offending. And this is the voice which we are tempted to make our guide, and even to enthrone above our own consciences. Those who begin with the world almost always end with the flesh, or sometimes with what is worse still. They begin by talking lightly of serious faults because they are common, because they are not thought much of, because the temptations to them are great. And such invariably, if they do not repent, go straight on from mere laxity of judgment to downright indulgence in fleshly sins. And hence conformity to the world does the same

kind of mischief now that idolatry did long ago. It leads by a direct and rapid course to a low moral standard, to stifling the higher nature, to a weak and perhaps a positively corrupt form of religion, and to a degradation of the life and character. F. T.

We must avoid as much as in us lies all *such society*, all *such amusements*, all *such tempers* which it is the daily business of a Christian to subdue, and all those feelings which it is his constant duty to suppress. Some things, which are apparently innocent and do not assume an alarming aspect or bear a dangerous character—things which the generality of decorous people affirm (how truly we know not) to be safe for them; yet if we find that these things stir up in us improper propensities—if they awaken thoughts which ought not to be excited—if they abate our love for religious exercises, or infringe on our time for performing them—if they make spiritual concerns appear insipid—if they wind our heart a little more about the world—in short, if we have formerly found them injurious to our own souls, then let no example or persuasion, no belief of their alleged innocence, no plea of their perfect safety tempt us to indulge in them. It matters little to *our* security what they are to others. Our business is with ourselves. Our responsibility is on our own heads. Others can not know the side on which we are assailable. Let our own unbiased judgment determine our opinion; let our own experience decide for our own conduct. *H. More.*—I have found nothing yet which requires more courage and independence than to rise even a little, but decidedly, above the *par* of the religious world around us. Surely, the way in which we commonly go on is not that way of self-denial and sacrifice and cross-bearing which the New Testament talks of. Then is the offense of the Cross ceased. Our slender influence on the circle of our friends is often to be traced to our leaving so little difference between us. J. W. A.

3. To every man. This is more pressing than if he had said simply, *to you*, or generally, *to you all*. Thus we ought to speak, and thus ye ought to hear. We to speak, not as telling some unconcerning stories, but as having business with you; and you to hear, not each for another, as you often do, "Oh! such a passage touched such a one," but each for ourselves. **Not to think more highly.** The first particular the apostle recommends is that gracing grace of humility, the ornament and the safety of all other graces, and which is so peculiarly Christian. Somewhat philosophers speak of temperance, justice, and other like virtues, but these rather to swell the mind with conceit and confidence of itself than to dwell together with self-abasement and humility. But in the school of Christ

the first lesson of all is *self-denial* and *humility*. It is written above the door as the rule of entry or admission, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart*. And, out of all question, that is truly the humblest heart that hath most of Christ in it. L. —A false, imaginary perfection makes way for too many real imperfections. Christ has been disparaged in all manners by this infidel fervor; disparaged in his nature, his dignity, and holiness. There is not one of those schools which, by stretching certain cords to excess, have not in an equal degree slackened others which ought to have been kept stretched. There is not one of those schools whose progress has not been marked by the destruction or weakening of some one of the fundamental truths of religion or morality. A. V.

To think soberly. A low self-esteem doth not wholly take away the simple knowledge of what gifts and graces God hath bestowed on a man, for that were to make him both unthankful and unuseful. He that doth not know what God hath freely given him can not return praise to God nor make use of himself for God in his station. The apostle's caution intimates a sober, humble reflection on the *measure* God hath given a man, which he not only allows but requires; and himself gives example of it in his own present expression, declaring that he speaks these things *through the grace that is given* to him. In this dependent notion of freely given, a man shall never be puffed up by any endowments, though he see and know them; yea, the more he knows them thus, will be the more humble still, as being the more obliged. L.

4-8. The second constituent of Christian duty is reciprocal justice and kindness between man and man, like the harmony and helpfulness which the Creator has established between the several members of a living body. Mark how the hand comes to the defense of the eye in its weakness; and how the eye with its sight, and from its elevated position, keeps watch for the welfare of the lowly, blind, but laborious and useful foot. The mutual helpfulness of these members is absolutely perfect. Such should be the charity between brother and brother of God's family on earth; such it shall be when all the sons and daughters are assembled in the many mansions of the heavenly home. In the remaining portion of the Epistle, Paul labors with all his might to stimulate practical charity, in one place reducing the whole law to one precept, to one word—Love. After devoting so much attention to the roots, he will not neglect to gather the fruit. *Arnot.*

6. The gospel, as taught by our Lord and his apostles, is pure, transparently clear, radiant alike with the glory of God and the happiness of man—of that there is no doubt; yet what twists has the

mind of man contrived to give it, so that in some forms of Christianity you can hardly at all recognize the original draught, as it came from the divine mind! What follies, fancies, superstitions, licentious doctrines, have founded themselves—not justly of course, but with a most perverse ingenuity—upon the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament! It would be interesting to consider every heresy which has hitherto arisen, and see how in each case it has been a caricature of some one point of Christian truth—an exaggeration by which the fair proportion of the faith, of which Paul here speaks, has been distorted, and a single passage of Scripture or a single class of passages brought into undue prominence. E. M. G.

8. In the scheme of evangelical charity the *principle* which actuates the giver is of paramount importance. "He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity." The gospel rejects alike the tax which is reluctantly paid by fear, the bribe which is given to silence importunity, the sacrifice which is offered to a vain ostentation, and the price which is intended to purchase a place in the divine favor, or as a ground of justification before God. The only offering which it accepts is that which originates in a principle of love and obedience to Christ, and which hopes and asks for divine acceptance through him

alone. And having made its appeal at the Cross, having provided and plied him with the grand motive of redeeming love, it will accept nothing which overlooks the constraining influence of that principle. J. H.

9. The duty here meant and commanded is, *that we love one another*, and our love must be un hypocritical and sincere; such as, though it may consist with, yet doth not wholly consist in civilities of expression and behavior, but a real benevolence of soul and good will to all—a love disposing readily to forgive evil and do good upon all occasions. **Cleave to that which is good.** This expresses a vehement and inseparable affection; loving and rejoicing in all the good thou seest in others; desiring and seeking after all the good thou canst attain unto thyself; such as will put thee and keep thee most in mind of thy home, and the way thither, and admonish and reduce thee from any declining steps.

10. **In honor preferring one another.** Putting all possible respect on one another; for though a man may see the weakness of those he converses with, yet he ought to take notice of what is good. All have something commendable, and none hath all; so the meanest may in something be preferable to the highest; and Christian humility and charity will seek out for that. L.

Section 253.

ROMANS xii. 11-21.

11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient
12 in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of saints; given
14 to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them
15 that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. *Be of the same mind one toward another.*
16 Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own con-
17 ceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.
18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved,
19 avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is*
20 mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst,
21 give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome
of evil, but overcome evil with good.

CARRY holy principles with you into the world, and the world will become hallowed by their presence. A Christlike spirit will Christianize everything it touches. A meek heart, in which the altar-fire of love to God is burning, will lay hold of the commonest, rudest things in life and transmute them, like coarse fuel at the touch of fire, into a pure and holy flame. Religion in the soul will make all the work and toil of life, its gains and losses, friendships, rivalries, competitions, its manifold incidents and events, the means of religious advancement. Lofty or lowly, rude or refined, as our earthly work may be, it will become, to a holy mind, only the material for an infinitely nobler than all the creations of genius—a pure and godlike life. To spiritualize what is material, to Christianize what is secular—this is the noble achievement of Christian principle. If you are a sincere Christian, it will be your great desire, by God's grace, to bring every gift, talent, occupation of life, every word you speak, every action you do, under the control of Christian motive. Caird.

Where true piety exists, *fidelity to man is transmuted into worship before God*. This is the great truth which sanctifies all human life. Broken up as life is into myriads of little, insignificant acts, it is hard sometimes to redeem it from contempt. It becomes a holy thing, when we realize that, with the heart unreservedly given to God, even the most trivial duty becomes an act of worship. Glowing with the warm affection by which it is inspired, it glides into the frame of devotion itself; which, as grateful incense, goes up to heaven from the altar of God within the heart. Our worship consists not only in formal acts of praise and prayer, when we bow before God in the sanctuary, or kneel at his feet in the closet; but in the workshop, in the counting-room, in the office, everywhere, and in the hourly transactions of common business, the whole life becomes a sacred chant. The ten thousand little obediences are the sweet notes which compose it, rising above the din of this poor world, and mingling in the universal psalm of praise that is heard before the throne. Duty is felt in all its sacredness, and a soft radiance beams upon the path of the most obscure and patient of the Lord's saints upon the earth. B. M. P.

11. The words seem to imply that religion is not so much a duty as a something that has to do with *all* duties; not a tax to be paid periodically, but a ceaseless, all-pervading, inexhaustible tribute to him who is not only the object of religious worship but the end of our very life and being. It suggests to us the idea that piety is not for Sundays only, but for all days; that spirituality of mind is like the act of breathing, like the circulation of the blood, like the silent growth of the stature, a process that may be going on simultaneously with all our actions—when we are busiest, as when we are idlest; in the church, in the world; in solitude, in society; in our grief, and in our gladness; in our toil, and in our rest; sleeping, waking; by day, by night—amid all the engagements and exigencies of life. For you perceive that in one breath, as duties not only not incompatible but necessarily and inseparably blended with each other, the text exhorts us to be at once “not slothful in business,” and “fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.” *Caird*.

Suffer the mind to revert to the thought that what we are about to do is the task assigned to us in the order of God's providence, that it is a task which he will inspect, and that it must be executed as well as we are able in order that it may meet his approval. Do the work under the eye of your heavenly master, and look up in his face from time to time for his help and blessing: an internal colloquy with him ever and anon, so far from being a distraction, will be a furtherance. For no work can in any high sense prosper which is not done with a bright, elastic spirit; and there is no means of keeping the spirit bright and elastic but by keeping it near to God. And never think of your work as a distraction or a hindrance to piety. Think of it as contributing to healthfulness and cheerfulness of mind, as a steadying and sobering influence, preventing those extravagances into which without it the mind might run. E. M. G.—There is many a secret sin that is best contended against, not by first thinking about it and then resisting it—for, while you think about it, it takes the form of

a temptation—but by crowding our days so full of duty that the tempter will find no treacherous door open. Work is chaste. Work hallowed by prayer is chaster still. Have no fears that God will not help. F. D. H.

Fervent in spirit. The *fervor* whereof the apostle speaks hath religion, or the *service of God*, for its object. Love to God is the principle, the law of God is the rule, and his glory the end, of all its operations. The *fervent* Christian is habitually on the stretch to answer the great purposes for which he was made and redeemed; his understanding is employed in searching out the mind of God so far as it regards the conduct of his creatures; his will is firmly and resolutely determined to perform whatever shall appear to be his duty; his affections are inspired with holy life and vigor; in consequence of which his executive powers are all ready to perform their several parts: the tongue to speak, the hands to give or to do what is required, and the feet to run in the way of God's commandments. In short, the whole man is engaged in the *service of God*, so that religion becomes his constant and most delightful occupation; he counts nothing too much to be done or too hard to be endured for the enjoyment of that God whom he most ardently loves and to whom he is entirely devoted. This is to be *fervent in spirit*. R. W.

True manly strength in religion is nurtured at the mercy-seat and at the foot of the Cross. The world has already half destroyed us when we are too busy to pray. Better forego food or rest, especially better forego any amount of profit, than learn to live without communion with God. The man of business, who from morning till night scarcely redeems a moment for stated reflection, must, by stern resolution and self-denial, gain some hour to hear God speak and to speak to God, or he will inevitably shrink and wither down into the every-day worldly professor, who is bold at a bargain and cowardly in faith, earnest on week-days and half asleep on the Sabbath, indefatigable in trade-labors and unheard of in operations for Christ's kingdom

or his poor. J. W. A.—Believer, the more worldly business lies upon thy hand the more need thou hast to keep close to thy closet. Much business lays a man open to many sins, many snares, and many temptations. Brooks.—Most businesses have wide gaps; all have some chinks at which devotion may slip in. Be we never so urgently set or closely intent on any work, be we feeding, be we traveling, be we trading, be we studying, nothing can forbid that we wedge in a thought concerning God's goodness, and a word of praise for it; that we reflect on our sins, and spend a penitential sigh on them; that we descry our need of God's help, and dispatch a brief petition for it. Barrow.—Often a man in the multitude and pressure of his avocations exercises a more God-pleasing humility and real waiting upon God than in highly favored moments of elevated devotion. Beng.

12. Wilt thou resolutely strive against slothfulness? Then *rejoice in hope*—in the hope of that glory which is the portion of the true Christian. Wilt thou be and remain fervent in spirit? Then be *patient*—that is, at once enduring and resolute—in *tribulation*. Patience strengthens the power out of which true zeal is born; and, in order to do much for the kingdom of God, we must have learned to suffer, if need be, for his sake. Wilt thou, finally, serve the Lord uprightly in thy work? *Continue instant in prayer*. To work and pray are not to the Christian two opposite things; far less does the one exclude the other—they flow together incessantly in higher unity. Persevering, believing prayer alone will give thee enjoyment, courage, and strength for the daily service of the Lord, even in a post which perhaps thou wouldst not have chosen for thyself. The hidden power of the prompt, busy hand lies in the constantly bowed knee. Van O.—If afraid of fainting, yea, if at the point of fainting, prayer revives the soul, draws in no less than the strength of God to support it. And what, then, can surcharge it? Oh! acquaint yourselves with prayer, and by it with God, that, if days of trouble come, you may know whither to go and what way; and, if you know this way, whatever befalls you, you are not much to be bemoaned. L.

15. *Rejoice, weep*. This indeed is a characteristic trait that distinguishes the Christian faith from every religious pretension that was ever set up. It is not one-sided, as being all for melancholy or all for mirth—not stoical or epicurean. It has as many sides as our life has, goes with us wherever we can go, and only asks that it may consecrate everything with its blessing. F. D. H.—I am obliged to great thankfulness to God for the mercies of this life which he has shown to *my friends*. That which promotes their joy should increase mine. Nature and grace teach us to be glad, when our

friends are well and prosper. Do good to men's bodies if thou wouldst do good to their souls. Say not, "Things corporeal are worthless trifles for which the receivers will be never the better." They are things that nature is easily sensible of; and sense is the passage to the mind and will. Dost thou not find what a help it is to thyself to have at any time any ease and alacrity of body; and what a burden and hindrance pains and cares are? Labor then to free others from such burdens and temptations, and be not regardless of them. If thou must "rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep," promote then thy own joy by helping theirs, and avoid thy own sorrows in preventing or curing theirs. Baz.

16. *Mind not high things*. In order to escape the perils of a false elevation, to avoid falling either into the snares of the flesh or the snares of pride, aspire to things higher than all those to which the world unjustly gives the name of high things. Neither to the right nor to the left, but upward! Upward! in the practice of all the duties which God has given you to fulfill. Upward! in simple love to him who has loved you, diligently seeking his glory while despising your own. Upward! in the exactness, not the scrupulous and legal, but the tender and zealous exactness of Christian obedience, in humility truly humble, and that childlike simplicity which so admirably accords with enlightened reason in the intelligent but docile acceptance of the gifts which God has given, and the truths which he has taught you. A. V.

17. All that is required of us is that we should not suffer our resentment of injuries to carry us beyond the bounds of justice, equity, and Christian charity; that we should not *recompense evil for evil*, or repay one injury by committing another; that we should not take fire at every slight provocation or trivial offense, nor pursue even the greatest and most flagrant injuries with implacable rancor; that we should make all reasonable allowances for the infirmities of human nature, for the passions, the prejudices, the failings, the misapprehensions of those we have to deal with; and, without submitting tamely to oppression or insult or giving up rights of *great and acknowledged importance*, should always show a disposition to conciliate and forgive; and rather to recede and give way a little in certain instances, than insist on the *utmost* satisfaction and reparation that we have perhaps a strict right to demand. P.—It is not manhood but childishness to be quieted with striking the thing that hurts us. Though enemies be not worthy to be loved by us, yet malice is unworthy to be lodged in us. 'Tis true, the precept of loving enemies is contrary to unsanctified nature. But God alone knows how to punish our enemies without passion and inequality. It is

our duty to weary persecutors with patience. A Christian must not, like the flint, seem to be cool but be fiery when struck. He that takes up fire to throw (though against his enemy) hurts himself most. To be kind to the kind argues civility; to be unkind to the unkind argues corruption; to be unkind to the kind argues devilishness; to be kind to the unkind argues Christianity. *Jenkyne*.

18. Lieth in you. The emphasis is best laid on the word *you*. Not a mere repetition of the first clause, "if it be possible," but further insisting on that thought, as if in answer to the suggestion, "I would but somebody else will not." A proverb says, "It takes two to quarrel": keep peace on *your* side. O. E. D.—Remember that, when any man reviles you, it is not the tongue that gives you the opprobrious language that injures or affronts you; but it is your own resentment of it as an injury or affront that makes it such to you. *Epicurus*.

19. The second injury, done by way of revenge, differs from the first that provoked it little or nothing but in point of time; and certainly no one man's sin can procure privilege to another to sin in that or the like kind. If another hath broken the bonds of his allegiance and obedience to God and of charity to thee, yet thou art not the less tied by the same bonds still. By revenge of injuries thou usurpest upon God's prerogative, who is the *avenger*, as the apostle teaches. This doth not forbid either the magistrate's sword for just punishment of offenders, or the soldier's sword in a just war; but

such revenges as, without authority or a lawful call, the pride and perverseness of men do multiply one against another: in which is involved a presumptuous contempt of God and his supreme authority, or at least the unbelief and neglect of it. L.—**20. Coals of fire.** That fiery coals signify benefits is manifest by the words of Solomon which the apostle here reciteth. Benefits may properly be called coals of fire, for they inflame the heart with love, which was before cold and inactive. *Luther*.

21. When we meet with an opposition which frets and irritates us, Christian prudence counsels us to pray that the temptation may be removed; and in particular that our self-love and injured feelings may not weaken our love for our neighbor. But this prudence, if it counsels nothing further, is not prudent enough. If the same feeling which disposes us to pray does not dispose us to pray for our enemies or opponents, it is difficult to believe that it is a movement of charity. Charity can not be thus arrested. Its nature is to overcome evil with good, and this means not merely that it does not render evil for evil, but that in return for evil it renders good. It would not be charity if it did less. To pardon truly it is necessary to do more than pardon. Evil must be overcome by good; and after the example of God himself, where the offense has abounded, grace must much more abound. This is to say that pardoning, sparing, loving, *all* are secured in the person offended only when he prays for the offender. A. V.

Section 254.

ROMANS xiii. 1-14.

1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God:
2 the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resist-
3 eth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For
 rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the
4 power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the min-
 ister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth
 not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him
5 that doeth evil. Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for con-
6 science' sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending
7 continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom trib-
 ute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.
8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled
9 the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not
 steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other
 commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neigh-
10 bour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of
11 the law. And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for
12 now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at

hand : let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.
 13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day ; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and
 14 wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not
 provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts thereof.

If, indeed, God's kingdom were shining around us in its full beauty ; if every evil thing were driven out of his temple ; if we saw nothing but holy lives and happy, the fruits of his Spirit, truth, and love, and joy ; then we might be less anxious for ourselves ; our course would be far smoother. What evil thoughts would not be withered and die long ere they could ripen into action, if the very air which we breathed were of such keen and heavenly purity ! It is because all this is not so that we have need of so much watchfulness ; it is because the faults of every one of us make our brethren's task harder ; because there is not one bad or careless person among us who is not a hindrance in his brother's path, and does not oblige him to exert himself the more. Therefore, because the day is not bright, but overclouded, because it is but too like the night, and too many use it as the night for all works of darkness, let us take the more heed that we do not ourselves so mistake it ; let us watch each of us the light within us, lest, indeed, we should wholly stumble ; let us put on the Lord Jesus Christ. To put on Christ is a truer and fuller expression, by far, than if we had been told to put on truth, or holiness, or goodness. It includes all these, with something more, that nothing but itself can give—the sense of safety, and joy unspeakable, in feeling ourselves sheltered in our Saviour's arms, and taken even into himself. Assuredly, if we put on the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall not make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. T. A.

2. For "*damnation*" read "*condemnation*" ; punishment for that disobedience, not eternal perdition, being meant. A.

1-7. It is conscientious subjection that is spoken of ; free, willing, hearty ; not forced or constrained. It is to proceed from respect to the authority enjoining obedience, and not from a mere dread of the consequences of disobedience. W. S.—Christianity sees in the body politic not an arbitrary human invention ; in the magistracy, not a mere slavish creature of the sovereign will of the people, but a divine ordinance for the administration of eternal justice, which punishes evil and rewards good ; for upholding the majesty of law ; for maintaining order and security both of person and of property ; and for promoting the public weal. The state is moral society resting on law ; the Church, the same resting on the gospel. The one is necessarily limited and national ; the other, catholic and universal. The former looks to temporal welfare ; the latter, to eternal. But each promotes and protects the other. As to the particular form of government for a state the apostles give no directions. As all power and authority come from God, so also does the power of the civil government, be it an absolute or a limited monarchy or a republic, be it an aristocracy or a democracy. In virtue of its elevation above the temporal and earthly, Christianity may exist under all forms of civil government, and will always favor that which most corresponds to the historical relations and wants of a nation, and which is, therefore, relatively the best. Of course, however, in this point also, it tends steadily to improvement and to the highest possible perfection ; to the abolition of

hurtful laws and institutions and the introduction of good ; to an organization under which the power is judiciously distributed, the rights of the individual as well as of the commonwealth best preserved, and the moral ends of the race most efficiently promoted and most surely attained. P. S.

Christianity refused to be mixed up with any political system, or to bind those who followed it down to any form of political union, as it had refused to bind them down to any particular form of religious union. Leaving itself perfectly free, it could therefore enter as a spirit of good into any form of government. All its fundamental ideas—the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of all men in Christ, the equality of all men before God, the individual responsibility of every human soul, the surrender of all things for others, the one necessity of salvation for all alike, emperor and peasant—are spiritual ideas which bear an easy translation into political ideas, and which, gathering strength, have proved the ruin of many tyrannies. S. A. B.—Above and beneath all civil constitutions—the foundation of their stability, the dome of their protection, their corner-stone, their wall of defense, their genial and sheltering sky—is the religion and gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Virtue is loyalty. Goodness is patriotism. The best citizenship is the best Christianship. The best legislator is the truest and wisest man. Character is the strength of the state. They are the friends, the ornaments, the defenders of the country and its constitution, who will not swerve from its three original, immortal ideas—Faith, Freedom, Fraternity. F. D. H.

5. The subjection here required is not absolute

and unlimited. In obeying the constituted authorities—thus runs the exhortation—a man should, properly speaking, obey God only, whose minister the magistrate is, and whose sword he bears. And hence obedience to an earthly ruler must be measured and limited by the obligation to the heavenly. P. S.—The limits of every duty must be determined by its *reasons*, and the only ones assigned *here*, or that *can* be assigned for submission to civil authority, are its *tendency to do good*; wherever therefore this shall cease to be the case, submission becomes absurd, having no longer any *rational view*. But at what time this evil shall be judged to have arrived, or what remedy it may be proper to apply, Christianity does not decide, but leaves to be determined by an appeal to natural reason and right. R. Hall.—No command to do anything morally wrong can be binding; nor can any which transcends the rightful authority of the power whence it emanates. What that rightful authority is must be determined by the institutions and laws of the land, or from prescription and usage, or from the nature and design of the office with which the magistrate is invested. The right of deciding on all these points, and determining where the obligation to obedience ceases, and the duty of resistance begins, *must, from the nature of the case, rest with the subject, and not with the ruler*. The apostles and early Christians decided this *for themselves*, and did not leave the decision with the Jewish or Roman authorities. Like all other questions of duty, it is to be decided on our responsibility to God and our fellow-men. C. H.

8-10. The whole sum of the law is love: love to God and love to man; these two contain all, and the former of the two contains the latter; love to God is the only true principle and spring of all due love to man, and all love that begins there returns thither likewise and ends there. The engaging the whole mind and soul to the love of God does not engross it so that there should be no kind of love communicable to man; on the contrary, it is to refine it that it may flow forth the purer and better. All love should be once called in to God, to be sublimated and purified there, and then set in its right channel and motion, so as man be loved in him and for him; and so to love man is to love God, that love taking its rise from him and terminating in him; and in this circle is the proper motion of celestial divine love. L.

This love is exercised in obedience to the authority of God's word. It is a principle, not merely a feeling; it is cultivated and exercised as a duty, not yielded to merely as a generous instinct; it is a submission to God's command, not merely an indulgence of constitutional tenderness. J. A. J.—Remember that love fulfills obedience, and does not abolish it any more than faith abolishes the law; that he who

loves obeys joyfully, but still obeys; that he obeys better than before, but still obeys. Nothing, no attainments of the spiritual life, however sublime, can abolish obedience; and the spiritual life can not be advancing when obedience is on the decline. The proof of progress is better obedience. A. V.—Love as obligatory is the law of our being. In substance, and as expressing his inmost nature, Love is the one imperative word uttered by God in the Bible. It is also the one imperative word uttered by Him through the constitution and conscience of man, and in the coincidence of these two utterances we find a perfect proof that both are from Him. Law and love! These are the two mightiest forces in the universe. Law is stern, majestic, and the fountain of all order. Love is mild, winning, the fountain of all rational spontaneity, that is, of the spontaneity that follows rational choice. Love without law is capricious, weak, mischievous; opposed to law, it is wicked. Law without love is unlovely. The highest harmony of the universe is in the love of a rational being that is coincident with the law of that being rationally affirmed; and the deepest possible jar and discord is from the love, persistent and utter, of such a being in opposition to his law. It is because there is in the Divine Being this harmony of law with love that He is perfect. It is because this harmony is required in the divine government that that is perfect, and no philosophy for the regulation of human conduct can be both vital and safe in which that same union is not consummated. M. H.

9. The term *neighbor* includes every creature of God that needeth a blessing and can be blessed. Thus doth Christianity set the heart of man to throbbing along with the heart of everlasting love, in behalf of all that wear his form, and circulate life currents filled by the same heavenly Father. Thus does it create a spirit in man which sends him abroad with both hands full of all that can bless and endow human existence. Under the gospel, man is not all inhumanity to man. Heart does meet heart; does warm and grieve at the call of sorrow and need; if another be burdened, feels itself the pressure; if he be delivered, exults in the emancipation. White.

11. *Our salvation nearer.* The best thoughts we can have about the future life are thoughts that make us better men now—more fit to live under the eye of God, and in daily intercourse with our neighbors, just where we are—kinder and purer at home, more just and honorable in business, more reverent and humble in prayer, more charitable in our judgments of each other. Unless we are very thoughtless indeed, there can not fail to be a strong and salutary influence breathing on us continually by remembering this: that we are so near.

one day's march nearer every night, to a world that is *all love and all life*, without selfishness and without death, and that world eternal. The prospect itself, if we realized it, would shed some new sanctity over the life we are living. F. D. H.

12. The night. A picture of the Christian's present state. In comparison with other men he is in broad day; and so he is in comparison with his own former condition. But here the apostle is not thinking of other men, nor looking back to our own natural state: he is looking forward; he has a glorious eternity in view; and as he contemplates that, he feels that he and his fellow-believers are all still in darkness, that night with its shadows is still overspreading them. **The day.** Brightness and beauty and happiness are all connected in our minds with the word, and all the pleasant visions the word calls up in our minds are embodied and realized in heaven. Now this day, the apostle says, is near: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." He speaks like a man who has long felt himself benighted in the world, and who sees at last the morning breaking. "Now," he says in the preceding verse, "is our salvation nearer than when we believed," than when we first believed; time has brought it nearer. He looks on himself and his fellow-believers as standing on the very verge of God's kingdom. C. B.

Holiness, under the name of light, is by the apostle spoken of as the Christian's armor. Put on, saith he, the armor of light, in opposition to the works of darkness. Strange armor! that a man may see through. A good man's armor is, that he needs none: his armor is an open breast. Likeness to God is armor of proof, that is, an imitation of him in his moral goodness, which holiness as a general name comprehends. A person truly like God is secure from any external violence, so far as that it shall never be able to invade his spirit. He is in spirit far raised above the tempestuous, stormy region, and converses where winds and clouds have no place. *Hove.*

13. It is a common saying that the night is without shame, and this is in a measure true; for men often do those things in the night which they fear to do in the day, lest their acts should be discovered and they brought to shame and punishment. Therefore the apostle says, *Let us walk honestly as in the day.* *Luther.*

14. What is the wedding garment? Some say it is the *imputed* righteousness of Christ, some that it is the *imparted* righteousness of Christ,

others that it is *holiness of character*. I consider it to consist of all three together. "Putting on the Lord Jesus Christ" is possessing his righteousness *imputed*, his holiness *imparted*, and his example *imitated*. He first makes the robe, and then fits us to wear it. *R. Hill.*—Dress relates to the form or figure of the body, character to the form or figure of the soul—it is, in fact, the dress of the soul. On the ground of this analogy it is that the Scriptures so frequently make use of dress to signify what lies in character, and represent character, in one way or another, as being the dress of the soul. As character is the soul's dress, and dress analogical to character, whatever has power to produce a character when received is represented as a dress to be put on. Thus Paul, conceiving Christ to be the soul's new dress, or what is nowise different, its new character, says, "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Christ is to be a complete wardrobe for us himself, and that by simply receiving his person we are to have the holy texture of his life upon us, and live in the infolding of his character. We must put on Christ himself, *and none but him*. We must put him on just as he is, wear him outside, walk in him, bear his reproach, glory in his beauty, call it good to die with him, so to be found in him, not having our own righteousness, but the righteousness that is of God by faith. Cover us in it, O thou Christ of God, and let our shame be hid eternally in thee. *H. B.*

Make not provision for the flesh. Once in Christ, your necessary care for this natural life will be regulated and moderated by the Spirit. And for all unlawful desires of the flesh you shall be rid of providing for these. Instead of all provision for the life of the flesh in that sense, there is another guest and another life for you now to wait on and furnish for. *L.*—When Christ is really put on, the world falls off, and the lusts of property, and fame, and power, and appetite, subside or fall away. The effect runs both ways under the great law of action and reaction—as the old man is put off that the new may be put on, so the new put on still further displaces the old. And so if there be any overmastering temptation which baffles you, and keeps turning you off in your endeavors, and boasting itself against you, here is your deliverance—raise no fight with it in your own will, as you always have done when you have failed, but simply turn yourself to Christ alone: let your soul be covered in by the power of his grace upon you. *H. B.*

Section 255.

ROMANS xiv. 1-23.

1 HIM that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations. For one be-
 2 lieveth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that
 3 eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth:
 4 for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own
 5 master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him
 6 stand. One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*.
 7 Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth
 8 it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it.
 9 He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the
 10 Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

11 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we
 12 live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore,
 13 or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he
 14 might be Lord both of the dead and living. But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why
 15 dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of
 16 Christ. For it is written, *As I live*, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every
 17 tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.
 18 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a
 19 stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way. I know, and am persuaded by
 20 the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing unclean of itself; but to him that esteemeth any thing
 21 to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, now
 22 walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. Let
 23 not then your good be evil spoken of: for the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but
 24 righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth
 25 Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things
 26 which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. For meat destroy
 27 not the work of God. All things indeed *are* pure; but *it is* evil for that man who eateth
 28 with offence. *It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy
 29 brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. Hast thou faith? have *it* to thyself
 30 before God. Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.
 31 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is*
 32 not of faith is sin.

We want this bond of unity between *the dead and the living* to throw a purifying and ennobling influence into our present daily life, to save it from sinking, as our life is so terribly tempted to, into a besotted mammonism, an insane frivolity, or a miserable selfishness; to make it a noble and ever more perfect preparation for what is to come. We want this constant "power" of a practical connection between the two worlds, to keep the present from being a mere carnival of the senses, a place to eat and dress and sleep in, as well as to keep the future from being a sentimental phantasy or a dead blank. We are tempted hourly—nobody denies it—to unclean transactions, to covetousness and bad temper, to envying and evil speaking, to indolence, impatience, and unbelief. Now, one of the great powers by which we are to struggle against these successfully, and finally overcome, is the certainty of a day when Christ—who is life to those that love him, and whose eyes are like a flame of fire to those that are untrue to him and unrighteous to each other—shall appear. The new man in him is to be put on immediately. Even in these self-seeking earthly streets the Christian is to walk unselfishly and unblamably, his pride humbled, his temper controlled, his motives godly. Whatever is done in word or deed is to be done in the name and spirit of the Lord Jesus, risen from the dead, by those that are on the way to meet him. F. D. H.

1-6. Those Christians who still clung to superstitious distinctions between meats and days should be treated with indulgence by the more enlightened, and all should treat each other with charity, and

forbear from condemning one another, whether Jews or Gentiles, since Christ had received both into his favor as their common Lord. C.

3. Let not him that eateth despise him

that eateth not. That is to say, beware of the fancied superiority to the weaknesses and narrowness of your more scrupulous brother which is prone to creep into the hearts of the more liberal and strong. It may be that what you call over-scrupulous timidity is the fruit of a more earnest Christian principle than yours, and that what you call in yourself freedom from foolish scruples is only the result of a less sensitive conscience, not of a more robust Christianity. **Let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth.** Judge not from the height of your superior self-denial your brother who allows himself what you avoid. Your besetting sin is self-righteous condemnation of those who perhaps, after all, are wiser as well as wider than you, and who in their strength may be able to walk as near to God on a road which to you would be full of perils. Let us all remember, besides, that a thing which to ourselves is no weight may yet be right for us to forsake out of true and tender brotherly regard to others who, weaker than we, or perhaps more conscientious than we, could not do the same thing without damaging their spirits and weakening their Christian life. "Him that is weak in the faith receive." Him that is weak in the faith help. And in all these matters indifferent, which are weights to one and not weights to another, let us remember, first, for ourselves, that a weight retained is a sin; and let us remember, next, for others, that they stand not by our experience, but their own; and that we are neither to judge their strength nor to offend their weakness. A. M.

4. It was well and wisely said by Augustine that they were most likely to be uncharitable toward error who had never learned by their own experience how hard it was to arrive at truth. They who are so happy as to have arrived at truth, whose hearts and minds have been opened to receive the wisdom which is from God, they know how many are the ways to error on either side; how truth is for ever mixed with error, and error with truth; and they would rather dwell thankfully on that truth which their neighbor holds than be extreme to note his errors. T. A.

5. **Persuaded in his own mind.** Man must deny his self-will, but only in order to regain his will in a sanctified and refined state, which he subordinates only to that of God, that he may be the organ of the divine will, which is the only true freedom of a created spirit. But whoever denies his own will, in order to become the will-less organ of another man, denies the image of God in the dignity of his own free personality, turns himself from being a free servant of God into a servant of man, and gives to the creature the honor due to God alone. Every Christian must be a living organ of the Deity, a temple of the Holy Ghost, one taught

of God, acknowledging only one Lord and Master. N.—Men are for ever acting without being fully persuaded in their own mind; and that in various ways. The mischief of this is great and manifold. It makes men either, as so many are, wholly without depth and earnestness—living and acting, as it were, quite at random, and without an interest in anything but their own comfort or enjoyment—or else it makes them obstinate and unjust, persisting doggedly in their own ways and their own notions, without being able to render the least reason for either; or, lastly, it makes them insincere and sophistical, beguiling themselves and others with a show of reason, attacking other men's opinions and maintaining their own. It is evident that there must be attained a state of mind where men could be fixed and earnest, yet not obstinate or unreasonable, having opinions and principles dear to them as their very life's blood, and yet being all the while fair and teachable, ready to hear and to be convinced, and to make all just allowance for others. And this state would be his and his only, who, according to the apostle's words, was to be fully persuaded in his own mind. T. A.

Another external hindrance which deterred the heathen from Christianity was the variety of opinions and sects into which Christians were divided. "How can we look for truth among you," they said, "since you are not of one mind among yourselves about your religion?" Chrysostom thus replies to this objection: "If we professed to follow human reasonings, thou mightest be perplexed; but if we say that we believe the Scripture, and this is simple and true, thou mayest easily come to a decision. Whoever agrees with it, he is a Christian; whoever opposes it, he is very far from being one." The heathen rejoins: "But if some one comes and says, This stands in Scripture, but thou sayest something different; and so the Scripture is interpreted arbitrarily, and our minds are distracted." "But hast thou not reason and the power of judgment given thee by God?" is Chrysostom's reply. N.

6. The Christianized Jew, though he admitted that "Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth," that in Him all the scattered rays of type and prophecy converge and are for ever lost—yea, rather, are fixed and eternalized—yet still could not resist his tendency to preserve some fragments of the old preparatory creed, and incorporate them into the spiritual religion of Christ. The abstinence from peculiar meats, the observance of peculiar days, and others of the formal traditions of the synagogue, he was loth altogether to resign, though he could not altogether justify. W. A. B.

7. **None liveth to himself.** God never meant religion to terminate on itself. He enlightens to enable us to shine, and we very much doubt if

there be any force in all nature, or any gift or any work of God, that is self-contained or non-communicative. Certainly he is not, for he is always giving to all. Not so his Son, who said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive"; not so the Holy Ghost, who is ever giving light and joy and peace; not the angels, who are all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation. Nor in nature do we find anything great shut up in self. Not the sun, or moon, or stars, whose beams fill every land; not the sea, whose broad expanse gives forth the vapors that water the earth; not the rivers, that give back their gathered wealth to the sea; not the land, that gives its harvests; not the air, that forms the vital breath of all things. And when God shines into man's heart to give the light of his glory, shall man hide the light? This were to convert into a possession what God ties up as a trust, and bids us use for the creature's good. *J. Hall.*—That which a man is—that sum total made up of the items of his beliefs, purposes, affections, tastes, and habits, manifested in all he does and does not—is contagious in its tendency, and is ever *photographing* itself on other spirits. He himself may be as unconscious of this emanation of good or evil from his character as he is of the contagion of disease from his body, or, if that were equally possible, of the contagion of good health. But the fact, nevertheless, is certain. If the light is in him, it must shine; if darkness reigns, it must shade; if he glows with love, it will radiate its warmth; if he is frozen with selfishness, the cold will chill the atmosphere around him; and if corrupt and vile, he will poison it. Nor is it possible for any one to occupy a neutral or indifferent position. In some form or other he *must* affect others. *N. M.*

8. They, and they only, *live unto the Lord* who realize his authority and do everything he enjoins, as an act of willing and cheerful obedience, as a part of that homage they owe to their Master, who make his approbation their governing aim, and his glory their supreme end in all that they do, and who are wholly resigned to his wise, righteous, and loving disposal. *R. W.*—We are no more to die to ourselves than to live to ourselves. Our Lord Jesus hath purchased to himself a dominion over both states, of the living and dead; and, whether we live, we must live to him, or die, we must die to him. It is the glory of a Christian to live so much above the world that nothing in it may make him either fond of life or weary of it. *Howe.*—Unto him, as Christians, we are called upon to *live*; he who is the principle of our spiritual life is also made the object of it. Unto him, as Christians, we are called upon to *die*; he who died for us is made the object of our death likewise, that, as "our life is hid with Christ in God," so, "when he who is our life shall

appear, then we also may appear with him in glory." No reserve is admitted in the statement of our profession. We live and die to Christ; our whole nature, in all its aspects and positions, is offered to him as one solemn and perpetual sacrifice. "Bought with a price," we are delivered to him as his own spiritual property in this world; "we are Christ's, and Christ is God's"—so that, as it were, through him, as man, we pass into the very presence of the supreme divinity, enter within the verge of that ineffable nature with which he connects us, and catch upon our weak and shivering humanity the beams of the everlasting light of God! *W. A. B.*

9. **Lord of dead and living.** How strikingly, with a single touch, is the *glory of Christ* here pictured to us! No dominion can be imagined which in extent surpasses his. Even the mightiest monarch, although he had at last conquered the whole world, yet only sways his scepter over the living. The dominion of Christ embraces not only the visible world but also the invisible; it is one and the same law which is obeyed on this side of the grave and on yonder. His *right* to reign over both is founded on this double and irrevocable fact of his death and resurrection. *Van O.*

10. While each should enjoy his own opinion, and turn neither to the right hand nor to the left in the discharge of duty, he will find it no part of his duty to condemn those who may not be able to see as he does; no part of his duty, for things not essential, to set at nought and judge his brethren, because both he and they are equally answerable to the Judge of all. *R. T.*

We shall all stand. Earth must fade away from our eyes, and we must anticipate that great and solemn truth which we shall not fully understand until we stand before God in judgment; that to us there are but two beings in the whole world—God and ourselves. The sympathy of others, the pleasant voice, the glad eye, the smiling countenance, the thrilling heart, which at present are our very life—all will be away from us when Christ comes in judgment. Every one will have to think of himself. Every eye shall see *him*; every heart will be full of *him*. He will speak to every one; and every one will be rendering to him his own account. *Newman.*—God governs this world, governs you and me, down to the very depths of our being. And we possess the power of choosing right and wrong: right by the grace of God, and wrong by our failing to use that grace; and as responsible for such a power we shall be summoned at last before the judgment-seat of Christ. *Abp. Thomson.*

12. Woe to you if you do what others think right, instead of obeying the dictates of your own conscience! woe to you if you allow authority, or prescription, or fashion, or influence, or any other

human thing, to interfere with that awful and sacred thing—your own responsibility! “Every man,” said the apostle, “must give an account of himself to God.”

14. “To him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.” In other words, whatever may be the abstract merits of the question—however in God’s jurisprudence any particular act may stand—to you, thinking it to be wrong, it manifestly *is* wrong, and your conscience will gather round it a stain of guilt if you do it. F. W. R.

15. **Destroy not.** How destroy him? Evidently by inducing him, through force of example, to do what his conscience condemned. This abstinence to which the strong Christian should submit for the sake of the weak, however, was not to be perpetual. When there was no danger of his doing injury to his weak brother, the stronger and more enlightened Christian was free to act as he pleased.

16. **Let not your good be evil spoken of.** In one sense it is impossible to avoid such evil speaking. The best deeds of the best Christians may be misrepresented, and their kindest actions may be attributed to the meanest, if not the worst, motives. Paul and his fellow-laborers in the gospel had an ample experience of such speaking at the hands of those who “falsely accused their good conversation in Christ.” These words, therefore, must refer to evil speaking of a different sort. They teach that a Christian must not use what is good in itself, or what may be good to him, in such a manner, or under such circumstances, as to give occasion of evil speaking in regard to it. In the enjoyment of those good things which God has placed within his reach, he must take heed that he does not bring reproach on his good confession. The rule is one which is neither hard to be understood nor difficult of application, if he has a simple and honest desire above all things to please the Lord. And if Christian people would keep this brief precept in mind, they would be saved from much of the perplexity which they sometimes profess to feel in regard to various popular or fashionable amusements. *Forsyth.*

17. Earnest desire of holiness *is* holiness in the germ thereof. Soon shalt thou know, if only thou wilt *follow on* to know, the Lord. But sanctity is not the work of a day, but of a life. Growth in grace is subject to the same law of gradual and imperceptible advance as growth in nature. Be but true to your convictions. Do but follow the instigations of the Spirit. Follow him in darkness and light, through honor and dishonor, through evil report and good report, and in due time the new creation shall dawn within thee, and the fair fabric of God’s spiritual kingdom shall be built up step by step—“righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” E. M. G.

19. It is the ordinance of God that Christians should be often asserting the things of God to each other, and that by their so doing they should edify one another. Church-fellowship, rightly managed, is the glory of all the world. No place, no community, no fellowship is adorned with such beauties as is a church rightly knit together to their head, and lovingly serving one another. *Bun.*

20, 21. There are some things which are right or wrong in themselves. They depend on the positive enactments of God and on the eternal distinctions of things, and can not be compromised, modified, or disregarded. There are other things, however, which may be regarded as matters of personal comfort, convenience, or gratification. They are clearly right in themselves, but they may be so connected, or there may be such associations in regard to them, or others may entertain such views of them, that indulgence in them by us will be an injury to others. It may shock or pain them as if we were doing wrong; or, acting on our example, they may be led further than we would go, and fall into sin; or they may be led by our example to do that which they *now* regard as sin, and which would be sin to them. In such a case the course which *we* are to pursue becomes clear, and it is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby a brother is offended, or is made weak. A. B.

There is no self-denial deserving the name that is not willing to give up any privilege of the palate or the passions rather than endanger the least or lowest of God’s children. And then, if it is demanded, “Why should I be deprived of the lawful use of some agreeable thing merely because some less guarded, less experienced, or less coolly constituted neighbor will abuse it?” we will leave the ground of justice altogether and come upon that of magnanimity and of privilege. We will ask, not what we have a *right to do*, but what is to be gladly chosen because it is *right to be done*. In the estimates of God and eternity, the generosity that shields a human heart from shame will stand above a genial style of hospitality. Not till comfort shall become the creed of Christendom, can free living be the testimony of faith. . . . Too little, too little, will there appear in *that day* of any positive achievements of ours for God and his truth, proportioned to our opportunity. But at least let it not be found that, when some frail fellow-creature was inclining to baseness and to ruin, any frivolity or unconcern of ours made his downward way easier and swifter; or, if any other soul was struggling up into light and victory, that our faithlessness discouraged him, our inconsistencies confused him, our self-love drew him back.

22. **Hast thou faith? have it to thyself.**

There is no impersonal character, no pardon by proxy, no collective salvation. The work is for each. "Repent" is for each. "Take up the cross and come after me," is for each. The apostolic view of practical Christianity as a "calling" individualizes, first, the Christian principle as having a place distinct from all other principles, and, secondly, individualizes the Christian life as having all its awful obligations, its joys and sanctions, centered upon each personal conscience and heart. F. D. H.

23. For "*damned*," "condemned." In hardly any place where this terrible word is used is its use justified, or is the meaning to be referred to a future life. A.—The very duties of religion, if self be the soul of them, are nothing but guilt. Where there is faith, there is humility; but where there is not faith, there is nothing but pride and self-deceit.

Therefore, *whatsoever is not of faith is sin*. G. B. C. —*He that doubteth*. In every undertaking our first care should be to have a clear conscience. Rectitude is a sacred and awful thing; and, as its eternal laws should never be despised by open and deliberate transgression, so the very possibility of invading them by rashness and imprudence should fill us with constant vigilance and unceasing caution. J. H. T.—Misgivings and doubts and scruples are intended to make us think, but not to make us waste all our energy on thinking; they are intended to make us pause, but not to make us stop; they are intended to make us repent, but not to make us give up everything else to fruitless sorrow. And if we can not attain peace or light all at once, we must not, for all that, complain, lag, or despair; we must simply *obey and wait*. F. T.

Section 256.

ROMANS xv. 1-33.

1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please our-
 2 selves. Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification. For even
 3 Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached
 4 thee fell on me. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learn-
 5 ing, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. Now the
 6 God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according
 7 to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify God, even the Father
 8 of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to
 9 the glory of God. Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the
 10 truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might
 11 glorify God for *his* mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the
 12 Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his peo-
 13 ple. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. And again,
 14 Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles;
 15 in him shall the Gentiles trust. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in
 16 believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.
 17 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness,
 18 filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. Nevertheless, brethren, I
 19 have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the
 20 grace that is given to me of God, that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the
 21 Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be ac-
 22 ceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. I have therefore whereof I may glory through
 23 Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of
 24 those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word
 25 and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that
 26 from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.
 27 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build
 28 upon another man's foundation: but as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they
 29 shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand. For which cause also I have been
 30 much hindered from coming to you. But now having no more place in these parts, and
 31 having a great desire these many years to come unto you; whensoever I take my journey
 32 into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on
 33 my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your *company*. But now I
 go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and
 Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath

27 pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. 28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by 29 you into Spain. And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness 30 of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in *your* prayers 31 to God for me; that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judæa; and that 32 my service which *I hate* for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; that I may come unto 33 you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed. Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

SELF-PLEASING always tends to meanness of character. It is clean against all that we understand by nobleness, magnanimity, courage, honor. It is against all the public virtues, such as patriotism, benevolence, and the charities of life. It always inflicts injury and misery upon others. Self-pleasing is enormously difficult to the self that is always seeking to be pleased, so difficult as to be ultimately quite impossible of realization. More and yet more must be had, until more is not to be had. Better and yet better, and, alas! better will not come. And Christian people ought to be constantly and watchfully on their guard against this thing. There is, absolutely, no one whom it will not beset. The vivacious will have it presented to them in forms of excitement and amusement, which, if indulged in, will draw them away from the important duties of daily life, as well as from some of the severer duties of Christian service. The quiet and retiring will have it presented to them in forms of sloth and ease—they will think that it can injure no one, and no precious interest, that they should take their rest. The busy will have it presented to them in the forms of avarice, and ambition, and fame, and honor; in fact, all the vices and all the faults are but different dresses which that protean character, the old self, puts on as it goes up and down the world, murmuring, "We ought to please ourselves!" Beware! brother; sister; young disciple; old disciple—beware! lest, unwittingly, ye fall into that soft and easy habit of pleasing *self*. Please the *higher* self and welcome. Please your conscience. Please the love that lies sleeping in you, deep, and vast, and far. Please the powers, and the sensibilities, and the activities of the Christian life; and then, not you alone, but angels and God himself, will be pleased. But as to pleasing that other self, that second you, that meaner creature you sometimes find yourself lapsing into, all danger and all soul-death lie that way. It is surely no irreverence to follow the figure that has been given us, and say, "Let *that* man be crucified." Put fresh nails into the hands and the feet. Pierce *that* cold black heart with the soldier's spear. The dear Christ died in his love and purity, and rose again, and revived, that *that* dark man of sin might die for ever. A. R.

1. The world abounds in wretchedness which can neither help itself nor make compensation for the help of others, and which appeals for relief to those who are able to render it. Here we have the law of unrequited or gratuitous service—the strong must serve the weak. Human need creates a lien on the ability to relieve it. Every man is debtor, *as much as in him is*, to use his superior power, of whatever kind, in uncompensated service to those who need. And the greater the power to serve, the greater the proportion of this kind of service that is due—preëminent ability, preëminent service; greatness, great service. Here we reach the Christian principle of stewardship—that men hold property and all means of influence, not for selfish ends, but in trust for the advancement of Christ's kingdom and the promotion of the best interests of man. J. H.

The strong virtue that can go on its own way without being shaken by any ordinary temptation too often forgets the duty due to the weakness close to its side. By stern treatment of faults which were yet much struggled against, by cold refusal to acknowledge any except plainly successful efforts,

by rejecting the approaches of those who have not yet learned the right way, but are really wishing in their secret hearts to learn it, those who are strong not unfrequently do much harm to those who are weak. F. T.

The ignorant and prejudiced, the contracted and infirm, generally expect that *their* weakness, ignorance, and infirmity (under other and of course finer names) are to give the law to the strong and to the free; and that no one ought to do either what they can not do or will not. Certainly it is the duty of the strong "to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves"; but also it is the duty of the weak to become strong, and not to need to be pleased by being allowed the selfish luxury of putting restraints on the liberty of others. T. B. —Rather trying are the infirmities of the weak. Very tiresome is a continual touchiness in a neighbor, or the perpetual recurrence of the same faults in a pupil or a child. But if by self-restraint and right treatment God should enable you to cure those faults, from how much shame and sorrow do you rescue *them*, from how much suffering *yourself*!

In this form of effort there can never be total failure; in trying to cure the patient, the physician heals himself. In combating his bad temper, you are obliged to conquer your own; and, in order to expel from that other sullenness, self-indulgence, petulance, you are compelled to go to God, and beg for your own spirit a larger supply of sweetness, generosity, long-suffering, and all those noble radiant attributes which in the contest with depravity make the sun-like Christian more than conqueror. *Hamilton.*

2. "Good to edification" means good in the spiritual sense; the building up of the character in spiritual life. It is not that one Christian man is to yield to another simply because he wishes it. It is this: that a man in yielding must exercise an enlightened benevolence, and have a view to the real and lasting good of the person with whose desires, or wishes, or tastes, such compliance is made. And he, my neighbor, will see that I am yielding for Christ's sake. He will see that it is the yielding of strength; that it is the yielding of love, in which all strength lies; and that will be to him like a very presence of Christ, and will do more to correct his errors, and supply his deficiency, and corroborate his feebleness, than the clearest statements and the firmest reasonings can do. A. R.

3. Some of the Roman Christians considered the meat that had been offered to idols unfit for Christian use, while others of them could partake of it without scruple. But, not contented with enjoying their own liberty, they set themselves to indulge in mutual recrimination. The one class considered the other unconscientious, while these retorted on them as weak-minded. It is a quarrel that, in some shape, has turned up ever since. The apostle Paul belongs unmistakably to the one side, that which saw no conscience in the matter, but he is not devoured by a zeal to bring all to his own mind. He sees that there are things infinitely more important than uniformity. Charity is greater, and liberty. Those who can not eat must believe in the good faith of those who can, and they who have no scruples must refrain from taunting those who have. Then from the whole controversy he rises to this great principle, which lifts the thing out of the local and temporary, and gives it a world-wide and permanent interest. In our intercourse with our fellow-Christians or fellow-men, we are not to make our own pleasure, but the pleasure of our neighbor, our chief end. This is the example set by Christ, our great Master: "He pleased not himself." The violation of this principle has produced more unhappiness and sin than many other things that seem at first sight more deadly—has broken up the communion of the Church and the comfort of the social and family circle. *Ker.*

Even Christ. As the brightness of the Father's glory, he discloses the love of God appearing under human limitations in service and sacrifice. As the ideal man, he reveals in service and sacrifice the image of God perfected in human character. The character expressed and developed in loving service is the highest and noblest type of character. Jesus reveals the divine in the human, and the human in its ideal perfection. That ideal is found in his life of service; he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. The conception of greatness by ministering is the conception of manly strength and power to serve, of resources given without impoverishment. So we assent to the words of Jesus, seeing therein our highest dignity: "It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord." J. H.

4. The words should stand, "that through the patience and the comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope." The verse is sometimes read as if "patience" were one thing by itself, and "comfort of the Scriptures" another by itself. But the two go together: it is "patience of the Scriptures and comfort of the Scriptures," i. e., patience and comfort, both arising from the Scriptures, produced by their study. A.—The New Testament is to us and our successors the same precious inheritance its gospels and epistles and prophecies were to the first believers; with this only difference: that as prophecy gathers to fulfillment, as the shadowy outlines of prediction begin to fill and flush with the vivid colors of *fact*, the story of Christ the Redeemer and of the human heart as acted on *by* Christ—the Bible history of man—becomes still more authentic and still more valuable. Truly, "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for *our* learning, that we, through patience and *comfort of the Scriptures*, might have hope." W. A. B.—We need no voice from heaven in order to make us happy. There is enough in the Bible to cause every heart in this wretched world to burn with joy. We are told of pardon for the guilty, sanctification for the polluted, rest for the burdened soul, salvation for the lost, Christ for a Comforter, heaven for a home. And we are told of these things for this express purpose: to give us consolation. C. B.

6. A grand end to live for. How many are the strong yet most tender, the common yet most sacred ties that bind us to it, no man can tell. We have more reason for living to God's glory than any angel has. He made us, has preserved us in life and provided for our wants; to us he has been merciful and gracious, besides being abundant in goodness and in truth—having borne with us, pitied us, spared us, loved us, and, not sparing his own Son, redeemed us, as well, by his gracious Spirit, and called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. And so the

warmest love to God should burn in human breasts, and in the heavenly choir the highest notes should be sung, not by angels, but those whom Jesus has redeemed to God by his blood out of every kindred, and nation, and people, and tongue. T. G.

13. We rejoice because our future is filled with hope—the hope of the glory of God. Joy comes then from *hope*; hope from the God of love; hope sure and steadfast; hope that maketh not ashamed; everlasting hope. Glory is ours in prospect—the glory of the new heavens and earth, the glory of resurrection, the glory of the kingdom, the very glory of Christ. And it is all ours, simply as those who have known and believed this free love of God. Hence the apostle's prayer, "The God of (the) hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing." *Bonar*.—There is "peace in believing." To the man of intelligent, heartfelt, yet childlike faith in the testimony of Jesus Christ, the principles and promises of that testimony are what the facts of nature are to the philosopher—*absolute certainties*, in which the mind may rest. He never is the subject of doubt, while his views of things are conformed to the disclosures of this testimony, and his feeling and course are in harmony with its requirements. In resting upon this word as the ultimate ground of certainty, in taking from it his ends, his rules, his motives, his encouragements—all the powers and elements of his nature work in harmony with each other; his conscience, his intellect, and his heart draw together. What the mind perceives to be taught here as true, conscience approves as right, and the heart loves as good. The man has never yet been found who felt that he was doing wrong in submitting himself in a spirit of implicit faith to the truth of Jesus Christ. His submission has always been the source of his peace; a peace as deep and refreshing and satisfying as his faith has been strong and decided. E. M.

16. The apostle represents himself as "acting the part of a priest in reference to the gospel of Christ," and in the exercise of this office laying on the altar of God the converted Gentiles as a sacrifice acceptable to God. In plain language, the design of his apostleship was, that the Gentiles, being converted by the faith of the gospel through his instrumentality, and by the agency of the Holy Ghost, might devote themselves to God as his peculiar property. J. B.—The doctrine of Christ concern-

ing the Holy Ghost (John 14-16) can be no other than this: that, after the body of Jesus should be removed from the Church, he should still continue to carry on the spiritual work of renewing, sanctifying, and saving souls—which is his eternal ministry—the Church itself thus becoming the body of his Spirit, *that* visible, but *he* indwelling, yet manifest still in the fruits of holy love and life; that, in thus acting on the spirits of believers in answer to prayer, the Son and the Father who sent him are together united in counsel and one in purpose; and that the agent by which they thus move and draw and change the heart is the Holy Spirit, but also known as the Comforter, the Paraclete, the Spirit of truth, and the Holy Ghost. F. D. H.

19. "So that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ." These words import that Paul had come to the confines of Illyricum, and that these confines were the external boundary of his travels. Paul considers Jerusalem as the center, and is here viewing the circumference to which his travels had extended. Illyricum was the part of this circle which he mentions in an epistle to the Romans, because it lay in a direction from Jerusalem toward that city, and pointed out to the Roman readers the nearest place to them to which his travels from Jerusalem had brought him. Illyricum adjoins upon Macedonia. If, therefore, Paul traversed the whole country of Macedonia, the route would necessarily bring him to the confines of Illyricum, and these confines would be described as the extremity of his journey. The account of Paul's second visit to the peninsula of Greece is contained in Acts 20 : 2. *Paley*.

24. *Into Spain*. Clement, the disciple of Paul, mentioned Phil. 4 : 3, writing from Rome to Corinth, expressly asserts that Paul had preached the gospel "*in the east and in the west*"; that "he had instructed *the whole world* [i. e., the Roman Empire, which was commonly so called] in righteousness"; and that he "had gone to *the extremity of the west*" before his martyrdom. Now, in a Roman author, *the extremity of the west* could mean nothing short of Spain, and the expression is often used by Roman writers to denote Spain. Here, then, we have the express testimony of Paul's own disciple that he fulfilled his original intention of visiting the Spanish peninsula, and consequently that he was liberated from his first imprisonment at Rome. C.

Section 257.

ROMANS xvi. 1-27.

1 I COMMEND unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cen-
 2 chrea: that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in what-
 soever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself
 3 also. Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus: who have for my life laid
 4 down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the
 5 Gentiles. Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epene-
 6 tus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ. Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour
 7 on us. Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of
 note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

8 Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord. Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys
 9 my beloved. Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus'
 10 household. Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Nar-
 11 cissus, which are in the Lord. Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord.
 12 Salute the beloved Persia, which laboured much in the Lord. Salute Rufus chosen in the
 13 Lord, and his mother and mine. Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes,
 14 and the brethren which are with them. Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sis-
 15 ter, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them. Salute one another with an holy
 16 kiss. The churches of Christ salute you. Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which
 17 cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid
 18 them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by
 19 good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. For your obedience is come
 abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise
 20 unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. And the God of peace shall bruise
 Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

21 Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.
 22 I Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, salute you in the Lord. Gaius mine host, and of the
 23 whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus
 a brother.

24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. Now to him that is of
 25 power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according
 26 to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is
 made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of
 27 the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: to God only
 wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

In this Epistle is treated in the most masterly manner everything that belongeth to the Christian life. Whatever it most concerns a Christian to know: law, gospel, sin, grace, justification, Christ, God, good works, faith, hope, charity; all wherein true Christianity consisteth; how it becometh a Christian to conduct himself toward his neighbors, whether good or bad, strong or weak, friends or enemies, and toward himself—all this is to be found here in such perfection, that it is impossible to wish anything more or better. So rich a treasure is it of spiritual wealth, that even to him who has read it a thousand times something new will be ever presenting itself. Its study, beyond every other, is found useful; and the longer and the more deeply it is pondered, its excellences grow upon you, and it appears to be constantly becoming more delightful, more valuable, and more copious than itself. *Luther.*

1-15. These chapters of salutations, which you perhaps have been wont to pass over at a bound as possessing no general interest, present a study as attractive as it is instructive, by enabling you to penetrate into the private life of the apostle and into his personal relations. *Monod.*—At the time when Paul wrote, there were many Christian labor-

ers in the great city—men and women well known to the apostle, and beloved for the truth's sake, and for their work's sake. They do not seem to have been as yet organized in one church-body. So we read in this chapter of churches, or groups, in various private houses. D. F.

We see woman in the early church already in a

position of trust and high usefulness: a position, let me observe, which she retains in the Roman Catholic communion to this day, in conjunction with various conditions opposed to Christian freedom and our Lord's commands, but which, owing to those conditions having been justly repudiated by the Reformed Churches, she has very generally lost among ourselves. One of the gravest problems of our own and of the coming age will be, to bring in female help to the work of the Church, and woman into an accredited position in her service, without any admixture of the "votal" element; without any permanent obligations to poverty, to what is called "obedience," to what is mistaken for "chastity." Another matter of interest in this chapter is the examples which it gives us of the refined delicacy and courtesy of the great apostle. "To whom not only I give thanks, but all the churches of the Gentiles"; "which were in Christ before me"; "Salute Rufus, the elect in the Lord, and his mother—and mine"; i. e., his mother, whom I also love as a son. Yet another point of interest is this. On the southern side of Rome, as you approach the gate now called the Porta San Sebastiano—not far from the Arch of Drusus, under which Paul passed as he entered the city with the brethren—is a garden containing the "columbarium" or "pigeon-house" of the "family" of Nero. These "columbaria" are so called from their containing a number of small recesses like pigeon-holes, in which are deposited the ashes of the dead, and that the "family" of a Roman prince or noble comprehended all who lived in his court, his relatives, freedmen, and slaves. And with thus much explanation, we may repeat the result of our own researches in the columbarium of the family of Nero. Among the names inscribed on the memorial tablets there, we found Tryphena (v. 12), Tryphosa (v. 12), Hermes (v. 14), Hermas (v. 14), and Junias (v. 7). A.

20. The whole history of the world is interwoven with the doings of him whom Scripture calls "the serpent," "the God of this world," "the wicked one," "the devil," "the prince of the power of the air," "the accuser of the brethren," "the adversary." He is a living person, originally connected with heaven, now with earth, once associated with angels, now with men, full of malice, a murderer and a liar, a deceiver. His dealings first with *Eve* and then with *Christ* are the two great specimens of his nature, his tactics, and his aims. The first promise announced a battle between him and the seed of the woman. This battle has been going on without intermission between him and Christ and between him and the members of Christ's body. With them it is *warfare*, with the rest of mankind it is *friendship*. The warfare has been fierce as well as long, open as well as secret, outward as well

as inward. In all his assaults and stratagems he has to a certain extent succeeded, but always in the end been baffled. It is to this ultimate baffling or bruising that the apostle here alludes. *Bonar.*—With so many hints given us in the Holy Scriptures that we wrestle not with flesh and blood alone, but with angels and principalities and powers of darkness—that there are devices of Satan of which it becomes us not to remain ignorant—that the great adversary goeth about seeking whom he may devour; with the command laid upon us, Resist the devil, and he will flee from you; with the promise given, The Lord shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly; should we not be ever acting on the conviction that our souls are the sphere of an unseen conflict, in which rival spirits of evil are struggling for mastery? W. H.

The Victory of the God of Peace.—It is as the God of peace that he wins the victory for us, and bruises Satan under our feet. It is as the bruised one that he bruises. He whom Satan smote is he who smites Satan. The God of peace has made peace; and, having made peace by the blood of his Cross, he proceeds to destroy all that had once marred the peace, all his enemies and ours, giving us complete victory and triumph. It is on the basis of the reconciling blood, the peace-giving work on the Cross, that the operations against Satan are carried on. It is under the banner of the God of peace that we fight. He is our captain, and the peace which he has made is that which secures the victory to us. We overcome by the blood of the Lamb, the blood that has made our peace. *Bonar.*

21. These Epistles are extraordinary productions, and it is inconceivable that any man should introduce them into the world by the fiction of addressing them to a church, and should connect such admirable sentiments with the details of their peculiar difficulties, and with salutations addressed to many persons by name. Let any man read the last chapter of the Epistle to the Romans (which is almost entirely made up of greetings and salutations), and ask himself if it is possible that any man, writing a letter for the purpose of deception, could have written it. Observe his particularity. Not only does Paul himself salute many persons, but Timotheus, his work-fellow, is joined with him, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, his kinsman, and Tertius, who wrote the Epistle, and Gaius, his host, and Erastus, the chamberlain of the city, and Quartus, a brother. M. H.

26. For the obedience of faith. Faith and reason have their limits; where reason ends faith begins; and if reason will be encroaching upon the bounds of faith, she is straight taken captive by infidelity. We are not fit to follow Christ, if we have not denied ourselves; and the chief piece

of ourselves is our reason. We must yield God able to do that which we can not comprehend; and we must comprehend that by our faith which is disclaimed by reason. *Bp. H.*

27. One can not but think that, as Tertius laid down the reed which he had used, the apostle took it into his own hand and added the sublime sentence of doxology with which the Epistle ends. God was able to establish the brethren according to Paul's gospel, which was something more than "the gospel of the kingdom," for it was a proclamation of the unseen Christ as the Saviour of the world. And, as in the gospel which Paul preached, and this wonderful Epistle which he has written, the divine wisdom is brightly displayed, the doxology is in these words: "To God only wise be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen." D. F.—This peculiar doxology, at the close of such an Epistle, connecting such a song of praise with the *steadfastness*

of the saints of God, is very striking, and fraught with deep lessons to us. The glory of the God only mighty, and eternal, and wise, is connected with our being established; and the process of establishing us depends on his being what he is here represented to be. We have to do with him as the God of power and wisdom and eternity. *Bonar.*

The Epistle to the Romans begins with the power of God, then declares his righteousness, and closes with adoration of his wisdom. It is so with the heart that receives the great truths with which this Epistle deals. It begins its new experience under the power of God who raised up Jesus Christ. It finds peace through the declaration of his righteousness. And then it rests in admiration and adoration of his wisdom in planning, providing, and applying the salvation of the world through Christ Jesus. D. F

Section 258.

1 CORINTHIANS i. 1-21.

1 PAUL, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our
2 brother, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ
Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ
3 our Lord, both their's and our's: grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and
4 from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God
5 which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utter-
6 ance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:
7 so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:
8 who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord
9 Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus
Christ our Lord.

10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the
same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined to-
11 gether in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of
you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions
12 among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos;
13 and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were
14 ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus
15 and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized
16 also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.
17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words,
18 lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is
to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.
19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the
20 understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the dis-
21 puter of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that
in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolish-
ness of preaching to save them that believe.

MEN had lost sight of God. Three kinds of selfishness had blinded them: self-admiration, self-will, self-indulgence; three forms of sin; three usurpers of the human soul. One—self-admiration—perverts and makes a rebel of the intellect; another—self-will—of the conscience; the other—self-indulgence—of the passions. In this threefold treachery and corruption the world had grown giddy, rapacious, and godless. Curiosity was all that was left as the highest aim in science; war, in enterprise; and a sensuous enthusiasm for the beautiful in art. Alexandria, Rome, and Athens represented these three ambitions. In losing his God, man had lost himself, as always happens. Faith in God and the dignity of man went down together. With divine worship fell human rights and liberties. The scholars and the priests mystified the people, the Epicureans tempted them, the Stoics flattered and despised them. There were gods enough: one for every propensity. But they were either patrons to be purchased, or abstractions to be apostrophized, or demons to be propitiated. Religion, where it was not a voluntary deception, had degenerated into an incantation and a ceremony. The priest, if he was a pagan, was a juggler or a dupe; if he was a Jew—read the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, and its eightfold woes on the hypocrites, to know what he was. There was intellect enough; but the amount of all that was, as Paul put it, that the world by wisdom knew not God, and never would till that “Logos,” or Messiah, came, who was the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation to them that believe. F. D. H.

(Read carefully pages 129–132.) Paul’s first missionary labor among the Corinthians extends over a year and a half, during which period he lived with Aquila and Priscilla, and wrought with his own hands to earn his daily bread. Some of the Jews, and those men of mark, as Justus and Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, were converted and baptized; but the Corinthian Church was mainly a Gentile one, and the questions there discussed were not Jewish, did not turn on the value of circumcision or the obligation of the law, but were such as concerned a people just converted from idolatry, and emerging from the corruption of heathen life in a city of Greece. This is the most varied and comprehensive of all the weighty letters of Paul, and exhibits throughout his fine tact and practical wisdom. It is less theological than the Epistle to the Romans; more casual in the good sense of that term. It says nothing of the law or of justification, discusses no doctrine whatever save that of the resurrection, but treats in a masterly manner of love, purity, conscience, discernment, and reverence in the Church of God. D. F.

It was written at Ephesus early in the same year in which he left Ephesus for Macedonia (1 Cor. 16:8). Its immediate occasion seems to have been the arrival at Ephesus of the family, or some of the family, of a Christian matron of Corinth named Chloe. These had brought unfavorable intelligence from the Corinthian Church. The apostle names only the report of divisions and parties; but we can hardly be wrong in believing that the news of the very serious matter treated in chapter 5 were brought by the same persons. These tidings, together with the questions on which apostolic counsels were requested, induced Paul to write this, one of the longest and most important of his pastoral letters, and the pattern, above all others, of earnest and weighty admonition and declaration springing out of circumstances. For of such a character, above all others, is this Epistle—not a treatise on any point or any system of Christian doctrine, as some others by this same apostle, but a series of fragments, or episodes, each of them *occasional*, arising out of something referred to him, or heard of by him, but not one of them devoid of interest for those who come after in all the long ages of the Church. No Epistle raises in us a higher estimate of the varied and wonderful gifts with which God was pleased to endow the man

whom he selected for the apostle of the Gentile world, or shows us how large a portion of the Spirit, who worketh in each man severally as he will, was given to him for our edification. The depths of the spiritual, the moral, the intellectual, the physical world are open to him. He summons to his aid the analogies of nature. He enters minutely into the varieties of human infirmity and prejudice. He draws warning from the history of the chosen people; example from the Isthmian foot-race. He refers an apparently trifling question of costume to the first great proprieties and relations of Creation and Redemption. He praises, reproves, exhorts, and teaches. Where he strikes he heals. His large heart holding all, where he has grieved any, he grieves likewise; where it is in his power to give joy, he first overflows with joy himself. A.

1. Paul learned that his authority was questioned; and so he opens his Epistle with these words, written partly in self-defense: “Called to be an apostle through the will of God.” In the firm conviction of that truth lay all his power. No man felt more strongly than Paul his own insignificance. He told his converts again and again that he “was not meet to be called an apostle,” that he was “the least of all saints,” that he was the “chief of sinners.” And yet, intensely as he felt all this, more deeply did he feel something above and beyond all this, that he was God’s messenger, that his was a true apostleship, that he had been truly commissioned by the King; and hence he speaks with courage and with freedom. His words were not his own, but His who had sent him.

2. **The church of God.** The Church is that body of men in whom the Spirit of God dwells as the source of their excellence, and who exist on earth for the purpose of exhibiting the divine life and the hidden order of humanity: to penetrate and purify the world, and, as salt, preserve it from corruption. It has an existence continuous throughout the ages; continuous, however, not on the principles of hereditary succession or of human election,

but on the principle of spiritual similarity of character. Paul asserted this spiritual succession when he said that the seed of Abraham were to be reckoned, not as his lineal descendants, but as inheritors of his faith. F. W. R.

The Christian Church is modeled on the Jewish congregation, and the word *ecclesia* is simply the translation of the Hebrew word signifying "congregation." S.—Inasmuch as the synagogue existed when the temple was unknown, and remained when the temple fell, it followed that *from its order and worship*, and not from that of the temple, were copied in their general features the government, the institutions, and the devotions of those Christian communities which, springing directly from the Jewish, were first known as "synagogues" or "meeting-houses," and afterward by the adoption of an almost identical word, "*ecclesia*," "assembly-house." A. P. S.

The Church is at once a divine institution, in that it is the perpetuated body of Christ and witness of his redeeming power, and it is also a practical manifestation of whatever spiritual life resides among us. It is the appointed means for unfolding and nourishing our capacities for piety. It is the soul's house, collecting, protecting, cherishing, multiplying, spiritual life. This is what the Church is by intention, the Church of God's design. But come into the Church as it is. What do we see? Life? interest? energy? reality? Pass in there from the streets of travel and the shops of merchandise. Is there life before you like the eager, throbbing intensity of life you leave behind you? Pass in there from the halls of legislation and political debate. Is there interest in duty and worship like the interest in the problems of public economy and the questions of party success? Pass in there from the schoolhouse and the university. Is there energy spent on forming righteous characters like the energy that beams in the faces and animates the ambition of students and their teachers? Pass in there from the joyous groups of kindred in their homes. Is there reality like the reality of the love and the sympathy, the fellowship and fervor, of families and wedlock, of parental devotion and filial gratitude? F. D. H.

Corinth. The city was the hot-bed of the world's evil, in which every noxious plant, indigenous or transplanted, rapidly grew and flourished; where luxury and sensuality thrived rankly, stimulated by the gambling spirit of commercial life, till Corinth now in the Apostle's time, as in previous centuries, became a proverbial name for moral corruption. Amid this universal degeneracy there were two classes among the Greek population. There were, first, the uncultivated and the poor, to whom the ancient glories of their land were yet dear, to

whom the old religion was not merely hereditary, but true and living still, whose imagination still saw the solemn conclave of their ancient deities on Mount Olympus, and still heard Pan, and the Fauns, and the wood-gods piping in the groves. Very different, however, was the state of the cultivated and the rich. They had lost their religion. Their civilization and their knowledge of the world had destroyed that; and, that being lost, they retained no natural vent for the energies of the restless Greek character. Hence out of their high state of intellectual culture there arose a craving for "wisdom"; not the wisdom which Solomon spoke of, but wisdom in the sense of intellectual speculation. The energy which had found a safe outlet in war now wasted itself in the amphitheatre. The enthusiasm which had been stimulated by the noble eloquence of patriotism now preyed on glittering rhetoric. Men spent their days in tournaments of speeches, and exulted in gladiatorial oratory. F. W. R.

Them that are sanctified, called to be saints. Paul chooses to regard those to whom he is writing as being in all respects true Christians, as being worthy of their privileges, as answering to what God had done to them. He might have thought indeed that, if he wrote to them as redeemed, justified, sanctified, as having all things new, as being the children of God and the heirs of God, and the temples of the Holy Ghost, any individual who felt that he was none of these things, that sin was still mighty within him, and that he was sin's slave, would neither deny his own conscience nor yet call Paul a deceiver, but would read in the difference between Paul's description of him and the reality the exact measure of his own sin and need of repentance and watchfulness. But he does not rely on this only: he notices sins as actually existing; he mingles the language of reproof and of anxiety, so as to make it quite clear that he did not mean his descriptions of their holiness and blessedness to apply to them all necessarily; he knew full well that they did not; but yet he knew also that, considering what God had done for them, it was monstrous that they should not be truly applicable. Let us ponder all the magnificence of the Scriptural language, not as describing what we are when we are full of sin, nor yet as mere exaggerated language, which must be brought down to the level of our present reality. Let us consider it as containing the words of truth and soberness; not one jot or one tittle needs to be abated; it must not be lowered to us, but we rather raised to it. It is a truth, it is the word of God, it is the seal of our assurance; it is that which good men of old would have welcomed with the deepest joy, which to good men now is a source of comfort unspeakable. For it tells us that God has done for us, is doing, will do, all that we

need; it tells us that the price of our redemption has been paid, the kingdom of heaven has been set open, the power to walk as God's children has been given; that so far as God is concerned we are redeemed, we are saved, we are sanctified; it is but our own fault merely that we are not all of these actually and surely. T. A.

5. Utterance. Knowing a truth is one thing, being able to express it is quite another thing; and then, again, to be *able* to express a truth is one thing, but to *dare* to do it is another thing altogether. "Utterance" implies both power and courage. And therefore the power of utterance becomes, by the grace of God, truly a faculty divine. F. W. R.

7. Of this future coming, of this true advent-season of eternity, though much is known, much too is hidden. Between the Church and the Church's head there still subsists, even in this intimate union, a mysterious separation; and on the period of that separation a holy reserve. It has already lasted for ages, and we can not dare to predict at what epoch it is to close. The veil that hangs before the celestial sanctuary is still undrawn; and it is vain for us to "marvel," as of old the expectants of Zacharias, that the High Priest of our profession "tarrieth so long in the temple." He has willed it that, certain of his eventual arrival, we should remain in uncertainty as to its destined moment. "The times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power" he would have us desire, and expect, and conjecture, but not dare to define. W. A. B.

8, 9. Paul's congratulation contains a ground of hope for the continuance and successful issue of those blessings—"God shall confirm you to the end"; and again, "God is faithful." He relies not on any stability of human goodness; he knows that he can not trust to their inherent firmness or fidelity: his ground of confidence is in God. He does not count on their faithfulness to God, but on God's faithfulness to them. F. W. R.—Yet faith in man and faithfulness in God are the two members of one spiritual harmony. Neither is to be conceived without the other. Man, without God, would be fatherless; and God has almost permitted us to say that without his people (the "little children" whom he wills not "to perish") he would himself be, as it were, *childless* in his own celestial family! W. A. B.

There is complete fellowship with Christ. It is to this that we are called by a faithful God; and is it not a high and glorious calling? Fellowship in his Cross, his grave, his resurrection, his throne, his glory! All this faith secures to us; and of all this the Holy Spirit bears witness to us. Believing, we are reconciled, saved, accepted, blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus. Let us walk worthy of it, as men who really believe it, happy,

holy, unworldly, zealous, generous, loving. Let us carry the consciousness of our calling into everything, great or small; into business, daily life, recreations, reading, education, everything; maintaining our true position before men; manifesting our proper character; letting the world know our prospects, and doing nothing inconsistent with what we profess to be now, and with what we shall be when the Lord comes. Bonar.

11. Contentions among you. It is painful to be compelled to acknowledge among the Christians of the apostolic age the existence of so many forms of error and sin. It was a pleasing dream which presented the primitive church as a society of angels, and it is not without a struggle that we bring ourselves to open our eyes and behold the reality. But yet it is a higher feeling which bids us thankfully to recognize the truth, that "there is no partiality with God," that he has not rendered schism and heresy impossible in any age of the Church. C.—Nothing more certainly eats out the heart and life of religion than party spirit. Christianity is love; party spirit is the death of love. Christianity is union amid variety of views; party spirit is disunion. F. W. R.

12. Certain persons had arisen as teachers antagonistic to Paul, and claiming superiority to him on various accounts: some as representing the teaching of Peter, an elder apostle; some as following the Alexandrine learning of Apollos; some again as having had the advantage of nearer personal intercourse with Christ himself; while the followers of Paul were degenerating into the same type of a mere personal adhesion to *him*, instead of following him as he followed Christ. This confused embryo state of parties appears to have been all that can be safely assumed. A.

Apollos had been educated at Alexandria, the university of the world, and we are told that he was mighty in the Scriptures and remarkable for eloquence. The cloquence of Paul was rough and burning; it stirred men's hearts, kindling in them the living fire of truth; that of Apollos was more refined and polished. Peter was as gifted in his way as Paul; but there was this difference between them: that, whereas the Spirit of God had detached Paul from Judaism by a sudden shock, in the heart of Peter Christianity had been regularly and slowly developed; he had known Jesus first as the Son of man, and afterward as the Son of God. It was long before he realized God's purpose of love to the Gentiles. In his conception the Messiah was to be chiefly King for the Jews; therefore all the Jewish converts, who still clung to very much that was Jewish, preferred to follow Peter. F. W. R.

Envy and strife go often under the mask of zeal. These whom the apostle addresses were apt to

glory in their carnal strifes. It is easy to tack on a pretense of religion, and to baptize envious contests with a glorious name. There are so many things that look like zeal but *are not*; and *our own interest* is so often concerned in the interests of religion, that we have need to suspect ourselves, lest the wild gourds of frowardness and passion be mistaken for the planting of the Lord, zeal and righteousness. There are two shrewd presumptions upon which, if you can not absolutely *condemn* such motions, you have cause to *suspect* them. *One* is, when they boil up into irregular and strange actions; true zeal, though it increase the stream, does not usually overflow the banks, and break one rule to vindicate another. The *other* is, when we are apt to *glory and boast*, as in the case before us. T. M.

13. What was Paul's method of curing schism, and of making men truly one who had been "divided"? He directed every eye, and every heart, and every spirit, to one object—Jesus Christ, the personal Saviour, the center and source of unity; in fellowship with whom all men would find their fellowship with each other. N. M.

14-17. It may be expected that those whom the apostle baptized with his own hands were converts distinguished from the rest by some circumstance, either of eminence or of connection with him. Accordingly, of the three names here mentioned, Crispus (Acts 18: 8) was a "chief ruler of the Jewish synagogue at Corinth, who believed in the Lord, with all his house." Gaius (Rom. 16: 23) was Paul's host at Corinth, and the host, he tells us, "of the whole Church." The household of Stephanas, we read in the sixteenth chapter of this Epistle, "were the first-fruits of Achaia." Paley.

17. Paul knew that "Christ had sent him to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the *Cross of Christ* should be made of none effect." All the arts of rhetoric and philosophic argument, the "excellency of speech and wisdom," the "enticing words of man's wisdom," were abjured by the very apostle who was qualified to use them on the very field that invited and provoked their display, in order to give place to the "manifestation of spirit and of power," to prove that the simplicity of preaching was God's instrument for saving them that believe, and to assure the converts that "their faith was not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God." S.

18-21. In this passage we have a sublime strain of prophetic utterance from Paul, coming with such irresistible power of inspiration, and with such self-attesting credentials of the Spirit of truth in its majestic affirmations, as to supersede argument, and leave the poor conceits of irreligious knowledge and genius to contempt. F. D. H.—The sects of philosophers, though numerous and exceedingly vari-

ous, were all agreed in proudly trusting in themselves that they were wise, and despising others. Their published opinions, their private speculations, their personal immorality, made them irreconcilable adversaries of Christianity. It went up into their schools, and called their wisdom foolishness, and rebuked their self-conceit. As with the Epicureans and Stoics who encountered Paul, mockery was the natural expression of their minds when they heard of the resurrection of the dead. The apostles, therefore, in attempting to propagate the gospel among the Gentiles, were opposed by all the wit and learning and sophistry, all the pride and jealousy and malice, of every sect of philosophers. McIlvaine.

19. **Destroy wisdom of the wise.** Modern idolatry has raised two altars, to which a crowd of idolaters press forward. One of these is the altar of matter, the other that of intellect. Upon both human victims are offered; for all idolatrous worship is murderous worship. The adoration of intellect has its barbarity as well as the adoration of matter. The man of intellect finds his account in sparing nothing. He who despises most passes for having the most sagacity. It has been said that the heart often has intellect, but that the intellect has no heart. In the unrestrained pleasures of the intellect, as in the unrestrained pleasure of the senses, the heart dries up. A. V.

21. Till we arrive at that world of glory we have no reason to expect any grace but in the diligent use of means appointed thereto. If the Ethiopian eunuch is to be instructed in the gospel, Philip must be miraculously directed to him to open to him its glad tidings. If Cornelius is to receive the same blessing, an angel shall instruct him *where to find* a teacher; but not a ray of light does he receive except through God's appointed ordinance—the foolishness of *human* preaching saving them that believe. Look to it, then, that you undervalue not these outward ministrations; look to it, also that you do not rest in them, but in *his Spirit* accompanying them. Look *through* and *above* all ordinances to the *God* of ordinances. Goode.—To make Christianity depend on the power of its preachers or the skill of theologians is at once to measure absolute beauty, truth, and good by mortal competency, and to stimulate the pulpit with a spur as foreign from gospel simplicity as it is insulting to the authority of God. The function of a clergy is not the audacious one of representing the Majesty of Heaven, but to plead generously with the reluctance of men; not to dole out God's compassion by the petty dimensions of their intelligence, but to be unpretending heralds of a Christ who makes their weakness his strength, and even the foolishness of preaching the wisdom of God unto salvation. F. D. H.

Section 259.

1 CORINTHIANS I. 22-31.

22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ
 23 crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them
 24 which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.
 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger
 26 than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh,
 27 not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*: but God hath chosen the foolish things of
 the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to
 28 confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are
 despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that
 29 are: that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of
 30 God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that,
 31 according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

WHAT Christianity really is appears most evidently in its filling vessels that are insignificant and contemptible in human eyes with a heavenly glory which infinitely outshines all earthly glory, since it pours into them the powers of the world to come, compared with which all the powers of earth are nothing. In all ages the glorious declaration of the apostle in verse 27 has been amply verified in the operations of the gospel. Listen while Gregory describes the life of a man who, in the lowest worldly station, in the most needy and helpless lot, manifested the glory of a divine life: "He had been worn out by long illness; he could neither stand, nor sit upright in his bed, nor raise his hand to his mouth, nor turn himself from one side to the other. Whatever he received in alms he distributed with his own hands to the poor. He could not read, but he had purchased a Bible; he received all pious men as his guests, who read to him constantly out of the Bible. And thus, without being able to read, he became acquainted with the whole Bible. Amid all his pains he endeavored to thank God, and to spend day and night in praising him. When he felt himself near death he begged his visitors to stand up near him, and to sing psalms with him in expectation of his approaching dissolution. And as he was singing with them he made a sudden pause, and exclaimed aloud: 'Hush! do you not hear how the praise of God sounds in heaven?' And, as he applied the ear of his heart to this praise of God which he perceived mentally, the holy soul departed from the body." N.

22. The Jews. In their way they were religious, but it was a blind and bigoted adherence to the sensuous side of religion. They had almost ceased to believe in a living God, but they were strenuous believers in the virtue of ordinances. God only existed to them for the benefit of the Jewish nation. To them a Messiah must be a World-prince. To them a new revelation could only be substantiated by marvels and miracles. To them it could have no self-evident spiritual light; and Paul describes the difficulty which this tendency put in the way of the progress of the gospel among them in the words: "The Jews require a sign." F. W. R.

The Greeks seek after wisdom. Full of system and of science, of the all-sufficiency of reason, the dignity of human nature, and the absolute perfection of stoical wisdom and virtue, they must needs regard with supercilious contempt an unsystematic and unscientific religion, first promulgated in an unpolished and unlettered corner of the world, by the son of a carpenter, who never studied at

Athens or at Rome; preached afterward by illiterate fishermen and mechanics, and received with eagerness by the illiterate populace. They would never endure a religion that rejected the aid of eloquence and learning, in the pursuit of which they had spent their lives; a religion that laid open the weakness and depravity of the human heart, and the insufficiency of our own powers, either to lead us to a just knowledge of our duty or support us in the due performance of it, without supernatural aid; which inculcated the necessity of a mediator, a redeemer, a sanctifier, and required the *very unphilosophical* virtues of meekness, humility, contrition, self-abasement, self-denial, renovation of heart and reformation of life; which taught the doctrines of a resurrection from the grave, and an eternal existence in another world. P.

23. Unto the Jews a stumblingblock. The scribes and Pharisees turned away from the Cross, and their hatred darkened into derision, not merely because of a pride of wisdom, but because of

a *complacent self-righteousness* that knew nothing of the fact of sin, that never had learned to believe itself to be full of evil, that had got so wrapped up in ceremonies as to have lost the life; that had degraded the divine law of God, with all its lightning splendors, and awful power, into a matter of "mint and anise and cummin." Not transgression shuts a man out from mercy. Transgression, which belongs to us all, makes us subjects for the mercy; but it is pride, self-righteousness, trust in ourselves, which "bars the gates of mercy on mankind"; and the men that *are* condemned are condemned not only because they have transgressed the commandments of God, but "*this* is the condemnation, that light came into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." A. M.

Foolishness. The Greek philosophers expected to have all the difficulties relating to *Jesus and the resurrection* cleared up to them, to have all the reasons on which God acted laid open before them, and all his proceedings with mankind justified on the principles of human wisdom. Till this were done, the doctrine of *Christ crucified* would always appear "foolishness to the Greeks." P.

Paul did not become less a philosopher by being a Christian, but the energies of his mind were given neither to philosophy nor to literature, but to something far higher. And so, now, many of the finest spirits of our race are diverted from science by the practical calls and self-denying duties arising from the spiritual wants of the world. But does this dwarf the intellect? Can that dwarf the intellect which shows it realities more grand than those of science; which, with a full comprehension of the nature and processes and ends of science and of literature, yet gives them their rightful though subordinate place? Never. For energy and balance, I would rather have the intellect formed by the Bible alone—by grappling with its mighty questions, by communing with its high mysteries, by tracing its narratives, by listening to its matchless eloquence and poetry—than to have that formed by all the popular literature and the scientific tracts in existence; and if these should practically exclude the Bible, instead of being a blessing, they would only bring disaster. M. H.

24. Christ himself is, in his sacrifice, the mighty power of God. This is the power that has new-created and sent home, as trophies, in all the past ages, its uncounted myriads of believing, new-created, glorified souls. It can do for you, O sinner of mankind! all that you want done. Go to the Cross, and meet there God in sacrifice. Behold him, as Jesus, bearing your sin, receiving the shafts of your enmity! Embrace Him, believe in Him, take Him to your inmost heart. Do this, and you shall feel

sin die within you, and a glorious quickening—Christ the power of God, Christ in you the hope of glory—shall be consciously risen upon you as the morn of your new creation. H. B.

25. Whence was it that they who, while Christ was alive, did not withstand the attack of the Jews, afterward, when Christ had died and been buried, set themselves against the whole wide world? Hold fast these two heads of the argument: How did the weak overcome the strong? And, being the men they were, how did it occur to them to form such a plan unless they had the help of God? *Chrys.*

26. This should read, "How that not many of you are wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble." A.—That which remained concealed from philosophers and sages, in the most brilliant periods of the human intellect, twelve poor fishermen, from the lakes of Judea, quitted their nets to announce to the world. Certainly they had not more of imagination, of reason, of heart, or of conscience than the rest of mankind; yet they put to silence the wisdom of sages, emptied the schools of philosophers, closed the gates of every temple, extinguished the fire on every altar. They exhibited to the world their crucified Master, and the world recognized in him that which their anxious craving had sought in vain for three thousand years. A new morality, new social relations, and a new universe sprung into being at the voice of these poor men, ignorant of letters and of all philosophy.

27-29. Things which are not. He has brought into competition riches and poverty, wisdom and ignorance, philosophy and rusticity; but poverty, rusticity, and ignorance have conquered. From time to time he has called to his aid genius and power, and permitted them to coöperate in his work; but when he has so willed it, the sling of the young son of Jesse has sufficed to overthrow Goliath. The smallness of the means has only served to enhance the power of him who employed them. In all time the Church has been sufficient to the Church, truth has been sufficient to truth. Eloquence and enthusiasm have not done so much for this sacred cause as the modest virtues, the uniform activity, and the patient prayers of thousands of believers whose names are unknown. A. V.—In that day of simple spiritual revelation, when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, all earthly distinctions leveled, and all ranks and badges forgotten, the question shall not be, Who was highest, who lowest? who richest or who most beautiful? who cultivated alone, or refined alone? But, Who loved God and man, who honored the right, who was loyal to truth, who lived and walked in the Spirit, who had faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and out of that faith, as toward Christ himself, did minister to those hungry, athirst, naked, strangers, sick, in

prison? So, many that are here first shall be last, and the last first. F. D. H.

30. "*Ye are*," says the apostle. After speaking of "things that are not," and of "things that are," he turns to his fellow-believers and says, "*but ye are*." And whence is this existence found? *From Him*, from God himself, as its immediate origin and still continuous author. And *where* is it found? "In Christ Jesus." In Christ Jesus! As the simple voice of faith this word is ever uttered with joy unspeakable and full of glory. But preacher or commentator who may attempt to sound the depths or open the treasures of its meaning, must feel his tongue falter under the sense of the inadequacy of every explaining word. Let us, however, at least assert the *reality* of the fact which it expresses, for it is no symbolical form of speech, but the statement of a fact, as real in regard to the spirit as the fact of our being in the world is real in regard to the body. T. D. B.

As there is no other channel to God but Christ Jesus, so there is no other beginning or termination to the work of Christ Jesus but God. The language of Scripture on this point is wonderful, unfathomable. It would appear that, as regards the work of grace, God sees nothing but Christ Jesus alone and altogether. *He* is made to us *wisdom* by enlightening us, *righteousness* by justifying us, *sanctification* by purifying us, *redemption* by purchasing us into immortality. He justifies as Christ crucified and risen without us; He sanctifies as Christ crucified and risen within us; He glorifies in virtue of both, as Christ enthroned in the fullness of consummate power, and at length "subduing *all* things unto himself." W. A. B.—This wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, indispensable conditions of eternal life and sacred earnestness of our inheritance, are in germ and principle included in faith in the work of redemption; they come forth from it spontaneously, just as the blade sends forth the stalk, and the stalk the grain. In the soul whose look is fixed upon the Cross there exists a beginning of wisdom, a beginning of righteousness, a beginning of sanctification;

and in proportion as the believer's work is so fixed, the spiritual life, under the three forms which the above terms imply, grows and is silently developed in his breast. A. V.

One day as I was passing into the field, suddenly this sentence fell upon my soul, "Thy righteousness is in heaven"; and methought I saw, with the eyes of my soul, *Jesus Christ* at God's right hand. There was my righteousness; so that, wherever I was or whatever I was doing, God could not say of me, "He wants my righteousness," for that was just before him. I also saw, moreover, that it was not my frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my righteousness worse; for my righteousness was Jesus Christ himself. By this Scripture I saw that the man *Christ Jesus*, as he is distinct from us as touching his bodily presence, so he is our righteousness and sanctification before God: here therefore I lived for some time at peace with God through Christ. Oh! methought, Christ, *Christ!* there was nothing but Christ that was before my eyes. I was not now only for looking upon this and the other benefits of Christ apart, as of his blood, burial, or resurrection, but considered him as a whole Christ, as he in whom all these and all his other virtues, relations, offices, and operations met together, and that as he sat on the right hand of God in heaven. 'Twas glorious to see his exaltation, and the worth and preva- lency of all his benefits. *Now Christ was all: all my wisdom, all my righteousness, all my sanctification, and all my redemption.* Bun.

31. **He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.** On the one hand, Christ is "set forth evidently *crucified* among us"; on the other, we see "the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the *right hand of God*." On the one hand, "Behold the Man!" and the crown of thorns; on the other, "Behold the Man!" and the crown of glory, and the raptures of an assembled universe! But whether on the cross or on the throne, in Him alike and in Him alone will we glory. W. A. B.

Section 260.

1 CORINTHIANS ii. 1-16.

1 AND I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom,
2 declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among
3 you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear,
4 and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching *was* not with enticing words of
5 man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not
6 stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among
them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world,

7 that cometh to nought : but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory : which none of the princes of this world knew : for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit : for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him ? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God ; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth ; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him : neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

16 For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him ? But we have the mind of Christ.

PAUL knows nothing but Christ crucified. When he entreats for purity among them, and the purging out of their sensuality, this is his reason : " Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." Keep your bodies holy as temples, for they are " bought with a price," and that price is Jesus' blood. When he remonstrates against misleading or tempting an unguarded heart, this is his expostulation : " Shall the weak brother perish, *for whom Christ died ?*" When he urges them with all tenderness to cherish a forgiving and forbearing temper, this is his motive : " If I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I *it in the person of Christ.*" When his own sufferings and weakness oppress him, this is his consolation, that in that infirm and aching body he can " bear about the dying of the Lord Jesus." And when he comes to offer to the reverential reception of the Church the Supper of the Lord, this is the inmost meaning he assigned to it : it shows forth the Lord's *death* till he come ; it represents the dying love ; its profaners are they who do not discern the Lord's broken body there. It is plain enough where the apostle Paul sets the doctrine of the propitiatory sacrifice in the New Testament system of theology, and among the practical powers and consolations of the Christian life. He sets it where the church evangelic and catholic finds it, and has kept it, in the supreme and central place. F. D. H.

2. Know nothing but Christ. Everything which we are to believe, to know, to practice ; all which pertains to God and to man ; all of the least importance concerning other worlds and other orders of beings ; all history from the beginning of time ; all prospect and expectation of the future till time shall be no more ; all that by any possibility we can know concerning eternal retributions when this world has disappeared from its present place and uses ; all arts, all sciences, all discoveries, inventions, and achievements, wars, revolutions, governments, if they be any thing, are related to him *for whom* all things were made, and *by whom* all things consist, in their diversity, their totality, and their unity. Be sure of this. When the converted scholar of Tarsus determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified, he restricted himself to no mean and narrow bounds ; for he placed himself at that focal center where he could command every radius in the vast infinity of knowledge. W. A.

Him crucified. That Christ had suffered the most degrading form of death, the death of a criminal slave, the death which every freeman would

have considered a taint upon his blood and an ignominy never to be wiped out from his family—this was the one great trial of faith to the wise Greek and the proud Jew. It is perhaps impossible for us, by any effort of mind, to appreciate the stigma which, at the time when Paul wrote these wonderful words, attached to the cross of Christ. The reproach of crucifixion, as an historical punishment actually inflicted upon our blessed Lord, is entirely rolled away. His cross has, in fact, become to our apprehensions his crown ; the hearing that he underwent this death never wakes in any mind a feeling even of surprise, much less of disgust, or of derogation from his dignity ; gratitude and love are the only sentiments which the spectacle of Calvary, looked at through the veneration of ages—a glorifying perspective—stirs in the mind of his professing followers. E. M. G.

Christ is the very *foundation and subject-matter* of preaching, and all preaching without Christ is building castles in the air. Christ is the *life and soul* of preaching, and all preaching without him is like a body without life and spirit. Christ is the

great end of preaching; preaching is to manifest his glory; and, when Christ is not preached, the great end is lost. R. S.—Let the great end be to render him precious in the eyes of his people, to lead them to him as a sanctuary to protect them, a propitiation to reconcile them, a treasure to enrich them, a physician to heal them, an advocate to present them and their service to God; as wisdom to counsel, as righteousness to justify, as sanctification to renew, as redemption to save, as an inexhaustible fountain of pardon, peace, comfort, victory, glory! *Bp. Reynolds.*

The New Testament says nothing of "Christianity." The word is not there. But when God would save the world, he sends the Saviour with a throbbing heart and a living voice. The first teachers said nothing about Christianity; but "Christ crucified" and "the resurrection" they could preach in jails and synagogues, turn the world upside down for and die for, counting it all joy. *Dying* men speak little of Christianity. They say *Christ*. Last breaths are too short for abstractions, and can only articulate the one dear and all-prevailing name. The fading sight loses all images but the cross. F. D. H.

4. Paul does indeed discard the "enticing words of man's wisdom," but he does not discard eloquent, powerful, and well-ordered discourse; or what mean his own matchless discourses before Agrippa and the Athenian Arcopagites, and his farewell to the Ephesian elders, and his descent upon the resurrection? T. H. S.

It is well known that not a few of the Hebrew nation, from the age of the Macedonian conquests, and during the course of the four following centuries, ambitiously addicted themselves to Grecian literature; and in this ambiguous course advanced as far toward a treasonable admiration of polytheistic philosophy, poetry, and art, as could well consist with their professed attachment to the national faith. Some went further than this limit. Scattered indications of the incongruous mixtures of opinions which thence resulted are to be found in some allusions of the New Testament, in the apocryphal books, and in the Rabbinical commentaries. But evidence to the same purport, and more at large, is presented in the writings of the Jewish philosopher of Alexandria, and of the Jewish courtier of Jerusalem. But it is observable in all these instances that the superinduction of Grecian modes of thinking upon the Hebrew mind was, to the whole extent of it, a corruption of faith. Philo is but an Alexandrian rabbi and a barbarian philosopher; Josephus little better than a renegade. Paul of Tarsus affords an instance of another sort. He was as well read as Philo; almost as much conversant with active life as Josephus; he was a reader of the Greek drama, and a great master of that *mental management* which then was to be learned only within the circle of Grecian dialectics and rhetoric. Nevertheless, he remains most completely national in his mode of thinking and his phraseology: it was at the feet of Gamaliel that he sat, though he learned lessons elsewhere. There is no alien spirit, no

shrinking from Moses, no blending of things incompatible, no affectation of doctrines more enlarged and liberal or more refined than were taught by the prophets in the writings of Paul. He is not now the Jew, now the Christian, now the sophist; but always both Jew and Christian, and as fully so as Peter or as James. Paul grasped in a much firmer manner than they the vital principles which were the glory of the Jewish people. Even as a Jew, and still more as a Christian, he was better qualified than they to estimate justly the intrinsic value of Grecian philosophy and refinement. He knew how to strike the balance of merit between Plato, or Pindar, or Menander, and David or Isaiah. He neither repudiated the Grecian literature with a rude fanatical arrogance because it was at fault in matters of religion, nor labored to deck himself in its flowers at the cost of consistency; but while he adhered in spirit and letter, in form and substance, to that fashion of thought and language which the divine oracles had set, did not scruple to avail himself of whatever aid might fairly be drawn from a foreign source. I. T.

God and his truth are one and inseparable: truth manifesting God, and God manifest through the truth; truth testifying for God, and God convincing by the truth; truth shining round all divine things, and God making all divine things savingly perceptible. This is the eternal union and coöperation of the Infinite with the light in which he dwelleth. The true idea of "gospel motives" is this—God moving in the gospel; and this is "the love of Christ truly constraining us"; Christ constraining us by the love which his word makes known; while the true "demonstration of the Spirit and of power" lies here, the Spirit demonstrating the power of that "preaching which is not with enticing words of man's wisdom." J. S. S.

5. In compassion to our weakness God has placed at our disposal that body of historical proof which, in its combination and details, deserves our admiration as much as the most exquisite arrangements of the organic world. These proofs lead as far as the door of the sanctuary, leaving it to us thereafter to remain outside or to enter. We may remain upon the threshold, holding in our hand the title-deeds which give us right of entrance; but if a last step, a last impulse which is divine, makes us enter, then we believe with a new faith and on new evidence. Our faith had till then been founded in some measure on the wisdom of men; but now it is founded on the power of God, because it is not by any ordinary means of which we can give account, but by the power of God, that this evidence is made complete. A. V.

6. Originally intellect is the ally and discoverer of truth; it finds its highest employment as the instrument of *religious* truth; and Jesus Christ, who restores the harmony of our nature, speaks "a wisdom" or philosophy "among them that are perfect"—a wisdom of which illuminated intellect is the student and guardian, and which amply recog-

nizes the high and abundant honor which the Creator has put upon his creature's thought. H. P. L.

7. The gospel, in the language of Paul, is a mystery—the mystery of God—the mystery hidden from ages everlasting in his own bosom, but now revealed unto men. In other words, it is the revelation of the glorious plan of his wisdom and love in our redemption. It is, therefore, a scheme of doctrine—something taught—and that which as taught is “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth”—that on the knowledge of which all right feeling and all holy obedience depends. Stability in the Christian faith is therefore no less important than stability of Christian character, since without the former the latter can not exist. N. P.

Verses 9, 10 ought to stand, “But as it is written, Things which eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man, things which God hath prepared for them that love him, hath God revealed unto us through his Spirit.” A.—These glorious words are sometimes strangely misinterpreted, as if the apostle merely meant rhetorically to exalt the conception of the heavenly world, as of something beyond all power to imagine or to paint. The apostle meant something infinitely deeper; the heaven of God is not only that which “eye hath not seen,” but that which eye can *never* see; its glories are not of that kind at all which can ever stream in forms of beauty on the eye, or pour in melody upon the enraptured ear—not such joys as “the heart of man” can invent or imagine; it is something which these sensuous organs of ours never can appreciate—bliss of another kind altogether, revealed to the spirit of man by the Spirit of God—joys such as spirit alone can receive. Do you ask what these are? “The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” That is heaven. F. W. R.

10. **The Spirit searcheth.** The reliance of the soul on Christ, the singleness and fixedness of purpose in divine things, the breathing of the soul after him, will lead to persevering intensity in prayer, the Holy Spirit will be vouchsafed, and God will shine into the heart so that it will be full of light. The *degree* of spiritual discernment possessed by a being taught of the Spirit of God depends much upon the habits of the soul, the study of spiritual things, the degree of watchfulness against sin, the faithfulness of the soul in prayer, the time one has been conversant with divine realities, and the habit of living with reference to them. G. B. C.

11. As no one man is acquainted with the consciousness of another man, even so the things of God—his counsels, thoughts, ways of viewing men and actions, objects of complacency and aversion—

“even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” We may hear the echoing thunder of God's judgments when they are abroad in the world; we may have the examples of his mercy and the monuments of his wrath before our eyes; the still small voice of his gracious invitations may be addressed to us; the letter of Holy Scripture may be familiar to us from our youth upward as a household word; and from these aids we may form some general conjectures as to the Divine character: but to God's own thought and counsel we must remain strangers, until the Holy Spirit initiates us into it intrinsically, by the communication of the Divine mind into the mind of the creature. E. M. G.—He who has found in his Bible the material for conversation, the topic for discussion, or the field for criticism and controversy, but who has not found in it the unfathomable fountain of peace undisturbed, the solace for every earthly suffering, the silent but faithful friend—he who has not found, in short, “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,” ever inviting him within that volume—though he may know the lore and the languages of antiquity, has yet to learn in the school of the Spirit. W. A. B.

12. **Received the Spirit, that we might know the things given of God.** The Spirit is both the principle of the external revelation, as having inspired the Scriptures which foreshow this glory, and of the internal revelation also, to enlighten blind minds that would otherwise never be able to discover things afar off: therefore called the spirit of wisdom and revelation, by which the eyes of the understanding are enlightened to know the riches of his inheritance *among* the saints. *Howe.*—The Spirit takes of the things of Christ and shows them to us; and then what was before like a book in a strange language becomes, on a sudden, instinct with the language of God, which we hear and understand as readily as if it were our own tongue wherein we were born. T. A.

13. “*Comparing spiritual with spiritual,*” should be “interpreting spiritual things to the spiritual.” A.—It is by the preaching of his gospel, in all varying ways, that Christ, through the Spirit, seeks to illumine the darkened mind and to renew the wicked heart of “the natural man”; to lay the foundations of holy character deep and strong and broad in the understanding and in the affections; to build up and garnish with heavenly graces the structure of individual holiness for which those foundations are laid; to “chase away erroneous and strange doctrines” from the church of God; to keep truth victorious, and to multiply the bright and blessed conquests of Christ's spiritual kingdom. J. S. S.

14. The persons here spoken of are described

as *natural*, the same word as that used by Jude (v. 19) to express persons "*not having the Spirit*." Such men, when the truths of the gospel are proposed to them, though it be "in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth," *receive them not*, see no glory in them, no correspondence with their character and condition; nay, count the representations made to them of spiritual joys and terrors, of corruption in them and mercy in God, of man's ruin and recovery through the gospel to holiness and happiness, of the vanity of the world and the blessedness of forsaking it for another, to be overstrained, false, gloomy, enthusiastic. *They are foolishness unto them.* Goode.

14. They are spiritually discerned. That is, they are discerned only by a faculty which he has not; and, therefore, as beings devoid of reason can not understand the truths of science or of man's wisdom, for they are without the faculty which can discern them, so beings devoid of God's Spirit can not understand the truths of God. T. A.—There is absolutely nothing to prevent the intellect from exercising itself upon the Christian revelation more than upon the contents of any other printed book, or the reason from estimating it, or the imagination from building on it, or even the gentler affections from softening at its details. But all this external similarity is accompanied with a total internal difference; and this book differs from every other in requiring, so to speak, an organ specially prepared to receive its real purport. These things are "*spiritually discerned*." W. A. B.

15. For "*judgeth*," "*judged*," substitute "dis-

cerneth," "discerned." A.—As in all subjects, we can understand language only as far as we have some *experience* of the things it imports, so in religion (by the very same principle) the spiritual heart alone can understand the language of the Spirit. Think of it for a moment, and you will find that, in every book whatever, it is the mind of the reader that puts meaning in the words. The language of the new covenant is a celestial language, and they who will give their fullness to its blessed words must have caught their secret from heaven! W. A. B.

16. The mind of Christ. A higher standard of judging and of acting has been set up in the mind of the world. Our Lord has not only purified man's abstract conceptions of virtue, but he has taught us what to admire and approve in life and action. He has lived a life, the principles of which are an everlasting protest against the misjudgments of men arising from their low standards. He has shown us the highest human excellence misunderstood, the highest reason pronounced a derangement of reason, and thus has put us on our guard against similar mistakes. In him we see the true measure of what is right and what is practical in conduct, of what in the end must commend itself to the rectified judgment of the world. *That is practical and that is practicable* which commends itself to a sound soul, to a calm, trustful, courageous soul in unison with Christ, which commends itself to a faith that overcomes the world, to a love that is capable of self-sacrifice. Undertakings will not suffer shipwreck, however maligned or scorned, into which men who have his spirit enter. T. D. W.

Section 261.

1 CORINTHIANS iii. 1-23.

1 AND I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, *even as*
2 unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were
3 not able to *bear it*, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there*
4 *is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For
5 while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I *am* of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who
6 then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave
7 to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then
8 neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the in-
9 crease. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive
10 his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye
11 are God's husbandry, *ye are* God's building. According to the grace of God which is given
unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon.
But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any
12 man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every
13 man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed
14 by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide
15 which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be
16 burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. Know ye not

17 that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which 18 *temple* ye are. Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in 19 this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is 20 foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And 21 again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no 22 man glory in men. For all things are your's; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the 23 world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are your's; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

EVERY Christian is in himself a temple, "a temple of God," as well as a separate or single stone in the general edifice. He has to build up, on the foundation of faith, all that is holy in personal character. "Other foundation can no man lay," as the inward basis of *Christian* virtue, "than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Religious faith—faith which accepts a personal Redeemer and a personal redemption—is the support and groundwork of Christian excellence. That excellence, however, is reared and perfected by sore labor and slow degrees. "Let every man," therefore, "take heed *how* he buildeth"; after what model and with what materials. The aims and purposes, the motives and ends, which influence the soul, the walk and conversation, the practical habitudes that appear in the life, all that properly constitutes *character*, the character of the inward and the outward man—*this* is the building which individual Christians have to labor to erect. In the materials that constitute personal character, as in those that compose the visible Church, there may be the solid and the durable, the chaffy and the worthless. There may be the gold and silver, the precious stones and resplendent ornaments of a divine virtue; or there may be the wood and hay, the straw and the stubble of an earthly life. Just as it is incumbent on the official builders to take care, in their relations to others, that they teach nothing but the true, and sanction and encourage none but the good, so is it incumbent on the private Christian to take care, in relation to himself, that he do the same; that is, that he have just views of what it is that is to be "built up" on the foundation of his faith as "holy living," and that he strenuously endeavor to embody and realize this divine "idea" in the positive habitudes of his daily life. And still further: just as in the end the work of one builder will "abide" and he "have a reward," and that of another will be "burnt" and he "suffer loss," so also will it be with individual Christians, according as they may be found, at the day of reckoning, to have traded with their talents with intelligence and skill, or to have misunderstood or abused or buried them in the earth. When the Lord is revealed at the last day, the event will be productive of various feelings even in the circle of the *saved* themselves! Some will rejoice with instantaneous exultation, and be "found of him in peace, without spot and blameless," while others "will be ashamed before him at his coming," awake to apprehension, and be "saved as by fire." T. B.

1, 2. Paul taught the Corinthians all the doctrine he had to teach, but not all the conceptions of the blessed life which he knew of. He showed them that, leaving the principles of doctrine, they were to keep themselves in the love of Christ, and be strengthened more and more with his Spirit in the inner man, growing up into him in all things. But all this by degrees. F. W. R.

5. As to Apollos, who had followed Paul in evangelical labors at Corinth, the apostle is in no wise jealous of him, and does not for a moment suspect him of fostering the spirit of faction. This is quite evident from his desiring his "brother Apollos" to return to that city (12:16). But he presses on the Corinthians to remember that both Apollos and he were not masters, but servants, by whom they believed; that they were builders, but the building was not their house; it was God's temple. The church was not for the ministry, but

the ministry for the church, and the church for the Lord. D. F.

7. You may rise up early and go to bed late, and study hard, and read much, and devour the marrow of the best authors; and when you have done all, unless God give a blessing to your endeavors, be as lean and meager, in regard of true and useful learning, as Pharaoh's lean kine were after they had eaten the fat ones. It is God that both ministereth the seed to the sower and multiplieth the seed sown: the principal and the increase are both his. *Sanderson*.—What a powerful incentive to thankfulness and prayer, and at the same time to watchfulness and activity! He who must give the increase will do so where the planting and watering are done with an eye upon him. *Van O.*

8. This is the true inspired remedy for all party spirit: "He that planteth and he that watereth are one." Each in his way is indispensable. To do our

own share in the acting, and to feel that each is an integral, essential portion of the whole, not interfering with the rest; to know that each church, each sect, each man, is coöperating best in the work when he expresses his own individuality (as Paul and Cephas, and John and Barnabas did) in truths of word and action which others, perhaps, can not grasp—that is the only emancipation from partisanship. F. W. R.

Not according to his talents and opportunities, but to the use made of them; not to the harvest that is reaped, but to the seed sown. "Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labor." Not according to his gifts; not according to his successes; not according to the worldly applause he may have won; but "according to his labor." This meets the case of every disciple, as well the poorest as the richest, as well the obscurest as the greatest, as well the servant with one talent as the servant with five. Only be faithful to your trust, and when the labor of the day is over, and you go up to the great harvest-home, you will be "satisfied." H. A. B.

9-15. Paul's favorite images are drawn, not from the operations and uniform phenomena of the natural world, but from the activities and outward exhibition of human society, from the life of soldiers, from the life of slaves, from the market, from athletic exercises, from agriculture, from architecture. Here he first uses an agricultural metaphor, and then he passes to an architectural. Paul has planted the precious trees. Apollos, and probably others with him, are watering them. Suddenly the image changes to one more capable of being turned to what the apostle wishes to enforce. A building in progress rises before us. Paul has laid the foundation—laid it once for all, and laid it well. He has no objection to say this, for it has been done by the grace of God. On this foundation Apollos and others are building. As to building on another foundation, this is set aside at once. The work is going on, and will go on indefinitely in the future; but it will be tested. A day will come when the fire will burn up those wretched edifices of wood and straw, and leave unharmed in their glorious beauty those that were raised of marble and granite, and decorated with silver and gold. Those who raised such structures as these shall not only be safe but rewarded; those who lost their time on the others shall just escape out of the conflagration, because they built on the right foundation, but their escape shall be barely an escape. H.

9. **God's building.** The Church below is at best but a small part of the entire structure which belongs to all ages. Much that we behold is, after all, only scaffolding that shall be removed, or rubbish that shall be cast away. But meanwhile the work

is going forward, and the walls, however slowly, are rising. Everything in God's providence respecting the present world is made to lead to this. All preaching of the word, diffusion of truth, conversion of sinners, and edification of saints, are means in God's hands for carrying up his structure. Prophets and apostles are humble instruments in the work. J. W. A.

11. "Ye are God's building," he tells his Corinthian converts, and then he immediately alludes to Christ as the foundation of this building, and the only one. If we divest this language of metaphor, its meaning is that the Lord Jesus stands in a relation to his Church similar to that which a foundation bears to a building. His Church rests on him. Its pardon, its holiness, its hope, its blessedness, its safety, its very existence, all depend on him. C. B. —That foundation on which the Christian architect builds is Jesus Christ—that is, his experience of Christ as his Saviour. There may be moral men, amiable men, benevolent and charitable men, who do not have this; but you can not call them Christian men. Their life, admirable in some respects, is not a Christian life. The structure they build may be a splendid pantheon or museum, but it is not a Christian temple. They may use labor and diligence, but the Christian corner-stone is wanting, and when the test-hour comes they will find it so. E. H. G.—Some are all their days laying the foundation, and are never able to build upon it to any comfort to themselves or usefulness to others. And the reason is, because they will be mixing with the foundation stones that are only fit for the building. They will be bringing their obedience, duties, mortification of sin, and the like, unto the foundation. These are precious stones to build with, but unmeet to be first laid to bear upon them the whole weight of the building. The foundation is to be laid in mere grace, mercy, pardon in the blood of Christ; this the soul is to accept of and rest in merely as it is grace, without the consideration of anything in itself, but that it is sinful and obnoxious to ruin. Owen.

13. It takes a spiritual vision to see that nothing but what is invisible is indestructible. Only truth, love, purity, spiritual affections, and spiritual attainments survive that fire which shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. The soul is holier than the scene and the instruments amid which it is trained, because it has an everlasting consciousness, responsibility, judgment. It is not written of our reputation, our trade, or our estate, but of our souls, that they shall "all stand before the judgment-seat of God." F. D. H.

15. **Saved so as by fire.** Many get to the foundation, "other than which no man can lay," which is "Jesus Christ." The faith which unites

them to him is a foundation in themselves, on which is to be built the beautiful fabric of the Christian virtues; but they build nothing upon it at all, or nothing but "wood, hay, and stubble"; or the materials of their character are so heterogeneous that it appears to consist of a strange mixture of the valuable and the worthless. Christian professors with enormous means do nothing. With great influence, they never exert it for great ends; with talents for service, they let them lie unimproved; or, having only one talent, they bury and conceal it because they have not ten. What strange practical inconsistencies are to be seen on all sides! What questionable conformity to the world! What subjection to fashion! What luxury and display! What liberties of speech! What keenness in business—so very nigh to taking an advantage, imposing upon ignorance, or overreaching the unwary! What clutching and covetousness and hardness of heart! What terrible justice in some people; in others what explosions of temper! In most, what a want of harmony and entireness; and in many, at times, what strange apparitions of even the old animal life! Yet, along with all these diversities of defect, or in connection with most of them, there shall be unquestionable proofs of the men having a firm standing on "the foundation"; and there shall be manifest in the entire structure of their habits several portions of solid masonry, and, mixed with the mud and rubble they put into it, a good many valuable and precious things. T. B.

16. The Spirit of God dwelleth in you. No passing visit is here, no sudden but transient illumination, no power fitfully given and suddenly withdrawn. "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." We need motives, strong motives, one and all of us. We need them for purposes of action and for purposes of resistance. And among these none is better and more serviceable than the motive which appeals to the sanctity, the responsibility, the powers, the capabilities implied in that inward presence of the eternal Spirit, which is the great gift of the new covenant between God and man. In moments of moral surprise, in moments of unusual depression, in moments of a felt sense of isolation which threatens to take the heart out of our whole life, in moments of spasmodic daring, when ordinary sanctions have lost their hold upon us, it is well to fall back upon the reassuring, tranquilizing, invigorating resources of such an appeal as that of the apostle: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" H. P. L.

A sublime truth is here! The body of every saint is a temple far more real than that on Mount Zion, and the heart of every saint is a "holiest of

all" far more glorious than that of old; for the Shechinah was but a symbol of the divine presence, but the Spirit is infinitely beyond a symbol. He is an actual Deity, positively dwelling in the heart, and beatifying it with his own heaven. *Davies.*—Roofs arched with gold and palaces adorned with marble are vile in comparison with that house which the Lord has chosen to be his temple, in the which the Holy Ghost dwells. Illuminate this house with the light of righteousness. Its ornaments shall never fade, and it shall dwell hereafter in spotless beauty and eternal majesty. *Cyprian.*

17. The Corinthian Christians were guilty of sins both against purity and charity. The popular idolatries of Corinth, aggravated by the commercial and maritime importance of the place, would probably have exposed them to considerable temptations to unclean living; and they had even learned to look with self-complacency upon evils which were not tolerated by heathen opinion. And so little did they understand the love which was due to their brethren in Christ, that they evidently regarded the Church as only another form of political life, with its natural divisions of opinion and its heated passions and its pervading earthly taint. For both evils the remedial truth is one and the same: Christians are members of a society which the Spirit inhabits, because he dwells in them individually, and so has made them collectively the body of Christ. H. P. L.

22. Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas. No doubt there were some differences of views even between Paul, and Peter, and Apollos; for while, on the one hand, they were all enlightened by the Spirit of God, yet, on the other hand, they retained still their human differences of character and disposition, which must on several occasions have been manifest. But Paul was earnest that schism should be ended by all parties remembering that whatever became of the truth or falsehood of their own particular views of Christianity, yet that Christianity according to any of their views was the one great thing which was their glory and their salvation. "Paul, and Apollos, and Peter, are all yours; but you are Christ's." T. A.—There is not a wise or a luminous man of the past, or of the present age, who does not shine to give light to the children of light, who does not belong to all the good. A. R.

The world. The soul, by virtue of union with God, has the divine life in it. Rising above the fears and fascinations of sin, growing into the image of him whose new life is now the soul's life, it becomes absorbed in the pursuit and the enjoyment of something higher and better than it ever tasted or sought before. The sources of pleasure from which the soul drank before are not cut off;

but those sources are themselves purified, and living water springs up even in a desert. Love, friends, letters, music, art, are not less to the soul in Christ than they were when the eye and ear and heart had not been anointed. They are all loved more, enjoyed more, because "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." *Prime.*

Life, or death. *Life* is the Christian's in a far higher and fuller sense than it is the worldly man's, since he enjoys it on a far higher level of blessedness, and uses it in a much nobler cause. Even *death* is his, since, though for a moment it triumphs over him, in the end he triumphs over it, and, while he seems to yield to it, he treads it under his feet. For it is the portal to life; and while our friends are weeping at our bedside a chorus of angels welcomes us into Paradise. What the world dreads, the believer at last welcomes, for it severs us from sin, and takes us to the vision of God. A. W. T.

Things present. Wherever the Lord Jesus takes up his abode, what before was evil, and a complication and accumulation of evils, becomes now a train of God's ministers for good, a chariot of fiery and glorious discipline, to which Satan himself is harnessed, if God pleases, to do God's bidding. G. B. C.

Things to come. Thine are not only all the

former and present but also all the future; thine the new heaven and the new earth; thine all the promises and their glorious fulfillment; thine all the battles, and, therefore, also the coming final one between light and darkness, and the mighty victory of light, eternal peace, the unending rest of the people of God! Thine are the angels and all the blessed in the New Jerusalem; thine all the glory of God and Christ in the world of light; for thee shine all the stars in this life and the next; for thee are rising the enduring mansions of the heavenly home. *Christleib.*

All are yours. All things are the Christian's—this marvelous life, so full of meaning, so pregnant with infinite opportunities. Still more death, which *seems* to come like a tyrant—death is his in Christ, his minister to lead him to higher life. Paul is his, to teach him freedom. Apollos his, to animate him with his eloquence. Cephas his, to fire him with his courage. Every author his, to impart to him his treasures. But all things are ours on this condition—that we are Christ's. When the law of the cross is the law of our being, when we have learned to surrender ourselves, then, and then only, they are ours, not we theirs. The Christian is "creation's heir." He may say triumphantly, "The world, the world is mine." F. W. R.

Section 262.

1 CORINTHIANS iv. 1-21.

1 **LET** a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries
2 of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me
3 it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge
4 not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he
5 that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come,
6 who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the
7 counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God. And these things,
8 brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye
9 might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be
10 puffed up for one against another. For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what
11 hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as
12 if thou hadst not received it?

8 Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to
9 God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you. For I think that God hath set forth
10 us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the
11 world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ;
12 we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. Even unto this
13 present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no cer-
14 tain dwellingplace; and labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless;
15 being persecuted, we suffer it: being defamed, we entreat: we are made as the filth of the
16 world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day. I write not these things to
17 shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. For though ye have ten thousand instruc-
18 tors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through
19 the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me. For this cause have I sent

17 unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.
 18 Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you. But I will come to you
 19 shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but
 20 the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. What will ye? shall
 21 I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?

To do right, to do always right, and to do it without concern as to the judgment of human creatures, belongs to the very highest degrees of moral culture, to the strong man in Christ Jesus. Yet we should strive after it as indispensable as well to our holiness as our happiness. Multitudes are daily kept from doing or attempting what they know to be right, by the dread of what fellow-creatures will say or think. In this there is such a weakness that we are prompt to despise it, when presented in the abstract, or in the case of another, while we are perpetually incurring the same condemnation by our indecision and cowardice. As the character thus formed is insusceptible of true greatness, so it is liable to unspeakable misery. No man can lift up his head with manly calmness and peace, who is the slave of other men's judgments. It is, therefore, a matter of great moment, in our discipline of heart and life, to keep before our minds those considerations which shall dispose and enable us to say with Paul, "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgment." J. W. A.

1, 2. These verses are addressed to congregations in order that a right estimate may be formed by them of the ministerial office, which neither, on the one hand, ought to be depreciated, nor, on the other, to be unduly valued. Paul's view was in opposition to all tendencies to worship the man, or to represent the office as magical or mysterious; and, on the other hand, his view was in direct opposition to all opinions which value it only as a sphere for the exhibition of gifts and talents. And in reference to that right, so liberally assumed, of passing judgment, of criticising individual ministers, the apostle teaches that the same definition excludes this right, because of the impossibility of judgment; for all that a steward can have of merit is fidelity, and fidelity is exactly that which men can not judge—it is a secret hidden with God. F. W. R.—As a faithful steward does not curtail to his master's servants their due, but gives them their portion of meat in due season, so is it also with stewards in the kingdom of grace. Thereby they prove themselves to be honest, blameless laborers, by rightly dividing the word of truth, by not corrupting the word of God, by feeding souls unto eternal life with unadulterated doctrine, and with sound words which can not be condemned. *Beaser*.

3. **A small thing that I should be judged of you.** Not because he was above judgment, not because he was infallible, or teaching truths too grand for them, but because he was to be judged before a tribunal far more awful than Corinthian society. F. W. R.—It is a good observation of Fuller that "those are the best Christians who are more careful to reform themselves than to censure others." The world, it must be expected, will be void of charity toward God's people, and judge them as hypocrites, enthusiasts, and what not; but it is much to be

lamented that the children of grace should judge one another so rashly as we often see them do. *Hill*.

4. "By myself" should be "against myself." When our version was made, "by myself" had this meaning, as may be seen in the comments and sermons of the time. A.—**He that judgeth me is the Lord.** Suppose men condemn me, yea, suppose all men unite in censure and reprobation, what is this, if He that sitteth in the heavens looks down with approval? This is the only true ground to take in regard to the regulation of our conduct: to do all as in the immediate presence of God and as subject to his animadversion. How serenely, how loftily may a true Christian go on in the performance of some distasteful or unpopular duty, if he can say with assurance, "I know that the eye of my God looks down with approbation on what I am doing." This sustained Paul, and has sustained God's most faithful servants in every age; the thought and assurance of God as ever sitting in judgment upon every act. J. W. A.

We need such an order of men still, not self-assuming or dominant, as "lords over God's heritage," but gentle among them, while loyal to truth and to its God—men of kingly nature, because they serve a heavenly Master, and who are bold to utter his word without fear and without favor. Never since the world began were such men needed more. And let it be remembered that, while this duty falls with double weight on those who have been called to it by the rule of God's house, it does not belong to them alone. Wherever a man feels the force of divine truth within him, he should be fearless in his place to speak it out, without shrinking, and to show that he is a witness for God. It was the noble wish of Moses, "Would that all the Lord's people were prophets," and all that follow him, however

humbly, to testify in word or deed to the truth of God, shall have a share in his reward. "This honor have all his saints." *Ker.*

5. Before the assembled myriads of all the earth's inhabitants, before listening angels, before the great Judge himself, the secrets of our hearts will be laid bare, and our inmost thoughts brought into the light. The veil of hypocrisy will drop off; and many, who in the praise of men have had their reward, will stand exposed in the shame and deformity of their own imaginations. The self-deceiver and the careless alike will be dismayed at the array of sins which dwelt unheeded, if not encouraged, in the secret chambers of their hearts. And the most faithful, watchful Christian may find matter for serious meditation in the truth that his every thought, as well as word and work, must be exposed on that day to the scrutiny of a righteous Judge. *J. J.*

8. "Ye are," says he, "already become full, ye are already become rich, ye reign without us." They were in spirit and conduct as if the kingdom of Christ had with them already reached its consummation, and they as partakers therein had attained to all riches, to the satisfaction of all their desires. And would this were so, says he; would they had already attained to this participation in the perfected kingdom of Christ; for then, assuredly, the apostles would not have been excluded therefrom, nor would their circumstances be such as they now are. Thus he holds up before them his own life of conflict, in contrast with their false security, their unauthorized and groundless exultation. *N.*

9. **Persons appointed to death.** This is an allusion to the Roman theatrical spectacles. In the morning those criminals to whom they gave a chance of escaping with their life fought with the wild beasts armed; but in the afternoon the gladiators fought naked, and he who escaped was only reserved for slaughter to another day; so that they might well be called "persons appointed to death." By comparing the apostles to these devoted persons, Paul hath given us a strong picture of the dangers which the apostles encountered in the course of their ministry: dangers which at length proved fatal to the most of them.

10. **We are fools on account of Christ.** The apostle repeats ironically the things which his enemies in Corinth said of him. And in the same spirit of irony he attributes to them the contrary qualities. *M.*

12. We are expressly told, in the history, that at Corinth Paul labored with his own hands. That manual labor he continued at Ephesus (Acts 20:34); and not only so, but continued it during that particular residence at Ephesus near the conclusion of

which this Epistle was written; so that he might with the strictest truth say, at the time of writing the Epistle, "even unto this present hour, we labor, working with our own hands." *M. H.*—It is during his sojourn at Ephesus that we get our first glimpse of a fact, which was no doubt one of the constant facts of his life—that he supported *others* as well as himself by his manual toils. When he took leave of the Ephesian elders, he says, "Ye yourselves know that *these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me.*" It is one of the most touching and impressive scenes in a life rich above most in tragic adventures. As we see the apostle lift those thin strong hands, worn and scarred with constant toil, even we are moved by the appeal. Those toil-worn hands speak to us with a still more pathetic eloquence when we know how constant and unremitting were the labors in which they had been occupied. *Cox.*

15. Here the whole order, work, and result of the ministry are given in brief but significant summary. "In Christ Jesus," who giveth the Spirit, and whom the Spirit glorifieth, Paul, the living preacher, "had begotten" to their new birth the Corinthian disciples, "through the gospel," as the divinely appointed instrument of their renewal and conversion. And here, too, are summarily involved: the new man; his renewal, or new birth; the implied agency of the Spirit; and the instrumentality of *knowledge*, "the gospel." This unfolds the whole work. The gift of the Spirit, which results in that "new man" wherein *dwelleth God*, whether as the Father, or as Christ, or as the Holy Ghost, is communicated through, or by, the *gospel*, by means of *knowledge* or of *divine truth*. *J. S. S.*

16. When Paul says, once and again, I beseech you, be ye followers of me, it has a sound, taken as it may be taken, of conceit, or vanity; but, when we look upon him as a man who goes after Christ in the ways of scorn and suffering patience, bearing his Master's dark flag of patience and loss, and calling others to follow, we only see that he has taken Christ's own spirit, and despises even to send the flock before him, where he does not lead himself. *H. B.*—It is not good for a man to be living any life which he would not desire to see made perfect and universal through the world. Paul says, "Be what I am"; but Dives cries out of the fire where he lies, "Oh, send and warn my seven brethren lest they come where I am!" The dying Christian tells those beside him of the blessedness of serving Christ. The dying murderer with his last breath warns men from the scaffold not to be what he has been. Oh! test your lives thus! Do not consent to be anything which you would not ask the soul that is dearest to you to be! Be nothing which you would not wish all the world to be! *P. B.*

17. We have the history of the apostle Paul stated fully and circumstantially in the Acts, and then we have thirteen letters of the same apostle, purporting to have been written during the period covered by the history. If, therefore, the history and the letters are both genuine, we should expect to find the same general character ascribed to the apostle in the history that is indicated by his letters; we should expect to find in the letters numer-

ous minute and undesigned references, such as could not be counterfeited, to the facts stated in the history. And all this we do find. The character of Paul was strongly marked, and no one can doubt whether the Epistles ascribed to him were written by such a man as he is described in the history to have been. How different are the characters of Paul, of Peter, and of John, and yet how perfectly do the writings ascribed to each correspond with his character! M. H.

Section 263.

1 CORINTHIANS v. 1-13.

1 It is reported commonly *that there is* fornication among you, and such fornication as is
2 not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And ye
3 are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be
4 taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have
5 judged already, as though I were present, *concerning* him that hath so done this deed, in
6 the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the
7 power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the
8 flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying *is* not good.
9 Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old
10 leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is
11 sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven
12 of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth. I wrote
13 unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: yet not altogether with the fornica-
tors of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must
ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if
any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or
a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to
judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? but them that are
without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

1. Ancient vices still infected the Christian converts. They carried into the Church the savor of their old life, for the wine-skin will long retain the flavor with which it has been once imbued. We find from these Epistles that gross immorality still existed, and was even considered a thing to boast of. We find their old philosophy still coloring their Christianity, for, on the foundation of the Oriental idea that the body was the source of all sin, they denied a future resurrection. We find the insolence of wealth at the Lord's Supper. We find spiritual gifts abused by being exhibited for the sake of ostentation.

2. It is a mistake to suppose that punishment is only to reform and warn. It is an expression on earth of God's indignation in heaven against sin. He who has done wrong has identified himself with wrong, and *so far* is an object of indignation. In our own day we are accustomed to use strange, weak words concerning sin and crime: we say, when a man does wrong, that he has mistaken the way to happiness, and that if a correct notion of real happiness could be given to men, crime would cease. We look on sin as residing, not in a guilty will, but in a mistaken understanding. Thus the Corinthians in Paul's days looked at it, and felt no indignation. They had some soft, feeble way of talking about it. They called it "mental disease," "error,"

"mistake of judgment," "irresistible passion," or I know not what.

In Scripture we read of two principal objects of punishment, viz., as an expression of righteous indignation and the reformation of the offender—his amelioration; and here the merciful character of Christianity comes forth. A third ground is the contagious character of evil. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Worldly minds, irreverent minds, licentious minds *leaven* society. You can not be long with persons who by innuendo, double meaning, or lax language show an acquaintance with evil, without feeling in some degree assimilated to them, nor can you easily retain enthusiasm for right among those who detract and scoff at goodness. F. W. R.

3. Church discipline is primarily a process of *self-purification* in the Church, designed for the restoration and maintenance of her essential attribute of holiness. But it necessarily has reference also to the good of the offender on whom it is exercised. And here appears its evangelical element; since even in its strongest form, the anathema, it has in view not punishment but *correction*, the reclaiming of the *soul*, to which the temporal punishment is intended to serve only as a means. This is what the apostle intends by delivering a backslider "unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit

may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." In this much-mistaken passage, as in the book of Job and 2 Cor. 12 : 7, Satan is conceived as a servant of God in the wider sense, as a being to whom power is committed to send upon men certain bodily chastisements and afflictions, but under the oversight and for the ends of Providence. So in the case before us, Paul expected that God, by means of the prince of darkness, would bring upon the excommunicated fornicator at Corinth some heavy trial, or sudden calamity, but that this punishment might arrest the sinful course of the unfortunate man, drive him to repentance, and result in his salvation in the day of the second coming of Christ. P. S.—There are cases occurring in almost every Church of Christ in which no means avail; applications, advice, prayers, have no permanent favorable effect. The difficulty is found to be unimproved by delay month after month; the Church is exposed to weakness and reproach; and the only hope is in the excision of that member from the body. Not that the body hates that member; not that its removal is not a calamity; but that the general health and salvation require it. R. T.

7. Christ our passover. The gospel pass-over commemorates a deliverance from spiritual thralldom, of which the release of the Jews from the Egyptian yoke affords but a faint and imperfect emblem. In those complicated sufferings which were the price of our redemption, we not only discover the unsearchable riches of divine love, but we likewise behold the full demerit of sin, and all the horrors of that misery into which we had plunged ourselves by our fatal apostasy; so that our triumph in the great salvation, by recalling to our minds the helpless state in which mercy found us, gives check to every self-exalting thought, and constrains us to ascribe to the free, unmerited favor of God the

sole, the undivided praise of all that we have or hope to enjoy. R. W.

8. The words, "let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," look very like words suggested by the Passover season; at least they have, upon that supposition, a force and significance which do not belong to them upon any other; and it is not a little remarkable that the hints casually dropped in the Epistle, concerning particular parts of the year, should coincide with this supposition. *Paley.*

9-11. Many Corinthian Christians were addicted to those sins of impurity which they had practiced in the days of their heathenism, and which disgraced their native city even among the heathen. We can not wonder if it proved most difficult to root out immorality from the rising Church. The offenders against Christian chastity were exceedingly numerous at this period; and it was especially with the object of attempting to reform them, and to check the growing mischief, that Paul now determined to visit Corinth. He has himself described this visit as a painful one; he went in sorrow at the tidings he had received, and when he arrived he found the state of things even worse than he had expected; he tells us that it was a time of personal humiliation to himself, occasioned by the flagrant sins of so many of his own converts; he reminds the Corinthians afterward how he had "mourned" over those who had dishonored the name of Christ by "the uncleanness and fornication and wantonness which they had committed." H.

10. The Greeks and Romans, before the time of Christianity, had no idea, or even the faintest vestige of an idea, of what in the Scriptural system is called *sin*; and the idea was utterly and exquisitely inappreciable by pagan Greece and Rome. *De Quincey.*

Section 264.

1 CORINTHIANS vi. 1-20.

1 DARE any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not
2 before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the
3 world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye
4 not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If
5 then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least
6 esteemed in the church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man
7 among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother
8 goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. Now therefore there is utterly
9 a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take
10 wrong? Why do ye not rather *suffer yourselves to be defrauded*? Nay, ye do wrong, and
11 defraud, and that *your* brethren.

9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived:
neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves
10 with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall
11 inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are
sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.
12 All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for
13 me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Meats for the belly, and the belly
for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now the body *is* not for fornication,
14 but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. And God hath both raised up the Lord, and
15 will also raise up us by his own power. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of

Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make *them* the members of an harlot? 16 God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, 17 saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of 20 the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Redeemed, and yet owing service—this describes the disciple of Christ; redeemed, but just on that account bound to a walk hallowed of God. And who does not feel on reflection how much is here expressed to us in few words? "Ye are bought with a price"; inexhaustible declaration, well deserving to be written in indelible characters in the deepest recesses of the heart! Bought, ransomed, from what else than from the deadly power of sin, which, without Christ, held us as in iron fetters, and made us guilty before the face of spotless holiness! *For how much* ransomed? For a price not to be fully estimated even by angels, a price only within the reach of almighty power; by holiness demanded, by mercy paid, and through grace offered even to the chief of sinners: the blood of God's incarnate son, the sacrifice of his divine yet human life, through the act of highest love, and yet of absolute obedience. And *whereunto* redeemed, if not in order "that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life"? "Therefore glorify God," writes the apostle, and thus binds together in the most beautiful manner grace and duty. This is the great principle of action for every really Christian life. "Glorify God," in the inner chamber, in the home circle, in society, under the father's roof, and far from the mother's eye; "glorify God," if thou wilt not that thy life should be useless, unhappy—nay, even lost. Glorify him "in your body," as in the temple in which you are the appointed priests, and this through all your members; and in his power keep yourselves pure. Glorify him "in your spirit," by directing all its powers and energies to the one grand aim, that God really may receive full honor from the work of his hands. Yea, verily, here is a task—an enjoyment for two lives; and the heart in which the work of sanctification has begun may thrill as with a blessed anticipation of what it shall be when the God of his salvation shall be perfectly glorified. *Van O.*

THIS Epistle deals with a large variety of isolated questions which the Corinthian Church had put to him on some previous occasion. Hence the Epistle is one of Christian casuistry—an application of Christian principles to the various circumstances and cases of conscience which arise continually in the daily life of a highly civilized and highly artificial community. This chapter contains the apostle's judgment on two such questions: 1. The manner of deciding Christian quarrels (vs. 1-11). 2. The character of Christian liberty, what is meant by it, and how it is limited (vs. 12-20).

1, 2. It appears from this account that questions arose among the Corinthian Christians which needed litigation: questions of wrongs done to persons or to property. These wrongs they carried to the heathen courts of judicature for redress. For this the apostle reproves them severely. F. W. R. —It should be remembered that the law gave its sanction to the decision pronounced in a litigated case by arbitrators privately chosen, so that the Christians might obtain a just decision of their mutual differences without resorting to the heathen tribunals. C.

3. **We shall judge angels.** When Christians are spoken of as kings and priests, it is not

meant that they wear a crown or minister at an altar, but rather that in heaven they are exalted and honored like kings and priests on earth. Official relation is not at all designated, merely official dignity. In this way the office of a judge is most appropriately employed to image forth the same elevation. It is one of the most dignified and imposing of human titles. It brings before the mind the picture of venerable wisdom upon its elevated seat, dictating the noblest of sentiments to the noblest of pupils, and receiving the homage of the crowd. What more natural than that the beings, who are figuratively decked with the scepter of royal dignity and the miter of sacerdotal rank, should put on also the vestments of the judicial station. They receive the admiring tribute of the world, and they may be styled the judges of the world. They are in some respects more glorious than the angels of God, and they may be said to judge those angels. The sentiment here taught is that Christians in heaven will in some respects be superior to angels. *Homer.*

7-11. His argument runs thus: You ask me how the oppressed are to be freed from gross oppressors except by an appeal to legal justice? how flagrant crimes—such as that condemned in the

fifth chapter—are to be prevented in Christians? I answer, The Church of Christ does not include *such* persons in the idea of its existence at all. It only contemplates men “washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” But drunkards, revilers, extortioners, covetous men, gross sensualists—I can not tell you how to legislate for such, for such ought not to be in your society at all. F. W. R.

He gives them a catalogue of the basest sinners that their profligate city or the whole earth could furnish, and then he says to these very men, these men destined for the walls of God's glorious house, “Such were some of you.” We come then to this conclusion—no meanness, no guilt, will cause God to reject any one of us. An earthly builder is obliged to cast away bad materials, for he can not alter them. God has promised to cast away none that come to him, for he can alter them. He is willing to take the worst, for he is able to transform them and make them the very best. C. B.

11. First of all we are clean as He is clean, then we are set apart as He is set apart, then we are righteous as He is righteous. Cleansed, sanctified, justified—these are the three conditions or privileges into which a believing man is brought from the moment that, by faith, he identifies himself with Christ! All this in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. The name washes, sanctifies, justifies. It is a name of power, containing everything in it that a sinner needs. He who consents to use it gets all that it contains! The Spirit washes, sanctifies, justifies. He has his part to do in all these, and he does it as the Spirit of Omnipotence! *Bonar.*

12. Men in the Corinthian Church, having heard the apostle teach the law of liberty, pushed that doctrine so far as to make it mean a right to do whatsoever a man wills to do. Accordingly he found himself called on to oppose a system of self-indulgence and sensuality, a gratification of the appetites and the passions taught systematically as Christianity. By these teachers self-gratification was maintained on the ground of the rights of Christian liberty and of the rights of nature. They said, We may eat what we will. We are free from the observance of days. All things are lawful. That which is done by a child of God ceases to be sin. Paul met this exaggeration by declaring that Christian liberty is limited, first, by Christian expediency, “All things are lawful”—yes, “but all things are not expedient”; and secondly, by its own nature, “All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” F. W. R.

Take the various forms of worldly amusement. So far as they are really amusements and not labor and sorrow (which in fact many of them are, dread-

fully jading the body and mind, and exhausting the energies); and so far as no breach of God's moral law is involved in them, they are innocent and lawful. But does any one find by experience that some worldly amusement, though innocent in itself, and very possibly innocent for others, yet has a tendency to influence his passions, to set up his vanity, and to brush rudely from his mind the thought of God's presence? Then let there be no compromise. Or should he experience no evil spiritual effect from the indulgence, or at least none of which he is conscious, may he abandon himself without restriction to the amusement in question, live in it, sacrifice a considerable amount of money, leisure, time to it? Surely not. To live in any amusement is to be the slave of it. And the Christian should spurn any such dependence. The tone which he takes up toward all innocent enjoyments and recreations should be just that of the apostle, “All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” Besides, the Christian *dares not* give himself full latitude in this respect. With an insidious heart, with crafty, spiritual foes watching for his halting, with that awful warning respecting the straitness of the gate and the narrowness of the way ringing in his ear, it would not be safe to do so. He sports not within a very wide margin of the precipice's edge. E. M. G.

13. The second plea of the teachers Paul is here condemning, is the rights of Nature. There is some difficulty in the exposition of this chapter, because the apostle mixes together the pleas of his opponents with his own answers to those pleas—states them himself, in order that he may reply to them. The first part of the thirteenth verse contains two of these pleas; the second part of this verse, with the fourteenth, contains his reply. 1. “Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats”—a natural correspondence. Here are appetites, and things made on purpose to satisfy appetites. “Therefore,” said they, “Nature herself says, ‘Enjoy!’” 2. The transitoriness of this enjoyment furnishes an argument for the enjoyment. “God shall bring to an end both it and them.” That is, the body will perish, so will the food and the enjoyments—they do not belong to eternity, therefore indulgence is a matter of indifference. It is foolish ignorance to think that these are sins any more than the appetites of brutes which perish. To the argument about correspondence of appetites with the gratifications provided for them, he replies thus: “The body is not for self-indulgence but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.” In other words, he tells of a more exact mutual correspondence. He reveals a true and higher nature. F. W. R.—The body is for the Lord Jesus, to be consecrated by his indwelling to his service; and the Lord Jesus is for the

body, to consecrate it by dwelling therein in the person of his Spirit.

15. Paul's argument here is, that sins of unchastity, though bodily acts, yet injure a part of our nature which will not be destroyed by death, and which is closely connected with our moral well-being. And it is a fact no less certain than mysterious that moral and spiritual ruin is caused by such sins, which human wisdom (when untaught by revelation) held to be as blameless as eating and drinking. C.

Your bodies are the members of Christ.

A man who is of a cleanly disposition loves to wear clean garments. The body is the garment of the soul, and a clean heart will preserve a pure body. Remember, Christians, by what hand your bodies were made, by what guest they are inhabited, by what price they are purchased, in what laver they have been washed, and to whose eye they shall hereafter be presented. *Jenkyn.*

19, 20. We hardly know which to admire most in this exhortation, the strength or the grandeur with which it is enforced. It makes duty appear so reasonable that we feel at once condemned if we shrink from it; and yet where in the whole Bible can be found a loftier description of the Christian's blessedness? And this is Paul's usual manner. He connects with the duty he inculcates some exalted privilege, and thus ennoble the service to which he calls us; causing us to glory in our work while we are performing it. Here he tells us whose the Christian is—he is God's; how he became God's—he has been "bought with a price"; what God makes him—"the temple of the Holy Ghost"; and then, what God expects from him—glory. C. B.

The second great truth peculiar to Spiritual Christianity is that of the *sovereign and abiding influence of the Holy Spirit in renovating the soul in each instance in which it is renovated.* This doctrine also, like the propitiation effected by the Son of God, while in one view it is an inscrutable mystery, is in another an intelligible truth, which accords at once with our consciousness and with the principles of sound philosophy. The contact of the infinite mind with the finite is indeed a depth; but not so the restoration of the moral faculties as a matter of consciousness. Let it only be granted that true felicity must consist in the predominance of holy affections or of emotions habitually tending toward God, and let it also be granted that no such affections ordinarily belong to us nor spontaneously spring up or grow with our growth, then must we not acknowledge that the doctrine so clearly affirmed in Scripture of the sovereign renovating influences of the Holy Spirit is full of consolation to ourselves, as well as strictly accordant with the best conceptions we can form of the goodness of God? Happy indeed, and ennobling as well as efficacious, is

the belief that the body of the Christian is "the temple of the Holy Ghost"—a doctrine this which precludes at once despondency and presumption. For how should we despond, if He who "creates us anew in Christ Jesus" is almighty? or how presume, if we be convinced that, were the sacred energy withdrawn, there "would remain in us no good thing"? I. T.—Happy would it be for us if we could always maintain an unwavering persuasion as to the reality and the greatness of this inhabitation of God through the Spirit. It would confer a dignity, of which we now know too little, upon the whole tenor of a Christian life. Temptation would be disarmed by the sense of such a presence, and we should tremble at the thought of grieving one so great and yet so near. J. W. A.

19. Not your own. A man does not own himself till God owns him, and that ownership is solemnly acknowledged. He is a slave to his baser nature, even though his chains are inviting as diamond rings and bracelets of gold. While a passion against which reason revolts domineers over him, while a lust which conscience rebukes scoffs at conscience, he is ruled by a tyrant as vile and base as his own deformity. E. H. G.

20. Bought with a price. A word made us, a Calvary bought us; creation was painless, redemption was a torture. The price paid measures God's estimate of us. He does not pay a life so dear to him for souls that are insignificant. God paid Christ for them—the gold of his heart. Stand at the cross, and there God shows you and the angels his estimate of souls. That he might win them back, that he might have them again, he paid that price. J. D.—**Therefore glorify God.** As creatures who derive their being from God, we are bound to serve him to the utmost extent of the powers he hath given us. But his redeeming grace brings us under a new and still more endearing obligation to his service. Surely nothing can appear more just and equitable than that he who bought us should possess us, and that the ransomed should be entirely devoted to their Redeemer. R. W.

Which are God's. The being that lives continually in God may well be called God's. The whole man, from center to circumference, the man developed and the man undeveloped, all that lies within these souls in germ, waiting other scenes and other eyes and other influences to bring it out—all, all is God's. He stamps it his. We are only free when we come into the possession of God. Till then we are bond-servants—free ever after. We lose ourselves in God. When we allow God to call us his, then he allows us to call him ours. He gains a creature and we gain a Creator. He gains a lost sinner and we gain a Redeeming Saviour and an eternal Father and Friend. J. D.

Section 265.

1 CORINTHIANS vii. 1-40.

1 Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me : *It is* good for a man not to touch
 2 a woman. Nevertheless, *to avoid* fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let
 3 every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevo-
 4 lence : and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own
 body, but the husband : and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body,
 5 but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except *it be* with consent for a time, that ye
 may give yourselves to fasting and prayer ; and come together again, that Satan tempt you
 6 not for your incontinency. But I speak this by permission, *and* not of commandment. For
 7 I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God,
 8 one after this manner, and another after that. I say therefore to the unmarried and widows,
 9 It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry :
 10 for it is better to marry than to burn. And unto the married I command, *yet* not I, but the
 11 Lord, Let not the wife depart from *her* husband : but and if she depart, let her remain un-
 12 married, or be reconciled to *her* husband : and let not the husband put away *his* wife. But
 13 to the rest speak I, not the Lord : If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be
 pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an hus-
 14 band that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For
 the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by
 15 the husband : else were your children unclean ; but now are they holy. But if the unbe-
 lieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such *cases* :
 16 but God hath called us to peace. For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save
thy husband ? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save *thy* wife ?

17 But as God hath distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him
 18 walk. And so ordain I in all churches. Is any man called being circumcised ? let him not
 19 become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision ? let him not be circumcised. Cir-
 cumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments
 20 of God. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called
 21 *being* a servant ? care not for it : but if thou mayest be made free, use *it* rather. For he that
 22 is called in the Lord, *being* a servant, is the Lord's freeman : likewise also he that is called,
 23 *being* free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price ; be not ye the servants of men.
 24 Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God. Now concerning
 25 virgins I have no commandment of the Lord : yet I give my judgment, as one that hath ob-
 26 tained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. I suppose therefore that this is good for the pres-
 27 ent distress, *I say*, that *it is* good for a man so to be. Art thou bound unto a wife ? seek
 28 not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife ? seek not a wife. But and if thou marry,
 thou hast not sinned ; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall
 29 have trouble in the flesh : but I spare you. But this I say, brethren, the time *is* short : it
 30 remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none ; and they that weep,
 as though they wept not ; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not ; and they
 31 that buy, as though they possessed not ; and they that use this world, as not abusing *it* : for
 the fashion of this world passeth away.

32 But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things
 33 that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord : but he that is married careth for the
 34 things that are of the world, how he may please *his* wife. There is difference *also* between
 a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may
 be holy both in body and in spirit ; but she that is married careth for the things of the
 35 world, how she may please *her* husband. And this I speak for your own profit ; not that I
 may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the
 36 Lord without distraction. But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely to-
 ward his virgin, if she pass the flower of *her* age, and need so require, let him do what he
 37 will, he sinneth not : let them marry. Nevertheless he that standeth stedfast in his heart,
 having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart
 38 that he will keep his virgin, doeth well. So then he that giveth *her* in marriage doeth well ;
 39 but he that giveth *her* not in marriage doeth better. The wife is bound by the law as long
 as her husband liveth ; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom
 40 she will ; only in the Lord. But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment : and I
 think also that I have the Spirit of God.

Each man's wisdom and happiness must consist in doing, as well as his faculties will admit, the work which God sets him. So thought and so wrote, by immediate inspiration, the great apostle of the Gentiles. He did not counsel his converts to join himself and Barnabas in their missionary tours; but while reminding them ever and anon that the great system of society would ere long run down and come to an end—ringing ever and anon the great funeral knell of the world, "the fashion of this world passeth away"—he told them distinctly and emphatically that so long as the system still worked on, each one was to retain his position in it. "Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God." Ah! "with God." Those words wrap up the secret of which we are in search, the secret by which we may do God service in our daily business, and convert the most secular occupation, so long as it be an innocent one, into fine gold of the altar. E. M. G.

This world is not yours; thank God it is not. Things are passing; our friends are dropping off from us; strength is giving way; our relish for earth is going; and the world no longer wears to our hearts the radiance that once it wore. We have the same sky above us and the same scenes around us, but the freshness that our hearts extracted from everything in boyhood, and the glory that seemed to rest once on earth and life, has faded away for ever. Sad and gloomy truths to the man who is going down to the grave with his work undone. Not sad to the Christian, but rousing, exciting, invigorating. If it be the eleventh hour, we have no time for folding of the hands; we will work the faster. Through the changefulness of life; through the solemn tolling of the bell of Time, which tells us that another, and another, and another are gone before us; through the noiseless rush of a world which is going down with gigantic footsteps into nothingness. Let not the Christian slack his hand from work; for he that doeth the will of God may defy hell itself to quench his immortality. F. W. R.

In the application of the principles of Christianity to the varying circumstances of life, innumerable difficulties had arisen, and the Corinthians upon these difficulties had put certain questions to the apostle Paul. We have here the apostle's answers to many of these questions. It is manifestly plain that there are many questions in which *right* and *wrong* are not variable, but indissoluble and fixed; while there are questions, on the other hand, where these terms are not fixed, but variable, fluctuating, altering, dependent upon circumstances. As, for instance, those in which the apostle teaches in the present chapter the several duties and advantages of marriage and celibacy. There may be circumstances in which it is the duty of a Christian man to be married; there are others in which it may be his duty to remain unmarried. These are questions of casuistry, which depend on the particular *case*; from which word the term "casuistry" is derived.

6. The real distinction is not between inspired and uninspired, but between a *decision* in matters of Christian duty and *advice* in matters of Christian prudence. It is abundantly evident that God can not give advice; he can only issue a command. When we come to advice, there is introduced the human element. In all such cases, therefore, as are dependent upon circumstances the apostle speaks as one whose judgment we have no right to find fault with or to cavil at, who lays down what is a matter of Christian prudence, and not a bounden and universal duty.

10, 11. The apostle here gives his inspired decision, first, concerning the sanctity of the marriage-bond between two Christians. His verdict is given in the tenth verse. He lays down the principle that the union is an indissoluble one. Marriage is of all earthly unions almost the only one permitting of no change but that of death. It is not a union merely between two creatures, it is a union between two spirits; and the intention of that bond is to perfect the nature of both, by supplementing their deficiencies with the force of contrast, giving to each sex

those excellences in which it is naturally deficient; to the one, strength of character and firmness of moral will, to the other, sympathy, meekness, tenderness. And just so solemn, and just so glorious as these ends are for which the union was contemplated and intended, just so terrible are the consequences if it be perverted and abused. For there is no relationship which has so much power to enable and to exalt. Very strong language does the apostle use in this chapter respecting it: "What knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt *save* thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt *save* thy wife?" The very power of *saving* belongs to this relationship. And, on the other hand, there is no earthly relationship which has so much power to wreck and ruin the soul.

12, 13. The second decision which the apostle makes is as to the sanctity of the marriage bond between a Christian and one who is a heathen. With his usual inspired wisdom he decides that the marriage bond is sacred still. Diversities of religious opinion can not sanction separation.

14. **They are holy.** It follows, if the children are holy in this sense of dedicated to God, and are capable of Christian relationship, then the marriage relation was not unhallowed, but sacred and indissoluble. The value of this argument in the present day depends on its relationship to baptism. The baptismal question is this: whether we are baptized because we *are* the children of God, or whether we are the children of God because we are *baptized*. The apostle's argument is full, decisive, and unanswerable. He does not say that these children were Christian, or clean, because they were *baptized*, but they were the children of God because they were the children of one Christian parent.

17-22. The third decision which the apostle gives, the third principle which he lays down, is but the development of the last. Christianity, he says, does not interfere with existing relationships. Christian men were to remain in those relationships in which they were when called, and in them to develop the inward spirituality of the Christian life. Then he applies this principle in two ways. With respect to the Church, he says: "Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised." Christianity required no change in these outward things, for it was not in *these* that the depth and reality of the kingdom of Christ consisted. Lastly, the apostle applies this principle to that civil relationship which, of all others, was the most difficult to harmonize with Christianity—slavery. "Art thou called," he says, "being a servant? Care not for it." This occurred in an age in which slavery had reached its worst and most fearful form, an age in which the emperors were accustomed, not unfrequently, to feed their fish with living slaves; when captives were led to fight in the amphitheatre with wild beasts or with each other, to glut the Roman appetite for blood upon a Roman holiday. And yet, fearful as it was, the apostle says, "Care not for it." F. W. R.

Verse 21 ought to stand, "Wast thou called being a slave? Care not for it: nay, even if thou canst be made free, use it [slavery] rather"; i. e., "abide in the calling wherein thou wast called." As the English version now stands, it bears a sense directly contrary to that which the apostle is enjoining; viz., the sense that the slave should *get liberated if he could*, which would be to *desert* the calling wherein he was called. Throughout this passage "*servant*" should be "slave"; otherwise the strong recommendation of the apostle is weakened. A.

24. Having found him, the business of life is to follow Christ. In following our respective callings we are to follow him. We may not perhaps be called *away* from our counters like Matthew, or our ships and nets like Peter and John, or our law-studies like Paul, but we *must* give up *ourselves*, in all these pursuits, to Christ, and must pursue them for Christ, and pursue *him* in them. A merchant who truly pursues his business for Christ, and maintains always a frame of heavenly-mindedness, may be so far forth a greater Christian than a minister of the gospel, who pursues *his* business for Christ; there being more to be overcome in the former case, greater difficulties in the way, and perhaps greater temptations. And certainly a man's crown of glory by and by will be determined, not by the position he filled, but the manner in which he filled it, whatever it might be; the sacrifices he

made, whatever they were. G. B. C.—To Paul, the work to which Paul was called of God, and for which Paul was prepared of God; and to you, your work, to which you have been equally called, and for which, doubt it not, you have been equally prepared. Whoever you are, and whatever you may have to do, be content with the task which is fallen to you; and while magnifying it, if God shall afford you the opportunity, be less solicitous to magnify than to fulfill it, that is, to leave no part of its duties which shall not be entered and penetrated by your action. *Monod.*

Abide with God. Certainly no man's calling is a calling away from God or godliness. Those are very ignorant who think themselves so closely tied up to their particular callings six days in the week that they must not intermeddle with any religious duties during those days. God, who is the Lord of time, has reserved some part of it to himself every day. Though the Jews were commanded to labor six days of the week, yet they were instructed also to offer up the *morning and evening sacrifice daily.* *Brooks.*

26-28. In the Church of Corinth there were two opposite parties holding views diametrically opposed to one another—one honoring the married and depreciating the unmarried life—the other attributing peculiar dignity and sanctity to celibacy, and looking down with contempt upon the married Christian state. Paul does not decide, as we might have been led to suppose he would, from his own peculiarity of disposition, upon one side only; but raises into relief the advantages and excellences of both. He attributes no intrinsic merit or dignity to either celibacy or marriage. The comparative advantages of these two states he decides with reference to two considerations: first of all, with respect to their comparative power in raising the character of the individual, and afterward with reference to the opportunities which each respectively gives for the service of God.

29-31. Observe the deep wisdom of this apostolic decision. In point of fact, it comes to this: Christianity consists of principles, but the application of those principles is left to every man's individual conscience. With respect to all the questions which had been brought before him, the apostle applies the same principle; the cases upon which he decided were many and various, but the large, broad principle of his decision remains the same in all. You may marry, and you have not sinned; you may remain unmarried, and you do not sin; if you are invited to a heathen feast, you may go, or you may abstain from going; you may remain a slave, or you may become free; in *these things* Christianity does not consist. But what it does demand is this: that whether married or unmarried, whether a slave

or free, in sorrow or in joy, you are to live in a spirit higher and loftier than that of the world.

The apostle gives us two motives for this Christian unworldliness. The first is this: "The time is short." He turns, as it were, entirely away from the subject, as if worn out and wearied by the comparatively trivial character of the questions, as if this balancing of one earthly condition or advantage with another were but a solemn trifling compared with eternal things, and speaks of the shortness of time. The thought of time is solemn and awful to all minds in proportion to their depth. Let but a man possess himself of this thought, that time is short, that eternity is long, and he has learned the first great secret of unworldliness. The second motive which the apostle gives us is the changing character of the external world. "The fashion of this world passeth away"; literally, "the *scenery* of this world," a dramatic expression drawn from the Grecian stage. The *principle* of Christian unworldliness is to "use this world as not abusing it." The spirit of the world says: "Time is short, therefore use it while you have it; take your fill of pleasure while you may." Christianity says: "*Use* this world"; but in opposition to the spirit of the world it adds: "Do not *abuse* it." Unworldliness is this: to hold things from God in the perpetual conviction that they will not last; to have the world, and not to let the world have us; to be the world's masters, and not the world's slaves. F. W. R.

Paul was in the midst of work, full of the interest and joy of living, holding the reins of many complicated labors in his hands, and he quietly said: "This is not going to last long. Very soon it will be over." There is simply a calm and satisfied recognition of a fact. It is the quiet statement of a great eternal necessity, at which the wise man must feel the same kind of serious joy as that with which he follows the movements of the stars, and looks to see day and night inevitably give place to one another. P. B.

30. Paul found the secret of the wisdom that at once allows these tender alternations of human feeling, and yet subjects them to a holier faith: "They that weep should be as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not." Because there is a life, possible to the soul through the Spirit, in which fear and mourning and suffering and death itself are swallowed up and lost, like bubbles on some calm, deep stream. F. D. H.

31. Use this world. Religion bars not the lawful delights that are taken in natural things, but teaches the moderate and regular use of them, which is far the sweeter; for things lawful in themselves are in their excess sinful, and so prove bitterness in the end; and if in some cases it requires the forsaking of lawful enjoyments for God and for his

glory, it is generous and more truly delightful to deny them for this reason than to enjoy them. Men have done much this way for the love of their country and by a principle of moral virtue; but to lose any delight or to suffer any hardship for that highest end, the glory of God, and by the strength of love to him, is far more excellent and truly pleasant. L.

Religion is the *art of being and of doing good*; to be an adept in it is to become just, truthful, sincere, self-denied, gentle, forbearing, pure in word and thought and deed. And the school for learning this art is not the closet but the world; the common world, with its cares and temptations, its rivalries and competitions, its hourly, ever-recurring trials of temper and character. Prayer, praise, and holy ordinances are necessary to religion—no man can be religious without them. But religion is mainly and chiefly the glorifying God amid the duties and trials of the world; the bearing us manfully, wisely, courageously, for the honor of Christ, our great leader in the conflict of life. Caird.

As not abusing it. All immoderate use of the world and its delights wrongs the soul in its spiritual condition, makes it sickly and feeble; benumbs the graces of the spirit, and fills the soul with sleepy vapors; makes it grow secure and heavy in spiritual exercises, and obstructs the way and motion of the Spirit of God in the soul; therefore, if you would be spiritual, healthful, and vigorous, and enjoy much of the consolations of heaven, be sparing and sober in those of the earth, and what you abate of the one shall be certainly made up in the other. L.—A pleasure-seeking soul never can be unselfish, magnanimous, serene, brave, pure. Such qualities come from sources far higher than the love of personal enjoyment. They come from the love of truth, from the practice of duty, from the habit of self-sacrifice, from seriousness, reflection, prayer. The love of pleasure can not give these things, but the love and pursuit of pleasure can take them away; will certainly much diminish their strength, and put them all in peril. It is therefore one of the Christian's daily lessons to teach himself effectually how to "use this world as not abusing it"; i. e., how to extract from present things all fair and honest enjoyment, without allowing selfishness and mere appetite so to touch and transmute them in the process that the enjoyment shall have some admixture of baser elements, and be no longer the thing which the divine beneficence provides for man's hunger and thirst. A. R.

In verses 36 and 37, "*his virgin*" should be "*his virgin daughter*." The case supposed is that of a father, doubtful whether he shall or shall not give his daughter in marriage. A.

Section 266.

1 CORINTHIANS viii. 1-13.

1 Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowl-
 2 edge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing,
 3 he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is
 4 known of him. As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in
 sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that *there is* none
 5 other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in
 6 earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) but to us *there is but* one God, the Father,
 of whom *are* all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *are* all things,
 7 and we by him. Howbeit *there is* not in every man that knowledge: for some with con-
 science of the idol unto this hour eat *it* as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience
 8 being weak is defiled. But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we
 9 the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this
 10 liberty of your's become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. For if any man see thee
 which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him
 11 which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; and through
 12 thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so
 13 against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore,
 if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I
 make my brother to offend.

RELIGION is the devotion of the soul to God. Then *everything* besides is not religion, but at most *a means to it*. That is true about all Christian ordinances. It is true about all acts and forms of Christian worship. These are not religion, but means to it. Their only value and their only test is, Do they help men to know and feel Christ and his truth? It is true about laws of life and many points of conventional morality. Remember the grand freedom with which the apostle dealt with the question about meats offered to idols. The same principle guided him when he said, "Meat commendeth us not to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, neither if we eat not are we the worse." The separation is broad and deep. On one side are all externals, rites, ceremonies, politics, church arrangements, forms of worship, modes of life, practices of morality, doctrines, and creeds—all which are externals to the soul; on the other is faith working through love, the inmost attitude and deepest emotion of the soul. The great heap is fuel; the flame is loving faith. The only worth of the fuel is to feed the flame; otherwise it is of no avail. We are joined to God by faith. Whatever strengthens that is precious as a help, but is worthless as a substitute. A. M.

1. *Knowledge puffeth up*. It does not say mistaken knowledge, or error, but knowledge in general, and, consequently, truth as well as error. *Love edifieth*. To edify is to construct, to build, to erect a solid monument or habitable abode; in two words, to produce a positive result. This is the true meaning of the word *edify*. Thus, then, in truth (if it is only *thought*) there is inflation, wind, nothing; in love is the positive and the real. Such is the doctrine of Paul. It is also evidently that of John, when he says that he who loves God knows him. A. V.—The understanding does not redeem the heart, for then were the learned the converted. Reason can not give man regeneration, though it can make him proud, and lead him into wrong paths. Reason is not the redeemer of men, but Jesus Christ the Crucified One. A. C.

4. The idol is nothing as a god, and has no share in the government of the world. The heathen had three classes of deities: the celestial gods, supposed to reside generally in the heavens; the terrestrial, called *demons* (see ch. 10: 20), and the infernal. M.

5, 6. There is much of the spirit of these Corinthians existing now. Men throw off what they call the trammels of education, false systems, and superstitions, and then call themselves free: they think it a grand thing to reverence nothing. The true freedom from superstition is free service to religion; the real emancipation from false gods is reverence for the true God. For high knowledge is to be freed from the fear of the many in order to adore and love the one. And not merely is this the only real knowledge, but no other knowledge "buildeth up" the soul. Separate from love, the more we know

the profounder the mystery of life becomes; the more dreary and horrible becomes existence. F. W. R.

6. I gratefully adore that incomprehensible existence, the Father in the Son and the Son in the Father. It is the life, the power, the spiritual grandeur, the one distinguishing fact and transcendent glory of the Christian faith. A God without unfathomable realities in the contents of his nature would be no God, just as a religion without mystery would be no religion. In the one case we should be orphans, as in the other we should be skeptics, faithless and forlorn. F. D. H.

But one Lord Jesus Christ. Some want a Christ who is not God; others a Christ who is not a sacrifice; a Christ without a cross, and without blood; a Christ who will teach but not expiate sin; a Christ whose life and death are an example of self-surrender to the utmost, but not an atonement; a Christ who is not a judge, nor a lawgiver, nor a priest, and only a prophet in the sense of teacher. Thus in the present day there are many Christs. It has been so all along; only the apostle John calls them not *Christs* but *Antichrists*—"many Antichrists." To us there is but one Christ. He who was announced as the woman's seed; he of whom Abel's sacrifice spoke; he of whom Enoch prophesied as the Avenger; he who was revealed to Abraham as his seed; he of whom Job spoke as the Redeemer; he of whom Moses spoke as the Prophet; of whose work the whole book of Leviticus is full; he of whom David sang as the sufferer yet the King; he of whom Isaiah and all the prophets sang; he who proclaimed himself as come to seek the lost; to whom John the Baptist pointed as the Lamb of God; who hung on the cross, and died in anguish, yet rose again and ascended on high; he is the one Christ whom we recognize. *Bonar.*

7. **Their conscience, being weak, is defiled.** There could be no harm in eating the flesh of an animal that had been offered to an idol or false god, for a false god is nothing. And yet if any man thought it wrong to eat such flesh, to him it *was* wrong; for in that act there would be a deliberate act of transgression—a deliberate preference of that which was mere enjoyment to that which was apparently, though it may be only apparently, sanctioned by the law of God. And so that act would carry with it all the disobedience, all the guilt, and all the misery which belongs to the doing of an act altogether wrong; or, as Paul expresses it, the conscience would become defiled.

Do what *seems* to you to be right: it is only so that you will at last learn by the grace of God to see clearly what *is* right. A man thinks within himself that it is God's law and God's will that he should act thus and thus. He is responsible for the opin-

ions he holds, and still more for the way in which he arrived at them—whether in a slothful and selfish or in an honest and truth-seeking manner; but being now his soul's convictions, you can give no other law than this: "You must obey your conscience."

12. It was to him a prerogative far more precious to assert the rights of Christian conscience than to magnify the privileges of Christian liberty. The scruple may be small and foolish, but it may be impossible to uproot the scruple without tearing up the feeling of the sanctity of conscience, and of reverence to the law of God associated with this scruple. And therefore the apostle counsels these men to abridge their Christian liberty, and not to eat of those things which had been sacrificed to idols, but to have compassion upon the scruples of their weaker brethren. And this for two reasons. It might cause exquisite pain to sensitive minds to see those things which appeared to them to be wrong done by Christian brethren; and it might even lead their brethren into sin. F. W. R.

13. The word *offend* signifies to cause any one to *fall from his faith*, to renounce his belief in Christ by any means whatever; and against every one that makes use either of violence or artifice to terrify or seduce the believer in Christ from his faith and obedience to his divine master, the severest woes and the heaviest punishments are denounced. The several modes of *making our brother to offend* are persecution, sophistry, ridicule, immoral examples, and immoral publications. *Immoral publications* have the same tendency with bad examples, both in propagating vice and promoting infidelity; but they are still more pernicious, because the sphere of their influence is more extensive. A bad example operates comparatively within a small circumference. But the contagion of a licentious publication, especially if it be as it too frequently is) in a popular and captivating shape, knows no bounds; it flies to the remotest corners of the earth; it penetrates the obscure and retired habitations of simplicity and innocence; it falls into the hands of all ages, ranks, and conditions, but it is peculiarly fatal to the unsuspecting and unguarded minds of the youth of both sexes, and to them its "breath is poison, and its touch is death." P.

How possible it is to mix together the vigor of a masculine and manly intellect with the tenderness and charity which is taught by the gospel of Christ! No man ever breathed so freely when on earth the air and atmosphere of heaven as the apostle Paul; no man ever soared so high above all prejudices, narrowness, littlenesses, scruples as he; and yet no man ever bound himself as Paul bound himself to the ignorance, the scruples, the prejudices of his brethren. So that what in other cases was infirmity, imbecility, and superstition, gathered round it in

his case the pure, high spirit of Christian charity and Christian delicacy. Match us if you can with one sentence so sublime, so noble, as this single, glorious sentence of his, in which he asserts the rights of Christian conscience above the claims of Christian liberty: "Wherefore if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." F. W. R.

Section 267.

1 CORINTHIANS ix. 1-27.

1 AM I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye
2 my work in the Lord? If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for
3 the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord. Mine answer to them that do examine me
4 is this, Have we not power to eat and to drink? Have we not power to lead about a sis-
5 ter, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? Or I
6 only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working? Who goeth a warfare any
7 time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or
8 who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man?
9 or saith not the law the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not
muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?
10 or saith he *it* altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, *this* is written: that he
that plougheth should plough in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be par-
11 taker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we
12 shall reap your carnal things? If others be partakers of *this* power over you, *are* not we
rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should
hinder the gospel of Christ.

13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of *the things* of the tem-
14 ple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord
15 ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. But I have used
none of these things: neither have I written these things, that it should be so done unto
me: for *it were* better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void.
16 For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me;
17 yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a
18 reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of *the gospel* is committed unto me. What
is my reward then? *Verily* that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of
19 Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel. For though I be free
20 from all *men*, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And
unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the
21 law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are
without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,)
22 that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might
23 gain the weak: I am made all things to all *men*, that I might by all means save some. And
24 this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with *you*. Know ye not
that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may
25 obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they
26 *do it* to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as
27 uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and
bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself
should be a castaway.

A good asceticism belongs to Christianity; the same which the apostle describes when he says, "I exercise myself to have a conscience void of offense." By which he means that he puts himself to it by the direct training of his will. In this good asceticism we take ourselves away purposely, when it seems to be needed, from society, from gain, and from animal indulgence, that we may assert, with more emphasis, the principle of self-subjection to God, or gird ourselves anew to the divine keeping. Christianity takes in this element. Filling us with great inspirations, it puts us to a stout self-discipline also, that we may get position for still greater and a still more victorious liberty. Over against this good asceticism,

there is also a false and a bad. It makes a virtue of self-torment, contrives artificial distresses to move on God's pity, or pacify his resentments, or purchase his favor. It macerates the body to make the soul weak and tender. It dispenses, in fact, with faith itself, and even thinks to square its account with God by a due contribution of bodily pains and privations. This bad asceticism we exclude, the good we accept. And in this we shall train ourselves, sometimes even naturally, by a fast. If we are mortified by the discovery that the body is getting uppermost, if our Sundays are choked, our great sentiments stifled, by indulgences of the body we meant not to allow, we shall turn upon it in this good asceticism, and say to it with a meaning, "I keep under my body." H. B.

PAUL had laid down the principle that it was good to avoid all injury to the scruples and conscientious superstitions of weaker brethren. When Christian liberty permits indulgence, very often Christian love says, Abstain. This was Paul's principle. But does the apostle practice what he preaches? The whole of the ninth chapter is an assertion of his own consistency. He shows that he submitted himself for love's sake to restriction, to which he was not in absolute duty bound. In verses 1-14 he proves his right to certain privileges, and there declares his salutary abstinence from many of them. F. W. R.—He enforces the previous counsels by a fearless reference to the self-abnegation which he had practiced during his own residence at Corinth. Let the members of the Church follow him, who had not sought his own profit, but followed Christ, "who pleased not himself." The whole passage beautifully combines the Christian exemption from petty scruples, with Christian regard and tender consideration for all brethren in the Lord. D. F.

1-6. The privileges to which he had a right were domestic solaces and ministerial maintenance. Have we not power to lead about a sister-wife, that is, a wife who was one of the Christian sisterhood? Have we not, Barnabas and I, power to forbear working? The right to the first of these privileges he proves by the position of the other apostles: Cephas and others were married men. His right to the second—that of maintenance—he proves by his apostleship: "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free?" that is, not compelled to labor.

7-15. The apostolic or ministerial right he bases on these arguments: 1. By a principle universally recognized in human practice. A king warring on behalf of a people wars at their charge—a planter of a vineyard expects to eat of the fruit—a shepherd is entitled to take of the milk of the flock. All who toil for the good of others derive an equivalent from them. Gratuitous devotion of life is nowhere considered *obligatory*. 2. By a principle implied in a scriptural particular enactment, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." Did God, in this, take special care for oxen? or was it a great general principle—human, not confined to a single isolated case, but capable of extension to the plowman and the sower? The ox was pro-

vided for, not because it was an ox, but because it was a laborer. 3. By the law of the Temple-service, the priests were supported by a special provision; animals sacrificed to God belonged partly to them. The whole Jewish ritual—the institution of Levites and priests—implied the principle that there are two kinds of labor—of hand and of brain; and that the toilers with the brain, though not producers, have a claim on the community. They are essential to its well-being, and are not mere drones. By all these arguments he proves his right. The apostle waived the right for himself; but he did this under special circumstances. He felt peculiarly bound, as specially and wonderfully saved. He had a peculiar gift qualifying him for celibacy. He lived in peculiar times, when it was necessary to have unmistakably *clean hands*, to be above all suspicion of mercenary motives. F. W. R.

10. Paul takes the plowman as a representative character. He would teach us that even in worldly matters God had so linked labor with its reward, that every man who wisely and diligently pursues his work may reasonably hope for an auspicious result. The spiritual no less than the natural husbandman has ample reason to go on with his work in hope. In doing the divine will, whether in a public or private station, whether on a broad or a humble scale, whether in the way of action, of suffering, or of silent waiting, we have ground to hope for a beneficial result. It is, under God, one of the great secrets of success, this "ploughing in hope." We may take heart from the triumphs of others, from the promises of Scripture, and from the rewards of eternity. Honestly endeavoring to make the most of life, let us "hope on, hope ever," and we will live to some purpose. H. A. B.

16, 17. **Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!** He was *bound* to do it. But he turned his necessity to glorious gain. That was his "reward," that is, made him rewardable—by forfeiting pay he got reward; and in doing *freely* what he must do, he became free. When "I must" is changed into "I will," you are free. And so in a profession you dislike, an alliance which is distasteful, a duty that must be done, acquiescence is Christian liberty. It is deliverance from the law. F. W. R.

20-23. Considering how uncompromising was Paul's maintenance of God's truth, what an infinite dislike of temporizing and dissimulation, what a strong love of plain speaking and plain dealing discovers itself in his character and conduct, it is surely very remarkable how he accommodates himself, not only to the general habits of thought, but even to the innocent prejudices of those whom he desired to win to Christ.

22. The one great aim which the Christian minister must ever have in view is nothing less than the salvation of souls—"That I might by all means save some." His object in pursuing any secular branch of knowledge may not legitimately be other than that to which at ordination he vows to devote his life. But how is all secular knowledge turned into the fine gold of the altar when the pursuit of it receives the consecration of an holy intention! In the day when the chief shepherd shall appear, what an honor shall we account it, an honor almost overwhelmingly great for flesh and blood, to have said a single word, or to have written a single line, whereby the Word of God shall have been vindicated against skeptical assaults, and the mind, which was tottering in its fundamental religious convictions, planted securely upon the rock of faith! E. M. G.

24-26. Among the localities of Corinth, our special attention is demanded by the *Poseidonium*, or sanctuary of Neptune, the scene of those *Isthmian games* from which Paul borrows some of the most striking imagery of his Epistles, and especially of those to the Corinthians. It stood at a short distance northeast of Corinth, on a platform above a ravine, along the edge of which ran the fortifications of the Isthmus, here at its narrowest width. To the south of the temple may still be seen the "*stadium*," in which, says the apostle, all the foot-racers run, but one receives the prize; and to the east those of the theatre, the probable scene of the pugilistic contest, the image of his own earnest fight with evil; and the coast is still fringed with the small green pine-trees that furnished for the victors that "corruptible crown," the symbol of the "incorruptible" promised to the Christian athlete who keeps his body under and brings it into subjection. S.

24. But one receiveth the prize. It is quite otherwise in the Christian race. There may be a great disparity among the candidates, but every one who endureth to the end shall be saved. He who is faithful over a little shall be as certainly rewarded as he who is faithful over much; each shall receive a crown as large as he can wear. They who run in other races have nothing but toil and labor till they obtain the prize; but in the Christian race the exercise itself carries part of the reward in its bosom: "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." R. W.

In verse 25, "*striveth for the mastery*" should be "contendeth in the games." In verse 27 the word rendered "*keep under*" signifies to bruise, to beat black and blue; "chastise" would be perhaps the nearest English. A.

The design of this passage is plainly to recommend the great Christian duty of being "temperate in all things," that is, of obtaining an entire command over our passions, or, as it is expressed a few verses after, of "keeping under our bodies, and bringing them into subjection." Poor as the reward was in those games, they who strove for the mastery in them were content to exercise the strictest discipline and abstemiousness, to renounce every pleasure and every indulgence that tended to weaken the body, and voluntarily to undergo many hardships in order to prepare themselves for the contest, and "to run so that they might obtain." Will not the Christian contentedly give up a few trivial indulgences and transient gratifications in order to secure a prize infinitely more glorious; a crown incorruptible, felicity commensurate to the existence and suited to the capacity of an immortal soul? P.

26. To fight wisely is not to fight at a venture, but with a definite aim. "So fight I," says the apostle, "not as one that beateth the air." In which words he is drawing an image from the boxing-match, and declares that in the spiritual combat he does not wear out his strength by vain flourishes of his hands in the air, but plants each blow certainly and with a telling aim. E. M. G.—The Christian conflict can not be imitated. The soul must not merely speculate about it, nor gaze upon others' record of it, but engage in it, each soul for itself. The closest watching of the Christian pilgrimage, the most accurate acquaintance with its theory, will be of no avail without this. G. B. C.

27. The fighting here alluded to is that pugilistic encounter with the cestus, or boxing-glove, which formed one of the Greek games held in honor of the god Neptune at the Isthmus of Corinth, and which, therefore, the apostle's Corinthian converts had frequently witnessed. His body he regards as his antagonist in a pugilistic encounter, and accordingly employs a peculiar word, which, literally translated, signifies, "But I cover my body with bruises." E. M. G.—Paul describes himself as one who by unremitting effort makes his body, the organ of sanctification intrusted to him, serviceable to himself as the servant of Christ. This conflict with the body of sin, inasmuch as the whole outward life of man manifests itself in the body, designates in general the entire conflict still to be waged by the spiritual against the fleshly man, by the new man against the old; and this in the case even of a Paul. N.—Perseverance is not only the duty but the privilege of all who set themselves in good earnest to run for

heaven; and though the law of God obligeth them, and the new nature habitually inclines them, "to keep under the body, and to bring it into subjection," yet they have far better security than any efforts of their own. Omnipotence is their guardian, and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. R. W.

A castaway. The meaning is, Lest after having preached to others the doctrine of self-abridgment of indulgences in things lawful, I myself should fail when put to the test; literally,

should be that which will not stand proof. The advice to abstain from things lawful, he gave them in the eighth chapter; then, in the ninth, he shows that he had only done what he advised; he had a right to a wife, and a right to be supported by pay, but he had abridged himself of both these rights (though every principle of the Old Testament established his right), simply in order to be beyond suspicion and gain the more to Christ. Read the two chapters (8 and 9) as one argument, and the whole will become intelligible. F. W. R.

Section 268.

1 CORINTHIANS X. 1-22.

1 MOREOVER, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers
2 were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in
3 the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same
4 spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was
5 Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in
6 the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after
7 evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as *were* some of them; as it is
8 written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit
9 fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.
10 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.
11 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.
12 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition,
13 upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he
14 standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common
15 to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able;
16 but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.
17 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men; judge ye
18 what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of
19 Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For
20 we *being* many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.
21 Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the
22 altar? What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to
23 idols is any thing? But *I say*, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to
24 devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye
25 cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the
26 Lord's table, and of the table of devils. Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we
stronger than he?

Most Christians have to learn by the painful experience of repeatedly falling into sin that our strength is absolutely nothing. But plainly we ought to learn it by habitually distrusting ourselves, by habitually guarding against everything like boasting, above all, by a habit of walking through the world with a consciousness that God is looking on us and willing to lead us. And if we would ask what are the tokens of our having learned the lesson, the answer is, that besides the quiet trust in God the chief token of our having learned to lean on God and not on ourselves is the avoidance of all unnecessary temptation. The man who goes into temptation in the way of duty may well feel certain that God will help him; for he may well feel that God sent him, and that he who sent will also protect. But any one who goes into temptation without any need can not feel this. He must rely, if he relies on anything, on his own strength. And so he proves that he has not yet learned the truth—that his own strength is a prop rotten at the foot and incapable of upholding him in any real trial. The humble Christian will so distrust himself that his life is constantly checked by the same thought which he expresses in the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation." He will avoid what he

has found dangerous or hurtful. For he knows that his enemy is one that he can not master, and he will therefore go nowhere unless Christ will go with him. F. T.—Thrice blessed the faithful love of Christ our Saviour, who constantly unveils himself to us, and, as with outstretched finger, points us to the abyss into which we are in danger of rushing whenever we trust more in our own hearts than on his unerring word. Are we reckless? He casts us down from our imagined heights; but when Satan would sift us and fling us forth as chaff, he thrusts aside the hand of the destroyer, and grasps compassionately ours and saves us ere we are awake. Assuredly, not our fidelity to Christ, but his own loyalty, inflexible even toward weak and faithless disciples, is the one ground of our hope. Let us trust henceforward upon nothing save his love alone. *Van O.*

1. The danger of the Corinthian Church lay in their false security. They were tempted to think that all things were safe to do because all things were lawful. They were ready to rest satisfied with the knowledge that they were God's people and God's Church. Now the apostle shakes this sense of their safety by reminding them that the ancient Church of Israel fell although it had the same privileges therefore he infers that spiritual privileges are not perfect security.

2. The passing through the Red Sea was the Israelites' profession of discipleship to Moses. Then the die was cast, and thenceforward there was no return for them. One solemn step had severed them for ever from Egypt; and the cloud-guidance which then began kept the memory of this act before them by a constant witness in all their journeyings. So far, then, this is equivalent to baptism, which is discipleship: a sacrament or oath of obedience, the force of which is kept up and recalled by an outward sign. F. W. R.

3. The same spiritual meat. The "fathers" from the beginning had but one table, one feast, one bread. Sometimes it was typified by the flesh of the sacrifice; sometimes by the shew-bread; sometimes by the manna. But all these pointed to the one heavenly bread—Jesus, the Christ of God; to his broken body; to his flesh, which is meat indeed; to his whole person as the very and true bread of God, on which the Church has been feeding from the beginning, and will feed to the end. *Bonar.*

4. **Spiritual Rock.** Paul calls this mysterious fountain a spiritual rock, and the water which flowed from it spiritual water; and he calls them so, because they were designed to have a spiritual meaning, and to represent spiritual things—the one standing as an emblem of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the other shadowing forth those precious blessings of which he is the author. C. B.—**That followed them.** The rock did not literally follow them, as the rabbins have with dullness dreamed; but, go where they would, the wondrous waters from the rock flowed by their path and camp. Figuratively, therefore, it followed; the life of it streamed after them; they were never without its life-giving influence. As Christ said of the bread,

"This is my body," so Paul declares, "That Rock was Christ"; not that the bread was literally transformed into his body, or that the rock was changed into Christ; nor, again, merely that bread represented the body of Christ, or that the rock represented Christ, but this—that which is wondrous in the bread and rock, the life-giving power in both, is Christ. The symbol as a material is nothing; the spirit in it—Christ—is everything.

6-10. Four special sins of the Israelites are mentioned by Paul as corresponding to the circumstances in which he found the Corinthian Church: idolatry, impurity, doubt, and discontent. "Is God among us, or not?" said the people in the wilderness, tempting Jehovah. Think you, we shall be less punished than they, if we similarly tempt our God? This chapter gives the answer. Here, then, we meet a very solemn truth: the sacrifice of Christ does not alter God's will; it does not make sin a trifle; it does not make it safer to commit offenses. It does not abrogate but declares God's law. And these Corinthians were boasting of their privileges, vaunting their liberties, talking of rights instead of doing duties, speaking of freedom, brotherhood, and reason, and all the time the same God who judged the people in the wilderness was ruling them by the same unalterable laws. F. W. R.

11. **For our admonition.** Christianity is the goal and end of all earlier revelations, and no other revelation follows upon it. Herein is the right given to the Christian to consider himself as the goal to which revelation, in the whole previous course of its development, points and ministers. N.

12. Wherefore, taught by their examples, let him that thinks himself safe, by being in the Church and partaking of the Christian sacraments, take heed lest he fall into sin, and so destruction from God overtake him. *Locke.*—He who takes no heed at any time to strengthen his nature has no right to plead its weakness; he who is the slave of all common temptations has no right to say that this one temptation overcame him because of its exceeding greatness. Christ knows that we are weak, and he tells us what we are to do to become strong. If we will not obey him, and will not practice his appointed remedies, then, if we remain weak, it is our own fault; it is not only the sin that dwelleth in us which

doeth the evil thing, but we ourselves are habitually consenting, and make sin's work altogether our own. T. A.

A child may play with fire, and that over a magazine of powder; but it is because he is a child. A man may play with temptations, do what he likes, rush with his powder-like nature into the flame; but it is because he is a childish man. W. I. B.—As long as there is fuel in the heart for a temptation, we can not be secure. He that has gunpowder about him had need keep far enough off from sparks; he that is either tender of his credit abroad or comfort at home had need shun the very shadow of sin; and he that would neither wound conscience nor credit, God nor the gospel, had need hate the garments spotted with the flesh. Brooks.—We must be always wakeful and on the lookout, and never deem ourselves secure; for there is no set time for the onset of him who is at war with us and is ready to attack us. Let us therefore be always thoughtful, always vigilant and prayerful; that so we may be able to remain unconquered, and, having escaped the devices framed by the enemy, be counted worthy of the loving-kindness coming from God, through the grace and compassions of his only-begotten Son. Chrys.

13. When Paul is endeavoring to strengthen the Corinthians against the trials they were exposed to, he sets out with assuring them "that no temptation had taken them but such as *was common to man*," as well knowing that, till he had convinced them of this, all other arguments would be ineffectual. P.—The sufferings and temptations of the godly are lightened by the consideration of this as their common lot, their highway, and not new in the person of any. If we trace the lives of the most eminent saints, shall we not find every notable step that is recorded marked with a new cross; one trouble following on another, as the waves do, in an incessant succession? L.

God will make a way to escape. This at least is certain, that whatever may be the corruption of our nature, whatever the power of pain to stagger our virtue or of pleasure to seduce it, it is impossible we can be so formed or so situated by a just and good God as to be under an absolute necessity of transgressing those laws which he has laid down for the regulation of our conduct. We may rest assured that he will give us powers, either natural or supernatural, to balance our defects. In the common trials of our virtue, the common efforts of human nature and the common influences of the Holy Spirit will be able to support us; "if any temptation take us *more* than is common to man," God will send us, provided we desire and endeavor to deserve it, more than common assistance; for his strength is made perfect in our weakness, and

we may in that sense most truly say with the apostle, "that when we are weak, then in reality are we strong." P.—God will either keep his saints from temptations by his preventing mercy, or in temptations by his supporting mercy, or find a way for their escape by his delivering mercy. Mason.

We must not be disappointed, cast down, or disheartened, because we find our self-improvement very much slower than we expect or like. We must not complain if a temptation, which we have had much trouble with, becomes stronger instead of weaker; if we fall after we have begun to think ourselves tolerably safe; if we try all manner of helps and aids and find them not enough. We must not complain if we find that earnest and warm prayers are followed in a few hours by feelings so cold that we can hardly keep in the strait path for want of impulse to do so; if very determined resolutions gradually wear out until, when the moment comes for acting on them, we even forget that we made them. Such results we shall surely find, for our enemy can take many shapes and still retain his power, and all our best endeavors will never repel him. God only can really give the victory; and God assuredly will. But God will not give it in the precise way that we ask for it. And hence it is that, beyond all other graces, the grace of perseverance is the one to which victory is promised; that perseverance which enables us, in spite of disappointment in ourselves, and of seeing no fruit of all our endeavors, and of coldness in the heart, and of poorness in the devotions, still to continue in the path which he has commanded; that perseverance shall one day be acknowledged as a proof of our being his children. F. T.

15. **Judge ye.** Reason should have free course through the whole empire of religion—length, breadth, depth, height; it should not be hindered, but expedited; we should wish to give it wings; we should wish it to be as swift and as free in its movements as the heart ought to be in loving God, and the feet in running the way of his commandments. It is not the exercise of reason which is to be guarded against, but those perversions of reason which spring from pride, the spirit of sect, preconceived opinions, and depraved inclinations and habits. T. H. S.

16. **Which we bless.** Literally, for which we speak good words of praise and thanks, as is plain from chapter 11 : 24, where this *blessing* is interpreted by the *giving of thanks*. The phrase here denotes the whole communicants joining together in blessing God over the cup, for his mercy in redeeming the world, through the blood of Christ. For both Luke and Paul, in their account of the institution, express this part of the action by *having given thanks*. M.

The Communion of the body and blood

of Christ. The great company of faithful Christians have *fellowship, a joint and common interest*, in the *absent* body and blood of Christ, as actually offered in sacrifice for their sins upon the cross. With the divine revenue of holy comfort, hope, and strength, which infallibly reaches them from their unseen treasury of blessings, they are sweetly satisfied. The covenant, by which they hold and enjoy their common interest in it, is in their actual possession. The *great seal* of that covenant, in the consecrated symbols of the Lord's Supper, is often exhibited to their eyes. And from this visible evidence, this sensible assurance that their title is good, that "he is faithful who hath promised," their faith gathers its richest income of present and of satisfying benefits. Thus it is that "the cup of blessing which we bless, and the bread which we break, are to them the *communion* of the very body and blood of Christ"; of the very sacrifice which was offered for their sins on the cross. J. S. S.—The word communion is properly "partnership"—"partnership in the blood of Christ"; all that the blood contains for the soul becoming ours—the whole blood becoming the property of each believer. All its blessings, the paid ransom, the canceled penalty, the forgiveness, the cleansing, the life, the joy, all becoming ours; we being partakers of Christ, partakers of his blood, partakers of his death and life. He then that takes that cup is committed to all that it symbolizes; he is counted as one with it; the possessor of its contents; the partaker of its fullness. He is to reckon himself one with Jesus in his death; and God reckons him such. Nothing less. He has the whole, or he has nothing!

17. Oneness with Christ and oneness with each other are embodied in these symbols. We are many, yet one; many members, yet one body and one head. All that he has is ours. His life, our life; his light, our light; his fullness, our fullness; his strength, our strength; his righteousness, our righteousness; his crown, our crown; his glory, our glory; his inheritance, our inheritance; for

we are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

18-20. It is only in passing, and as an illustration of his argument on another subject, that the apostle introduces the Lord's Supper here. The oneness of the worshiper, even in a heathen temple, with the whole religion or system of worship, and with the false god into whose temple he comes—this is his theme. Strange that, in connection with a pagan altar and a temple of devils, he should be led to give us one of the most striking of his statements regarding the supper. He takes the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils, places them side by side, and shows us the one from the other. Bonar.—He had already counseled them to abstain from partaking of heathen sacrifices for the sake of love, lest their example might lead their weaker brethren to sin by violating their conscience; now he takes higher ground, and this is his argument. Every sacrificial feast in all religions is a kind of worship, in the same way as all who partook of Christian sacrifices were Christians, and all who took part in Jewish were Jews; so all who sat at meat in idolatrous feasts formed one society with idolatrous worshipers. F. W. R.

21. "Ye can not be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils." That is, "fellowship with *Christ* and fellowship with *devils*, in the sacred rites performed to each, are utterly incompatible things; and partaking, not *literally of the tables themselves*, but of what is present on the tables of *both*, is an impious profanation of Christ's ordinance." J. S. S.

22. The heathen would reckon any one that ate of their sacrifice as a fellow-worshiper with them of a demon; hence this participation by Corinthian Christians would be taken as a sanction of heathenism. Thus these religious banquets being not only an injury to the Church, but also to the heathen, the apostle, indignant at this wrong, breaks out into forcible language, "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than He?" F. W. R.

Section 269.

1 CORINTHIANS x. 23-33; xi. 1-16.

23 ALL things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for
24 me, but all things edify not. Let no man seek his own, but every man another's *wealth*.
25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, *that* eat, asking no question for conscience sake: for
26 the earth *is* the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. If any of them that believe not bid you *to*
27 a *feast*, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for
28 conscience sake. But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat
not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth *is* the Lord's, and the
29 fulness thereof: conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty

80 judged of another *man's* conscience? For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken
 31 of for that for which I give thanks? Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye
 32 do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles,
 33 nor to the church of God: even as I please all *men* in all *things*, not seeking mine own profit,
 but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved.

1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye
 2 remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered *them* to you. But I
 3 would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman
 4 *is* the man; and the head of Christ *is* God. Every man praying or prophesying, having *his*
 5 head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with
her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.
 6 For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman
 7 to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover *his* head,
 forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.
 8 For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man
 9 created for the woman; but the woman for the man. For this cause ought the woman to
 10 have power on *her* head because of the angels. Nevertheless neither is the man without
 11 the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman *is* of the
 12 man, even so *is* the man also by the woman; but all things of God. Judge in yourselves:
 13 is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach
 14 you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long
 15 hair, it is a glory to her: for *her* hair is given her for a covering. But if any man seem to
 16 be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

ONE of the saddest things about the Christian life is, that it seems to ourselves to be split up into two separate parts, which we find it very hard, if not altogether impossible, to unite. We feel as if we lived in two different worlds. We have our moments of devotion and our hours of utter worldliness. We begin, for instance, the day with thankful acknowledgment to God for his mercies; and, howsoever sincere that may be, we know too well that it is going to be followed by a day of unthankful reception of them. We kneel down in the morning and ask God to guide us, and then we go out into the world and take guidance of vanity and selfishness. In a word, on the clear mountain-top we stand in the light of God's face, and then we come down into the plain, and the earthly vapors shut out the blue. I suppose the best of us feel this apparently inevitable severing of our lives into two unlike portions. Is that distinction between sacred and profane a valid one? is there any reason why a man's prayers should be more devout than his business? is there any need why the sanctity of life should be curdled together, as it were, into Sundays and acts of special worship, and not be diffused through the whole of life? Are we living on one principle from Sunday morning to Saturday night; or are we having one principle for Sunday and another principle for Monday, one principle for the ordinary tenor of our uneventful days and another principle for the crises and the solemn times? Do you and I keep our religion as princes do their crown jewels, only wearing them on festive occasions, and have we another dress for week-days and working days? Do we keep our love of Christ in our pews; or do we take it out into the street and the marketplace with us, and work it out day by day, hour by hour, in patient endurance, in loyal love, in simple faith, finding that there is nothing little if Christ's name be crossed over it, and nothing too great if it be approached in his strength? A. M.

It is necessary for the understanding of this Epistle that we should remember that it is an answer to a letter received from the Corinthian Church, and therefore constantly alludes to topics in that letter.

23, 24. "(But some one will say again), 'All things are lawful for me.' Nay, but not all things are good; though all things are lawful, not all things build up the Church. Let no man seek his own, but every man his neighbor's good." C.

25-28. True Christian freedom shows itself in self-restraint and tender forbearance toward the weak. So Paul, in full agreement with the spirit of the synod at Jerusalem, earnestly dissuaded the Co-

rinthian Gentile Christians from eating meat offered to idols, lest they should offend the conscience of a weak brother, for whom likewise Christ died; while yet he at the same time asserts, on the other hand, that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof," and that every kind of food is, in itself, good, if it be eaten with thanksgiving. P. S.

25. "Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, eat, asking no questions for conscience sake." You need not be troubled by the fact that the articles sold in the market have come from a temple, since their nature as food is unchanged; and, therefore, whether you wish to buy them for yourselves, or are invited

to partake of them in the house of a heathen neighbor, you are not bound to inquire from whence they came. In this matter they were free to act as they pleased, and yet their liberty was not without limits, since in its exercise they must ever be regulated by Christian love. Accordingly Paul repeats to them what he had said to the Romans: "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth; let every man please his neighbor for his good." "Take heed that this liberty of yours does not become a stumbling-block to the weak." From these authoritative expositions of the law of expediency, it would appear: 1. That it applies and can apply only to things which are essentially *indifferent*. They must be lawful, else they never can be simply inexpedient, because, if there exists in them necessarily an element of evil, they belong to the class of things which are unlawful everywhere and always, to all persons and at all times. 2. That it applies only to *special cases*, and comes into operation only under special circumstances. Abstinence from the meats in question was not a *rule* binding all Christians at all times, on the ground that their use *tended* to mislead weak consciences. It became obligatory only when it was morally certain that the use of them would cause some one weak brother to stumble. So Paul understood it, and on this principle he acted. 3. That it limits the liberty of Christians in lawful things to this extent only, viz.: that they do not put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in the way of others who are weaker or less enlightened than themselves. When our actions terminate upon ourselves, the law which governs them is of a higher and more imperative nature than that of simple expediency, because, in such cases, if there is a reason for our abstaining from certain courses, or from the use of certain things, we shall find, if we examine it closely, that this reason is one not of a temporary but permanent kind. The things themselves may be, indeed, *per se* lawful, but they are not to us. *Forayth.*

27. When he says, "and ye be disposed to go," he well understands that there are some who will not be disposed. Kept back by no ascetic scruples or legal restrictions binding their consciences, they will be kept back by their very fullness and freedom and the uplifting sense of Christ which ennobles their life. They are free in a sense to do it, but they are also more free, too free to have any disposition that way. They are able to come down now and then it may be, and touch the plane of nature in ways of playfulness; but it will not be to launch themselves on tides of high excitement, and be floated clean away, but only to freshen a little the natural zest of things, and keep off the moroseness of a too rigid and total separation from the socialities and playtimes of the world. H. B.

29-31. "Now when I say *conscience* I do not mean *thine own* conscience, for thou knowest that the eating of such a dish is not a worshipping of the idol; but the *conscience of the other*, who views it in that light. Perhaps thou wilt reply, *But why is my liberty ruled by another's conscience?* If by the free gift of God, to whom the earth belongs, I be allowed to partake of all kinds of food, why am I spoken of as an evil-doer for eating that meat for which I give thanks to God? In answer I say, For this very reason, that ye are allowed to partake of all kinds of food, *whether ye eat, or drink, or whatever ye do*, ye are bound to do all to the glory of God, by doing it agreeably to his will." M.

By all who believe that there is any such thing as a moral authority for human life, that duty is a word with a meaning, and that responsibility is a fact, it will be granted that each of these three propositions is applicable to our intercourse and connections with each other: 1. That the moral significance of life is nowhere more vitally manifest than in what we do or fail to do for the characters of our neighbors. 2. That a large part of what is included in the term duty is what we owe to other men's welfare, or their goodness, which is the same thing. 3. That society presents a scene of personal responsibility, peculiar to itself, where the materials of judgment are always accumulating. F. D. H.

31. **Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.** For indeed it is our privilege to be with him ever, and to have him ever with us; whether we eat or drink, or whatever thing, grave or light, we may be engaged in. There is nothing strange, nothing profane, nothing presumptuous in praying that Christ may be with us in all those common works which our daily life here brings with it. T. A.—The reception of food is a *common* action—homely, trivial, having nothing dignified or sublime about it. The implication of the text, then, is that in our common and trivial actions there is room and scope for glorifying Almighty God. In one word, we may either go through common life in a common way, tying up our religion to public worship on Sundays and private prayer on week-days, or we may go through common life with an uncommon motive—the thought of God, and the desire of pleasing and serving him in all things. E. M. G.—As in their work, so in their refreshments and rest, Christians may pursue all for him, *whether they eat or drink*, doing all for this reason, because it is his will; and for this end, that he may have *glory*; bending the use of all their strength and all his mercies that way; setting this mark on all their designs and ways, *this for the glory of my God, and this further for his glory*. This is the art of keeping the heart spiritual in all affairs, yea, of spiritualizing the affairs themselves in their use that in them-

selves are earthly. This is the *elixir* that turns lower metal into gold, the mean actions of this life, in a Christian's hands, into obedience and holy offerings unto God. L.—The work of our sanctification consists simply in receiving, from one moment to another, all the troubles and duties of our state in life as veils under which God hides himself and gives himself to us. Every moment brings some duty to be faithfully performed, and this is enough for our perfection. The moment which brings a duty to be performed, or a trouble to be borne, brings also a message declaring to us the will of God. The secret of belonging wholly to God is simply this : to serve him in all that comes to you, in all that you have to do. *An.*

32. Give offence neither to the Jews, nor, etc. To the unbelieving Jews, by giving them occasion to think that Christians are permitted to worship heathen idols ; to the unbelieving Gentiles, by giving them occasion to think that you allow their idolatry by partaking of their sacrifices ; to weak members of the Church of God, by drawing them through your example to eat of things offered to other idols, of the lawfulness whereof they are not fully satisfied. *Locke.*

33. Good pastors ought to desire in such sort to please men as that they may make the affection felt for them a kind of path along which they may lead their hearers' hearts to love the Creator. This is well expressed by Paul, "Even as I please all men in all things"; yet again he says, "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." So Paul pleases men and does not please them ; because in the very fact of his pleasing them he desires, not that he himself should please them, but that the truth should please them by his means. *Gregory the Great.*

In this chapter (11) we meet two extravagant abuses of Christian truth : first, concerning the conduct and deportment of Christian women (1-16), and next, respecting the administration of the Lord's Supper. F. W. R.

2. It is customary with Paul to recognize whatever is praiseworthy in the church to which he is writing. In this appears his wisdom as a spiritual guide. The confidence of men is far more easily won and a hearing secured for whatever one has to say in the way of admonition and rebuke, if it appears that he nowise overlooks or undervalues what is good in them, that he does not willingly find fault, but is ready to acknowledge every real excellence with cordial approbation. Good and bad, moreover, stand frequently in close connection with each other. The good lies at the foundation, but the evil mingles its disturbing influence with the good, and hence it is through the latter that we can best reach and remedy the former. It is in the clear per-

ception of this relation, and in the skillful use of it for the correction of error, that Paul manifests his wisdom. Of this a striking example is furnished in this Epistle. N.

3. The doctrine which acts as pedestal to the column is that of Christ's union as head with the believer. "The head of every man is Christ." Never was this precious doctrine more nobly unfolded or more urgently pressed than in the writings of Paul, himself. The acts of the Redeemer are for the redeemed. He took their nature, assumed their liabilities, answered for their delinquency, procured their pardon, accomplished their justification, and abides in connection with them for all the manifold ends of their salvation. For them he was born, for them he lived, for them he died, for them he rose, for them he ascended, for them he intercedes and reigns. He is made to each of them Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption. The funded treasury of his merits, his wisdom and his might, are theirs. J. W. A.

3-15. Paul had taught them that in Christ Jesus all national, social, sexual distinctions disappeared : "In him is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female." Certain Christian women laid eager hands on this principle, and so mishandled it as to occasion a public scandal. Paul had taught the spiritual equality of man and woman ; he had also taught the social subordination of the woman to the man. But these eager converts had not minds large enough to hold and reconcile both these great principles : they seized impetuously on that which fell in with their wishes and let the other go. And in our day there are men as well as women who find it difficult to reconcile Paul's two principles, who are disposed to object, "If in spiritual nature, relation, responsibility, women are on an equality with men, how can they be subordinate to them?" To any such objectors it might be enough to reply : "Christ is the coequal Son of the Father, the 'fellow' of the Lord of Hosts ; yet, in the complex, mysterious relations of the Blessed Trinity, Christ is the subordinate and dependent Son"; for here is an admitted case in which equality of nature and subordinate position coexist. *Coz.*—It is the doctrine of Paul that, as Christ is dependent on God, and man is dependent on Christ, so is woman dependent on man. Paul perceived that the law of Christian equality was quite consistent with the vast system of subordination running through the universe : "But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ ; and the head of the woman is the man ; and the head of Christ is God"; which two things we see he distinctly unites in verses 11 and 12 when he says, "Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman ; but all things of God." He asserts subordination in one sense, and denies it in another ; and therefore bids the foolish question of "Which is the greater?" to cease for ever ; for he distinguishes between inferiority and subordination, that each sex exists in a certain order, not one as greater than the other, but both great and right in being what God intended them to be. F. W. R.

Woman proves her equality with man, not by rebelling against her subordinate position in the social order, but by cheerfully accepting it as God's ordinance for her, and by discharging its duties with an ability equal or superior to that shown by her husband in his different sphere. The Corinthian women, or some of them, did not see that. They thought to assert the equality of the sexes by thrusting themselves into the habits and duties of the masculine sex to the neglect of their own, by praying and prophesying in church instead of ruling their households. As a sign of their enfranchisement from the degrading bonds of heathenism, as a proof that they were the equals of men, they appeared in public unveiled, and so violated the decorum of their sex as then understood; in short, they became bad as women that they might prove themselves as good as men. The honor of the Christian community was at stake. Only women convicted of adultery had their hair shorn; only women of notoriously abandoned life dispensed with a veil. The Greek women, the honorable women, invariably put on a veil, or drew their *peplum* or shawl over head and face when they left their homes. The heathen were quick to misconceive any departure from custom, any innovation on rule on the part of the Church. And had the Christian women gone unveiled, when the absence of the veil was the open stamp of harlotry, we can easily conceive what their neighbors would have thought of them, what a fatal obstacle would have been thrown in the path of the infant Church. It was no mere question of maxims and rules, therefore, with which Paul had to deal; it was a question of principle—of principles vital and profound. And hence it is that he argues so gravely and weightily on what might seem a matter of small moment. Hence he appeals to nature, to Scripture, to Christian doctrine, for arguments on points which seem so trivial as whether a man should or should not have his hair cut, whether a woman should or should not wear a veil. Take the simplest of his arguments—his appeal to nature. Man is by nature unveiled, has short hair; woman is veiled with her long hair. The divine intention is thus revealed. In handling and attiring the body we are to take the suggestions of nature as ordinances of God; we are to carry out the divine intentions indicated by our physical structure: man is to go unveiled; woman is to use or to imitate the natural veil which God has given her. The Greeks and Romans

did thus interpret and obey the voice of nature. And therefore the apostle might well appeal to what "nature taught." His Scriptural appeal is to the verses in Genesis which describe the creation of man and woman, and the relation in which they were appointed to stand (vs. 7-9). Man, said Moses, was made "in the image of God"; therefore, adds Paul, man is a "glory" of God. Hence he ought not to veil the head which bears an impress so divine, the face which reflects so excellent a glory. But "the woman is the glory of the man"; she was taken out of his side—not from the rude clay, but from clay already attempted by human life and heat; not from any remote or uncomely member of man's body, but from his very heart, from the very seat of life. Therefore she is his "glory"; she represents what is finest in him and most exquisite, what is highest and best. Nevertheless, the apostle insists (v. 8) she was taken from man, not man from woman; she was (v. 9) created for man, not he for her. And this derived origin indicates her dependent condition. Although she is his glory, because she is his glory she is to defer and minister to him from whom she sprang, just as the highest spirits are those who serve most and best. *Cox.*

5. This passage does not necessarily sanction women speaking in public, even though professing miraculous gifts; he simply records what took place at Corinth, without expressing an opinion upon it, reserving the censure of it till chapter 14 : 34, 35. *Fausset.*

10. To the Hebrews, unshorn hair was the sign of strength or power. And the unshorn hair of the woman is "the power," or the symbol of the power, which her service requires. This I take to be the apostle's thought. And does not nature itself confirm his thought? Is not a woman's hair a strength to her as well as a glory? *Cox.*—"Power" would be more intelligently expressed "the token of power," i. e., the covering, implying that she is under subjection, and thus preserving comeliness in the sight of the holy angels who are present in the Christian assemblies. A.

16. "But if any one thinks to be contentious in defense of such a custom, let him know that it is disallowed by me, and by all the churches of God." C.—In closing his argument, besides asserting his own decision, he appeals to the universal custom prevalent among the churches; confirming all by apostolic authority and established order. B.

Section 270.

1 CORINTHIANS xi. 17-34.

17 Now in this that I declare *unto you* I praise *you* not, that ye come together not for the
18 better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear
19 that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies
20 among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. When ye
21 come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating
every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.
22 What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and
shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise
you not.

23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord
24 Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given

thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do
 25 in remembrance of me. After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped,
 saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in
 26 remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the
 27 Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup
 28 of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man
 29 examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that
 eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning
 30 the Lord's body. For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.
 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are
 32 chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Wherefore, my
 33 brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger,
 34 let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I
 set in order when I come.

THE sacrament of the Lord's Supper, when the Church is kept pure by a faithful preaching of Christ crucified—the full and uncorrupt gospel—and when her ministrations are blessed with the influences of the overshadowing and life-giving Spirit, is an ordinance in which the Christian comes into closest communion with his Saviour, and feels his *love* for him kindling into its intensest glow; in which, too, he comes into holiest communion with his *fellow*-Christians of all ages and nations, and feels himself most inseparably knit to them in “the communion of saints,” in the *union* of the great mystical body of Christ; and in which he realizes a peculiar strengthening and refreshing of his soul in all her divine and heavenly graces of faith and courage, humility and purity, deadness to the world, and desires after heaven. Through the divinely ordained symbol of the sacrifice on the cross, faith feeds on all the benefits of Christ's passion, enters into the depths of that union which subsists between each member of the body and its head, and draws a happy immortality from the Fountain of Life. J. S. S.

The Lord's Supper is a scene of solemn and affecting remembrance, and a source of most impressive thought and feeling. It is the place of renewed vows, renewed mercies, renewed and renewing grace, compassion and forgiving love on Christ's part, and renewed penitence and faith on ours. It is a landing-place of rest, refreshment, survey, and setting forth again upon the Christian journey. It is an ordinance for gratitude and love enkindled and increased, and strength administered, as well as sins deplored. It is a mount of vision, where the glass is held to the eye of faith, and we may take a view of our fair and bright inheritance in heaven. G. B. C.

18. Divisions. Whatever alienates the affections of Christians from one another constitutes schism in the sense of the apostle; for this strikes directly at the vitals of Christianity, since it is in the union of affection among Christians that the spirit, the life, and the power of religion are principally placed. Schism, then, is the sin of doing anything to alienate men's hearts from each other, whatever be the occasion or the means of the estrangement. And a sin it is of a magnitude and enormity which few can estimate. It is the very opposite of charity; and in saying this we arraign it upon the most solemn and the most capital charge which any indictment can prefer. J. A. J.—During the present disjointed state of things nothing remains but for every one to whom the care of any part of the Church of Christ is intrusted to exert himself to the utmost in the promotion of vital religion, in cementing the friendship of the good, and repressing, with a firm and steady hand, the heats and eruptions of party spirit. Were our efforts uniformly to take this direction, there would be an *identity* in the im-

pression made by religious instruction; the distortion of party features would gradually disappear, and Christians would everywhere approach toward that ideal beauty spoken of by painters, which is combined of the finest lines and traits conspicuous in individual forms. Since they have all drunk into the same spirit, it is manifest nothing is wanting but a larger portion of that spirit, to lay the foundation of a solid, cordial union. It is to the immoderate attachment to secular interest, the love of power, and the want of reverence for truth, not to the obscurities of revelation, we must impute the unhappy contentions among Christians—maladies which nothing can correct but deep and genuine piety. The true *schismatic* is not so properly the person who declines a compliance with what he judges to be wrong, though he may be mistaken in that judgment, as the man who, like the author before us, sedulously employs every artifice to alienate the affections of good men from each other. R. Hall.

19. Heresies. The term *heresy* signifies primarily choice, then party, sect. It is commonly

used in the bad sense, implying willfulness on the side of the individual, a spirit of arrogant innovation and party zeal. In the New Testament the term frequently occurs, and in various connections, but almost always involving some bad sense. It is used of the religious parties among the Jews, as the Sadducees (Acts 5: 17), the Pharisees (15: 5; 26: 5); of the Christians in general, who were for a long time called by the Jews in contempt "the sect of the Nazarenes" (Acts 24: 5, 14; 28: 22); and of parties within the Christian Church (1 Cor. 11: 19; Gal. 5: 20). P. S.

20. *The Lord's Supper* was evidently to be a solemn commemoration and recognition of the redemption and deliverance of mankind by the death of Christ, as the Feast of the Passover was of the deliverance of the Israelites from the destroying angel. Nor is this all; for as the Jews were accustomed in their peace-offerings to eat a part of the victim, and thus partook of the sacrifice, so they would perceive that in this new institution the eating of the bread and drinking of the wine was a mark and symbol of their participating in the effects of this new peace-offering, the death of Christ, whose body was broken and whose blood was shed for them on the cross. They would also see that this supper of our Lord was from that time to be substituted in the room of the Passover. P.

The Lord's Supper is called a *sacrament*, that is, a *sign* and an *oath*. An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace; an *oath* by which we bind our souls with a bond unto the Lord. It is called the *Lord's Supper*, because it was first instituted in the evening, and at the close of the Passover Supper, and because we therein feed upon Christ, the Bread of Life. It is called the *Communion*, as herein we commune with Christ and with his people. It is called the *Eucharist*, a thanksgiving, because Christ, in the institution of it, gave thanks, and because we, in the participation of it, must give thanks likewise. It is called a *feast*, and by some a feast upon sacrifice (though not a sacrifice itself), in allusion to the custom of the Jews feasting upon their sacrifices. Buck.

21, 22. The Church of Corinth had introduced what was called a love-feast, in which the churches met together, previous to the reception of the Lord's Supper, to partake of a common meal, rich and poor bringing their own provisions. Beautiful as the idea was, it was liable to great abuse. In order to rectify the abuses which had grown out of these love-feasts, the apostle recalls to their remembrance the reasons for the original institution of the Lord's Supper, and from them deduces the guilt and responsibility of their desecration of that ordinance. He says that it was meant as a memorial of the Redeemer's sacrifice. F. W. R.

23-26. Three of the writers of the Gospels record the facts of its first institution, and of its being

enjoined on the disciples as a memorial of Christ, and as a sacred symbol of his atoning sacrifice. Paul here records the special revelation to him of the same facts. These records show that its Institution, and his first ministers, considered it an ordinance in which true Christians only are to commune happily together in love, and profitably together by faith, upon the consecrated symbols of their Saviour's body and blood; that, having previously, by "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," become participants in the pardon of sin, and in the hope of eternal life, as revealed in the gospel, such Christians come together at the Lord's Supper to express their love for Christ and their faith in him; and, in the exercise of these graces, to be refreshed and strengthened in the new life mightily, feeding in spirit on "the true bread which came down from heaven." J. S. S.

Looking at this ordinance we may distinguish four leading ideas: The *memorial* idea. "Do this in remembrance of me." The love which brought salvation, and the way by which salvation came, are to be kept fresh in our minds by the periodic observance of the ordinance which commemorates Christ's death. The *symbolical* idea. As baptism teaches by symbol the doctrine of depravity and the necessity of regeneration, so the impressive ordinance of the supper speaks to us of guilt and of the atonement. The *social* idea. It is the "Lord's table" which is spread, the "Lord's Supper" of which we partake. It is a communion of Christians with their Lord and with one another. The *sacramental* idea. This ordinance, besides being a memorial service and symbolical of precious truth, is really a means of grace to those who receive it in faith; in a real though not in a bodily sense Christ is present, and in a spiritual though not in a corporeal manner believers do feed upon him to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace. F. L. P.

Christ is really present to his people in this sacrament, not bodily, but in spirit; not in the sense of local nearness, but of efficacious operation. They receive him not with the mouth, but by faith; they receive his flesh and blood, not as flesh, not as material particles, not as human life, not the supernatural influence of his glorified body in heaven, but his body as broken and his blood as shed. The union thus signified and effected is not a corporeal union, not a mixture of substances, but a spiritual and mystical union due to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The efficacy of this sacrament as a means of grace is not in the sign, nor in the service, nor in the minister, nor in the word, but in the attending influence of the Holy Ghost. C. H.—The holy Communion was meant to be an abiding sign of Christ's love to us, that as we received into our

bodies the bread and wine, which are the signs of his body and blood, so he would enter into our spirits by his Spirit, and so become partaker in us, that we might become partakers in him. T. A.—We come to Christ for life, and to the holy Communion with life. We come to Christ for forgiveness, and to the holy Communion with forgiveness, if we come to it aright, for the strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine. Food and strength are for the living and not for the dead. A dead thing can not get strength and refreshment. It must first have life. The sinner, by grace, gets life in Christ and from Christ, and has Christ for his life; and in the blessed sacrament obtains by the same grace, from Christ, and not from the sacrament, strength and refreshment for the soul. The God of all grace works in the hearts of his believing people, in this and all his other ordinances, richly, to their souls' good. *Gregg.*

We feel what a tie there is to bind each of us to his brother when we come to the table of our common Lord. So far, the Lord's Supper is but a type of what every Christian meeting should be. Never should any of us be gathered together on any occasion of common life, in our families or with our neighbors, we should sit down to no meal, we should meet in no company, without having Christ also in the midst of us, without remembering what we all are to him, and what we each therefore are to our brethren. T. A.

These hands which take the body and blood of Christ, how holy they ought to be. They shall not withhold anything from Christ which he requires of us, nor be shut against the needy; they shall work no ill to a neighbor, keep back no just due; they shall be diligent in business, as the hands of Christ must have been when he worked at his trade and dignified our labor; they shall strike no passionate blow; they shall use severity at proper times, sustained by divine authority; they shall shed kindness and blessings on others; they shall write no letters which the eye of Christ might not be permitted to read; they shall receive no gains on which we can not ask his blessing. N. A.

26. Till he come. The rite was not a memorial of death simply, but of death conquered by life. The seal of the efficacy of the death of Christ was given in the resurrection, and the limit of the commemoration of his passion was looked for in his return. B. F. W.—The memorial of the cross is also the promise of the glory; and they who at the Lord's table on earth love to show forth their *Lord's death till he come*, are surely more likely than others to be looking forward to the glorious moment when they will be called to sit down to the marriage supper of the Lamb. A. W. T.

Notice here the many words which are connected with "the Lord" by the apostle: The Lord's *body*, verse 29; the Lord's *blood*, verse 27; the Lord's *bread*, verse 27; the Lord's *cup*, verse 27; the Lord's *death*, verse 26; the Lord's *supper*, verse 20. For in this ordinance Christ is all and in all; everything here speaks of Jesus, and he speaks in everything; he is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. *Bonar.*

Christ instituted two outward rites. There could not have been fewer, and they could not have been simpler; and look at the portentous outgrowth of superstition, and the unnumbered evils, religious, moral, social, and even political, which have come from the invincible tendency of human nature to corrupt forms, even when the forms are the sweet and simple ones of Christ's own appointment. What a lesson the history of the Lord's Supper, and its gradual change from the domestic memorial of the dying love of our Lord to the "tremendous sacrifice," reads us as to the dangerous ally which spiritual religion—and there is no other religion than spiritual—enlists when it seeks the help of external rites! A. M.

27-30. The occasion on which he spake is well known. The grossly "carnal" Corinthians had fallen into the practice of making the Lord's Supper a common meal, or, something worse, an occasion of excessive sensual indulgence. They paid no attention to it as a divinely ordained *commemoration* of the death and passion of the Lord Jesus Christ. They "distinguished" not between this and an ordinary feast: they ate, drank, and were drunken. They "discerned not the Lord's body," in that they treated the consecrated bread and wine, which were its symbols, as though they were a profane feast. They had lost sight of the true character and design of the sacrament, and had gone to such "excess of rioting," that, as a special judgment, some of them were seized with "weakness and sickness," and many of them were fallen "asleep," either in literal death or in awful spiritual insensibility. They were "*guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*," by heaping contempt on that sacred ordinance in which they were *represented*. Contempt of the *symbol* is contempt of the thing *symbolized*. Contempt of the *representative* is contempt of the being *represented*. Thus the *body of Christ* was dishonored by the abuse heaped on its *memorial*. Thus "*the King of Saints*" himself was insulted by the slight cast on his divinely appointed *representative*. This, plainly, is the whole of the apostle's meaning. J. S. S.

In verse 29, "*damnation*" should be "judgment"; and in verse 34, "*condemnation*" should be written "judgment." In verse 31, "*if we would judge ourselves*" should be "*if we duly discern ourselves*." The verb is the same as in "*discern*

not" in verse 29, and should have been carefully kept identical. A.

32. It is not an easy matter to be drawn from the love of this world, and this is that which God mainly requires of his children. And if in the midst of afflictions they are sometimes subject to this disease, how would it grow upon them with ease and

prosperity? When they are beaten from one worldly folly or delight, they are ready to lay hold upon some other, being thrust out from it at one door to enter at some other. Thus, it is clear, there is great need of afflictions, yea, of many afflictions, that the saints be *chastened by the Lord, that they may not be condemned with the world.* L.

Section 271.

1 CORINTHIANS xii. 1-31.

1 Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know
2 that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. Where-
3 fore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus
4 accursed: and *that* no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Now
5 there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administra-
6 tions, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God
7 which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit
8 withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of
9 knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of
10 healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to
11 another discerning of spirits; to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpre-
12 tation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every
13 man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the
14 members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also *is* Christ. For by one Spirit
15 are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or
16 free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.
17 For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the
18 hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say,
19 Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the
20 whole body *were* an eye, where *were* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *were*
21 the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it
22 hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where *were* the body? But now *are*
23 *they* many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no
24 need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more
25 those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: and those *mem-*
26 *bers* of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abun-
27 dant honour; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness. For our comely
28 *parts* have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant
29 honour to that *part* which lacked: that there should be no schism in the body; but *that*
30 the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer,
31 all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with
32 it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.
33 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly
34 teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of
35 tongues. *Are* all apostles? *are* all prophets? *are* all teachers? *are* all workers of miracles?
36 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet
37 earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

As warmth is inseparable from fire and brightness from light, so are the qualities of hallowing and giving life, of goodness and rectitude, inseparable from the Spirit. It is He that fills angels and archangels, hallows powers, gives life to all. Distributed to creatures, and variously shared by each, he is nowise diminished by those that share him. To all he gives the grace which proceeds from him, but he is not spent on his receivers; on the contrary, while they that take him are filled, he himself lacks nothing. He

illuminates all men for the knowledge of God ; he inspires prophets ; he gives wisdom to lawgivers, perfects just men, gives dignity to the self-controlled, works gifts of healing, gives life to the dead, releases the fettered, adopts the aliens into sonship. This he works through the birth from above. Through him the weak become strong, and the poor rich, and the unskilled in argument are wiser than the wise. He abides in heaven, and fills the earth, and is everywhere present, and nowhere circumscribed. He dwells entire in each one, and is entire with God. He does not administer his gifts ministerially, but distributes his graces with sovereign power. For he divides to each severally as he wills. *Basil.*

The Church may well be compared to a garden variegated with flowers of every species and clime ; to an anthem, in which the highest and deepest tones blend in wonderful harmony ; to a body, whose members have each its particular form and function, yet are ruled by the same head, permeated by the same blood, and subservient to the same end. In this very diversity of divine endowments must we adore the inexhaustible wisdom and grace of the Lord. The unbiased contemplation of this unity in diversity and diversity in unity should free us from all exclusiveness and bigotry, and raise us to a genuine liberality and catholicity of thought and feeling. P. S.

3-6. In this chapter Paul sets himself to discuss spiritual gifts and inspiration. First, he lays down a broad general principle respecting spiritual inspiration ; secondly, he determines the place and value of different degrees of spiritual inspiration. He lays down the general principle respecting inspiration in the third verse : "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." This made the broad separation between the Christian Church and the Gentile world. F. W. R.

4. Diversities of gifts. Gregory the Great says : "The Almighty has acted with the souls of men as he has with the different countries of the earth. He might have given fruits of all kinds to every land ; but, if every land did not require the fruits of another, there would be no fellowship maintained with the others. Hence it comes to pass that to one he gives what the other has not, and the latter supplies what the former wants, and so the separated lands are united by a communication of gifts. And, like different countries, the souls of saints are related to productions—they are all united together in one love." Thus Gregory points out how the inequality and diversity among men is necessary and ordained by God ; that to wish to make all things externally equal would be a mutilation of nature and a destruction of divine arrangement ; but that the love that proceeds from the gospel equalizes all from within, as all the inequalities founded in nature, or springing out of the relations of life, ought to be materials for the expression and preservation of love. N.

But the same Spirit. There is an essential difference in all lives, and there is in them also, by the gift of God, an essential unity. There is a difference in them because there is a unity ; because, that is, they are not bounded by that which falls under our present notice, which is fragmentary, imperfect, half suppressed, but pass on to the more immediate presence of God, where all that has been blessed by his Spirit coexists in absolute harmony and power. B. F. W.

7. While the Spirit is of one nature, yet many are the excellences which in the name of Christ he works out. For he uses one man's tongue to utter wisdom, illuminates another's soul with prophecy, to another gives ability to interpret the divine Scriptures. One man's self-control he strengthens, another he teaches how to give alms, another to discipline himself, another to despise the interests of the body ; another he prepares for martyrdom ; differently in each case, but not diverse from himself, as it is written, "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." *Cyril of Jerusalem.*—The loftiest gifts, the most conspicuous position, have no other purpose than that which the lowliest powers in the obscurest corner are meant to subserve. The one distributing Spirit divides to each man severally as he will ; and whether he endows him with starlike gifts, which soar above and blaze over half the world with luster that lives through the centuries, or whether he set him in some cottage window to send out a tiny cone of light that pierces a little way into the night for an hour or two and then is quenched—it is all one. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man for the same purpose—to do good with. And we have all one office and function to be discharged by each in his own fashion, namely, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus. A. M.

12. The whole human body is admirably arranged for growth and vigor. Every member and joint contributes to its healthful and harmonious action. All depend on the head with reference to the most important functions of life, and all derive their vigor from that. So it is in the Church. It is well arranged for growth and vigor, and it is beautifully organized in its various members and officers. It depends, moreover, on Christ as the head, to sustain, invigorate, and guide it. A. B.

13. Baptized. There is an inward work on the soul—a work of power and love, of quickening and life-warm energy, of transforming, yet of ordi-

nary grace—which is called a baptism, doubtless because the baptism by water is its appointed symbol. This inward work of the Spirit, whenever effected through the word of God, and the holy light which this word sheds around the mind, may, with truth and force, be called a baptism. Now, the whole of this connection is figurative speech; that is, the literal human body—animated, of course, by the living human soul—is used as a strong figure of the mystical body of Christ, filled with that Holy Spirit by whom its members are cemented into indissoluble union. Hence, doubtless, the baptism spoken of is that inward baptism of the Holy Ghost, which has its appointed symbol indeed in the baptism by water, but which, as we have so often seen, has no connection with it as its operated result. The true force of the passage may be thus expressed in paraphrase: “By one divine Spirit, all real Christians, of whatever nation or name, are closely united as members in that one spiritual body, of which Christ is the head; and this work of the Spirit may be called a baptism, because it has its appointed symbol in that primary Christian ordinance.” J. S. S.

13. By one Spirit into one body. *Union in Christ* they have that are indeed Christians; this they pretend to have who profess themselves Christians. If natural friendship be capable of that expression, *one spirit in two bodies*, Christian union hath it much more really and properly. For there is, indeed, one Spirit more extensive in all the faithful; yea, so one spirit, that it makes them up into *one body* more extensive. They are not so much as divers bodies, only divers members of one body. L.

14. There are different members, and all have not the same office. Some are there to teach—some to counsel and administer—some to tend the young—some to visit the sick-bed—some to conduct the temporal affairs of the Church—some to be liberal givers as God has prospered them—and some, without any formal mode of action, come under this description, which applies to them all, “Sons of God, without rebuke, shining as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.” It is very beautiful to see how the God, who has bound his world into a grand harmony by its very diversity, has arranged for this same end in his Church, by giving the members their different faculties of work—how the pure light that comes from the sun breaks into its separate hues when it touches the palace-house of Christ with its varied cornices and turrets till every color lies in tranquil beauty beside its fellow. If it is not so it should be so, and as the Church grows it will be so. Use and ornament, the corner-stone and the coping-stone, shall both be felt to have their due place. Ker.

17. Not only is the life of the body one thing, in whichever of the members it operates, but also

the members conspire together to one end. In fetching and reaching anything, the design is formed by the brain; the object is seen by the eye; the feet are made to walk in that direction; the hands subsequently are raised to grasp the object. Combination for one purpose is quite as obvious in the whole procedure as the interpenetration of the entire body by one life. E. M. G.

20, 21. The impression which the apostolic Epistles give us of a Christian congregation is that of a body so organized as that each and every member is made useful to the whole body, and the particular gift which God bestows upon the weakest and most insignificant is so appreciated and applied, that “the head” or “the eye”—the most intelligent or most discerning—can not say to that weak member, “I have no need of thee.” N. M.

22. As the apostle has spoken in the whole chapter of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, since it is with reference to these that he distinguishes the members of the Church as strong and feeble, we may present the idea of the apostle in this form. The gifts of the Holy Spirit which are the most feeble are also the most necessary. The gifts that are more feeble are humility, by which a believer abases himself before God and regards others as more excellent than himself; fidelity, which will not be unjust in the smallest any more than in the greatest things; purity of manners and of thought, which keeps undefiled the temple where the Holy Spirit deigns to dwell; truth, which would not for the greatest bribe open its lips to the slightest falsehood; contentment, which bears all losses without a murmur, because its real treasure can not be taken from it; activity, which remembers that the kingdom of God consists not in words but in deeds; charity, not charity factitious, borrowed, learned by heart, but a true love, a tenderness of soul, which alternately pities and consoles, soothes and besecches, which can not revile or despise, which bears all things, excuses all things, which rejoices not in iniquity but rejoices in the truth. A. V.

24. To regard the business attaching to any station of life as insignificant is as unreasonable as it is unscriptural. Paul says of the human body, that God has “given honor to those members which lacked.” The same may be said of society. Its whole fabric and framework is built up of humble duties accurately fulfilled by persons in humble stations. The Scripture, with that wonderful penetration into the thoughts of man which characterizes its every page, has taken care to set the seal of dignity and sacredness upon those callings and employments which are lowest in the social scale. E. M. G.—If I am faithfully serving Christ, does it really so much matter whether my hand holds a scepter, a pen, or a spade—whether I touch thou-

sands every day or only shillings and pence—whether I meet many people or only few—whether my house is large or small—whether my name is famous or utterly unknown? It is but “a little while,” and the stir and tumult of life, be it in high or low degree, will be over, the drudgery all gone through, the commonness ended in the shining of eternal sublimity. Not *where* I am, but *what* I am, and, still more, *what* I am becoming, is the thing! Not what I do, but how I am doing it! Not high or low in earthly place and estimate, but high or low in purpose, tone, temper! If anything of nobler outward aspect can be inserted into your life, well. If you can have the seeming commonness associated and relieved with something visibly greater and better—some new task, endeavor, friendship, possibility—well. But if not, we say again, call not that life which God in his infinite wisdom has appointed for you, which by his great redeeming act he has purified, which from the roll of his providence is unfolding itself under his very eye, which is quick with the stirrings of his Spirit, which has the seeds of immortal glory in its bosom—call it not common. It is great, unless you make it little; it is good, unless you make it evil. A. R.

26. The spirit and the law of the life of Christ is to be that of every member of the Church, and the law of the life of Christ is that of sympathy. F. W. R.—And this living sympathy is in every living member of the body of Christ toward the whole and toward each particular part. This makes a Christian rejoice in the welfare and good of another as if it were his own, and feel their griefs and distresses as if himself were really sharer in them; for the word comprehends all feeling together, feeling of joy as well as of grief. And always where there is most of grace and of the Spirit of Jesus Christ there is most of this sympathy. When the heart can unfeignedly rejoice in the Lord's bounty to others, and the luster of grace in others far outshining their own, truly it is an evidence that what grace such a one hath is upright and good, and that the law of love is engraven in his heart. And where that is there will be likewise a compassionate, tender sense of the infirmities and frailties of their brethren. L.

27. Under this striking and beautiful symbol of the body is set forth the unity, the harmony, the proportionate and coöperative efficiency of the Church of Christ. That equality of the brotherhood which our Lord laid down as a fundamental principle in the constitution of his Church does not imply equality of function or of official place and work. In primitive times, when miraculous gifts were widely shared by the Church, there were marked diversities in those gifts, and in the official position of persons thus endowed. And now the equality

of the brotherhood does not displace the divine law of arrangement, distribution, adaptation in the body. For the Church is not a society, it is a body; and the equality of its members consists first in the fact of membership in Christ, their common head; next in community of privileges; next in dependence upon one another for sympathy and support; next in coöperation toward the same end, under the authority and direction of the one head. And the humblest may now obtain the greatest gifts, which in the next chapter the apostle defines to be faith, hope, charity. J. P. T.

28. The miraculous gifts imparted to many in the early Church are carefully ranked and marked by the hand of the apostle as inferior to those gifts which were “for edification and exhortation and comfort.” “And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, *after that* miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.” Here miracle-working, healing, and speaking with divers tongues are set as inferior gifts to those whereby men were constituted teachers or prophets. *Arthur.*—All these are engaged in the work of the ministry, though in different departments. Together they constituted the *ministry* by which Christ meant to establish and edify the Church; but the offices of prophets and apostles were not designed to be permanent. A. B.

Prophets, teachers. All offices, whether for the government or edification of the body, were considered as *charisms*—gifts of the Spirit. Persons who were designated by their peculiar natural powers, as quickened and directed by the Spirit, for the discharge of their functions, were appointed to fulfill them. Among the gifts of the Spirit was that of teaching. There was a class of persons who showed themselves specially adapted to speak in a moving and instructive way, and these were recognized as having a divine call to this service. They were not elders, though elders might teach, and late in the apostolic age teaching came to be considered a necessary part of an elder's work. But teaching was free in the apostolic churches, in the sense that whoever felt himself impelled by an inward impulse to address his brethren might do so at the proper time in the service. The gift of prophecy was not a foretelling of future events, but rather a fervid outpouring of Christian truth, it might be in the form of exhortation. The “teacher” expounded doctrine in the exercise of reflection, and as a fruit of the study of the Old Testament Scriptures, though under an illumination from above. The utterances of the “prophets” were more improvised, and thus adapted to seize on the attention and thrill the mind even of a pagan auditor who chanced to enter the Christian assemblies. The addresses of the “teacher” were in the form of didactic instruction; those of the “prophet” were hortatory, or at least predominantly emotional. These last might spring from an extravagant zeal or enthusiasm, and contain an admixture of hurtful error. Hence there were persons competent to discern spirits, or to discriminate between what should be considered divine truth and what should be rejected.

Miracles. Including the power to heal diseases without the intervention of the ordinary

means of cure. Illustrations of the exercise of these powers are presented in the book of Acts; but they were not specially called into activity in the assemblies for worship.—Thus, in the apostolic church, all the functions of government, as well as of teaching, were in the hands of those who were conscious of acting as the organs of a Power above themselves, by whom they were singled out, each of them for his particular work. It was a community lifted up to this high pitch of earnestness. It was, to use the apostle's simile, a body, every member of which served every other, and was served in turn by all. G. P. F.

Other gifts specially mentioned as charisms are *the gift of government* and *the gift of ministration*. By the former, certain persons were specially fitted to preside over the Church and regulate its internal order; by the latter, its possessors were enabled to minister to the wants of their brethren, to manage the distribution of relief among the poorer members of the Church, to tend the sick, and carry out other practical works of piety. C.

31. Covet the best gifts. The same apostle who so earnestly urged contentment with the gifts we have, and forbade contemptuous scorn of others

with feeble gifts, bids us yet to aspire. Be contented, yet aspire; that should be the faith of all, and the two are quite compatible. And there arises from such a belief the possibility of generous admiration; all the miserable shutting-up of ourselves in superciliousness is done away. Desirous of reaching something higher, we recognize love and what is above ourselves; and this is the condition of excellence, for we become that which we admire. All gifts are to be cultivated; let no Christian despise them. Every accomplishment, every intellectual faculty that can adorn and grace human nature, should be cultivated and polished to its highest capability. Yet these are not the things that bring us nearer God. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." You may have strong, eagle-eyed faith; well, you will probably be enabled to do great things in life, to work wonders, to trample on impossibilities. You may have sanguine hope; well, your life will pass brightly, not gloomily. But the vision of God as he is, to see the King in his beauty, is vouchsafed not to science nor to talent, but only to purity and love. F. W. R.

Section 272.

1 CORINTHIANS xiii. 1-13.

1 THOUGH I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether *there be* prophecies, they shall fail; whether *there be* tongues, they shall cease; whether *there be* knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, 10 and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, 12 I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I 13 know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these *is* charity.

CHARITY involves the highest affection of the soul, and directs that affection with a proportionate ardor, and an absolute continuance toward all moral beings. It is piety toward God. It is a constraining philanthropy toward man. It reaches to all that lives around us. It loves ourselves, and we ought to be loved. And this is the ultimate glory of character. It is the parent of all other virtues, containing them within it. It is the sum of all other virtues, for "the greatest is charity." Humility, truthfulness, patience, magnanimity, the chasteness of temper that makes the soul white, the spirit of forgiveness that makes the soul Godlike, every excellence that exalts, every trait that adorns, is the child of benevolence. And yet this is simple as light, as air! R. S. S.

Hold fast charity, on which all the secrets of Scripture depend; so will you hold fast what you have learned, and also what you have not yet learned. For if you know charity, you know something on which that also depends which perhaps you know not; and in what you understand in Scripture charity is patent,

in what you do not understand charity is latent. Accordingly he who holds fast charity in his conduct holds both what is patent and what is latent in the divine discourses. Wherefore follow after charity, the sweet and salutary bond of souls, without which the rich man is poor, with which the poor man is rich. Charity is patient in adversities, temperate in prosperity, strong in grievous sufferings, cheerful in good works; most secure in temptation, most expansive in hospitality; most joyous among true brethren, most patient among false ones. In Abel it is acceptable through sacrifice, in Noah fearless amid the deluge, in Abraham's wanderings most faithful, in Moses most forbearing amid injuries, in David's tribulations most gentle. It is free-spoken in Paul for rebuke, humble in Peter for submission; human in Christians for confessing, divine in Christ for pardoning. But what can I say of charity that is greater or richer than those praises of it which the Lord utters by the mouth of the apostle when he points to the "far-surpassing way"? How great is charity! The power of prophecy, the basis of knowledge, the fruit of faith, the riches of the poor, the life of the dying: *Aug.*

THE previous chapter discusses the gifts of the Spirit, this contrasts them with the grace of charity or love; but the last verse of the former is the link between both chapters: "Covet earnestly the best gifts; and yet show I unto you a more excellent way." Now the more excellent way is charity. He who treads the brilliant road of the highest accomplishments is, as a man, inferior to him who treads the path of love. To the apostle's mind there was emptiness in eloquence, nothingness in knowledge and even in faith, uselessness in liberality and sacrifice where love was not. And none could be better qualified than he to speak. None taught like him the philosophy of Christianity. None had so strong a faith or so deep a spirit of self-sacrifice. In no other writings are we so refined and exalted by "the thoughts which breathe and words that burn." And yet, in solitary preëminence above all these gifts, he puts the grace of love. *F. W. R.*

The beautiful superstructure of philanthropy, which the apostle has raised in this chapter, has for its foundation a supreme regard for the great and blessed God. The utmost kindness and sympathy, the most tender compassion united with the most munificent liberality, if it do not rest on the love of God, is not the temper here set forth—is not the grace which has the principle of immortality in its nature, and which will live and flourish in eternity when faith and hope shall cease. For want of this vital and essential principle of all true religion, how much of kindly feeling and active benevolence is daily expended, which, while it yields its amiable though unrenowned professor much honor and delight, has not the weight of a feather in the scales of his eternal destiny.

1. Sounding brass. Should a man be invested with these stupendous endowments, and employ them in the service of the gospel; still, if his heart were not a partaker of love, he would be no more acceptable to God than was the clangor of the brazen instruments employed in the idolatrous worship of the Egyptian Isis, or the noise of the tinkling cymbals which accompanied the orgies of the Grecian Cybele.

2, 3. Though one were gifted with prophecy so as to explain the deepest mysteries of the Jewish or the Christian systems, and, in addition, possessed that miraculous faith by which the most difficult and astonishing changes would have been effected, he was nothing, and less than nothing, without love. "And though I give my body to be burned," i. e., as a martyr for religion. Whether such a case as this ever existed we know not; it is not impossible; but if it did, not the tortures of an agonizing death, nor the courage that endured them, nor the seeming zeal for religion which led to them, would be accepted in lieu of love. *J. A. J.*—I relieve no man upon the rhetoric of his miseries, nor to content mine own commiserating disposition; for this is still but moral charity, and an act that oweth more to passion than reason. He that relieves another upon the bare suggestion and bowels of pity doth not this so much for his sake as for his own; for by compassion we make others' misery our own, and so by relieving them we relieve ourselves also. *Brown.*

4. Suffereth long. The word signifies "to have a long mind," to the end of whose patience provocations can not easily reach. It does not mean patience in reference to the afflictions which come from God, but to the injuries and provocations which come from man, a disposition which under long-continued offenses holds back anger, and is not hasty to punish or to revenge. Its kindred property is nearly allied to it, "is not easily provoked," or "is not exasperated." **Kind.** Kindness is anxious not to give offense; it is delicately tender in reference to the feelings of its object, and would not unnecessarily crush the wing of an insect, much less inflict a wound upon a rational mind. It is *active in conferring benefits*—watches for an opportunity to afford assistance, and is not satisfied unless it can do something to increase the general stock of comfort. **Envieth not.** Envy causes us to feel uneasiness at the sight of another's possessions or happiness, and makes us dislike him on that account. Of all base passions, this is the basest. It is unmingled malignity; the most direct contrariety

of love. Envy can not even offer the excuses which many vices sometimes bring forward: anger pleads the provocation it has received, but envy has received no offense; lust and intemperance plead the gratification which their objects yield, and robbery holds up its gain, but envy gains nothing but misery, and converts the happiness of which it is the witness into wormwood and gall for its own cup, and transvenoms the honey of another man's comfort into the poison of asps for its own bosom. It is a source of eternal vexation—an instrument of self-torment—a rottenness in the bones—a burning ulceration of the soul—a crime which, partaking of the guilt, partakes as largely of the misery of hell. J. A. J.

4, 5. "Charity is not puffed up." This seems rather an attribute of humility than of charity. Again: "Charity doth not behave itself unseemly"; i. e., shows taste and tact in finer points of conduct. This sounds rather like courtesy than like charity. But the inspired apostle is not wandering from his point. Love has the closest connection with humility and courtesy, so that perfect love can never exist without either. Every breach of love in the world is due more or less to pride. Whence come all wranglings, jars, and discords, but from a secret feeling that a certain precedence and certain rights are our due, and a determination always to stand upon those rights, and never to waive that precedence? Strike at the root of this feeling in the heart, and you strike at the root of every quarrel; or, in other words, secure humility in any mind of man, and you secure love, at least on its negative side. The case is the same with courtesy. Perfect love would involve perfect courtesy, that is to say, a nice sense of propriety in our intercourse with others, and a delicacy of feeling toward them. So far as any one is defective in this perfect courtesy, he wants one of the finer features of love. E. M. G.

5. Seeketh not her own. The essence of man's sin, the sum of his moral depravity, is to love himself supremely, to seek himself finally and exclusively, to make self, in one shape or another, the center to which all his busy thoughts, anxious cares, and diligent pursuits constantly tend. Self is the great idol which mankind are naturally disposed to worship, and selfishness the grand interest to which they are devotedly attached. But the grace of God so subdues this disposition that it is no longer the ascendant of the mind, and plants in the heart the principle of benevolence—a principle which, as it leads us to love God supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves, is the direct contrary of selfishness.

Thinketh no evil. Like a good spirit, it is ever opposing the advice and counteracting the influence of envy, revenge, or avarice. It would make the miserable happy and the happy still hap-

pier. It retires into the closet to project schemes for blessing mankind, and then goes out into the crowded regions of want and wretchedness to execute them; it deviseth good on its bed, and riseth in the morning to fulfill the plans of mercy with which it had sunk to rest.

7. Charity is not fickle, unsteady, and easily discouraged; not soon disheartened, or induced to relinquish its object; but is persevering, patient, and self-denying in the pursuance of its design to relieve the wants, assuage the sorrows, reform the vices, and allay the animosities of those whose good it seeks. J. A. J.—We ought not to drive when we find we can not lead, nor wax fretful and impatient of delays which are inevitable, nor lose temper over great things or over trifles, for that will show that we ourselves are growing weaker, nor impute malign motives to others, nor even to think ungenerous or uncharitable thoughts concerning them or their action, but rather seek to settle our strength in this—in the universal charity which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," and then, as the result, achieveth all things. A. R.

8. Charity never faileth. Yes, see its eternity, its immortal vigor and freshness. For the door of heaven itself is thrown open, and lo! charity is there, as she was for ever, in the bosom of God—now in the hearts of his redeemed people. All personal accomplishments, intellectual masteries, miraculous exploits, prophecies, tongues, earthly knowledge, are passing away; the brightest lights go out, the finest brain is broken, the most eloquent voice is still. They "fail," they "cease," they "vanish away." They are all "in part," and are "done away," "when that which is perfect is come." Half blind, and groping, we see "as through a glass darkly." How true that is! The skies are clouded. Our very eyes are weak, and ache with straining to see. But all that lovely air is clear; and when the purer eyes of the spiritual body are opened, without dimness, doubt, or uncertainty, in the wondering fullness of open vision, the children of Christian charity shall see face to face, and in the "love that passeth knowledge" know as they are known. F. D. H.

9. Prophecy gives us light, that the Church may not lose its hope in the dark hours of its discipline. But the light reveals neither the length of the way nor the severity of the trials nor the exact nature or extent of the final triumph, for such full knowledge would prevent those influences with which the present state of things acts on character, and which are better than knowledge. He who gains character out of the uncertainties of life gains everything. He has learned in the dark not only those qualities of character which make him a good

actor in these earthly scenes and which generally insure success, but he has learned also how to depend on God, to trust in his providence, to act with him in his plans, and to secure his coöperation. He is thus fitted for eternal life, for its employment, for its revelations. He has gained from his condition here what God meant he should. Soon this earthly darkness shall pass away; soon a boundless field of knowledge be open to him; soon perfect certainty be within his reach. He now knows as he is known. Is not this gain? T. D. W.

10. Perfect is come. Looking at man we seem to see a vast collection of little beginnings, attempts, failures; like a plantation on a bleak and blasted heath. And the progress in whatever is valuable and noble, whether in individuals or communities, is so miserably difficult and slow. So that "*the perfectibility of man*," in the sense in which that phrase has been employed, stands justly ridiculed as one of the follies of philosophic romance. Then how delightful it is to see revelation itself pronouncing as possible, and predicting as to come, something "perfect" in the condition of man! **That which is in part shall be done away.** Imagine the emerging from this dark world into light! what a dismissal from our spirits, what a vanishing away of the whole systems of our little notions, our childish conceptions! And yet there will not be an entire contempt thrown upon the retrospect, for it will be understood how those little notions, that feeble light, that partial revelation, were the right training for the infancy and childhood of the human soul. Let us, then, be thankful that we *do* know, though but in part, and earnestly apply and improve what we are permitted to know. Let us be thankful, too, that one point of that very knowledge is, that its imperfection will at length be left behind. J. F.

11. It is easier to be always childish than to be always childlike. The immaturity and heedlessness of youth bear carriage better than the more precious vintages of that sunny land—its freshness of eye and heart, its openness of mind, its energy of hand. Even when these are in any measure retained—beautiful as they are in old age—they are but too apt to be associated with an absence of the excellences more proper to the later stages of life, and to involve a want of patient judgment, of sagacious discrimination, of rooted affections, of prudent persistent action. Beautiful indeed it is when the grace of the children and the strength of the young men live on in the fathers, and the last of life incloses all that was good in all that went before. But miserable it is, and quite as frequent a case, when gray hairs cover a childish brain, and an aged heart throbs with the feverish passion of youthful blood. A. M.

12. Paul was fully conscious that, when he should be raised to the full vision of the life above, that which he knew of divine things in this life must be cast aside by him, as the mature man casts aside the conceptions of childhood. The twilight of the earthly life of faith did not satisfy the aspirations of his soul, which thirsted after knowledge; and he longed to pass into that pure day of heavenly clearness, where our knowledge of God and divine things will be inward, immediate, a direct perception of that which is present, a knowing as we are known. N.

What an idea does it give us of the infinitude of knowledge yet to be obtained, when we are informed that the Bible itself, even the New Testament—that book of books, of which it is said it has God for its author, truth without any mixture of error for its contents, and salvation for its end—is but a book for children, a work for saints in their infancy, a mere elementary treatise on the subject of eternal truth, written by the finger of God for his family during their education and novitiate on earth. Our minds could no more bear to look upon the unmitigated glory of divine truth than the eye of an infant could sustain the unsoftened effulgence of the mid-day sun. The study, the discovery, the enjoyment of truth will form one of the chief felicities of the heavenly state; but what must that knowledge be which is to afford something new and interesting through eternity? how can this be obtained by man in the infancy of his existence upon earth? No wonder, then, that we walk at present amid shades and glimmerings! J. A. J.

Face to face we shall know. Adoration is the gate of knowledge. And when this gate of the soul is fully opened, as it will be when the adoring grace is complete in our deliverance from all impurity, what a revelation of knowledge must follow. Having now a desire of knowledge perfected in us that is clear of all conceit, ambition, haste, impatience, the clouds under which we lived in our sin are for ever rolled away, and our adoring nature, transparent to God as a window to the sun, is filled with his eternal light. No mysteries remain but such as comfort us in the promise of a glorious employment. Every object of knowledge, irradiated by the brightness of God, shines with a new celestial clearness and an inconceivable beauty. The resurrection morning is a true sun-rising, the in-bursting of a cloudless day on all the righteous dead. They wake transfigured at their Master's call, with the fashion of their countenance altered and shining like his own. H. B.—The veil that hides from us the all-glorious Father of spirits shall one day be withdrawn. The spiritual eye shall be quickened to look into the heart and life of the universe. The intercepting medium of sense shall be

swept away, and the soul of the redeemed laid bare to the ineffable brightness and beauty of God streaming full-orbed around it. *Caird.*

As we are known is a note of similitude, not of equality. The light of a candle as truly shines as the light of the sun, but not with that extent and splendor. We shall have such a perfect knowledge of God as our minds can receive and our hearts desire. We shall then see what we now believe concerning the glorious nature of God, his decrees and counsels, his providence and dispensations. The sublimest doctrine of the Christian religion, above the disquisition and reach of reason, is that of the sacred Trinity, upon which the whole economy of the gospel depends. In assenting to this, faith bows the head and adores. In the state above, where reason is rectified and enlarged, we shall understand that from eternity God was sole existing, but not solitary; that the Godhead is not confused in unity nor divided in number; that there is a priority of order, yet no superiority, among the sacred persons, but they are all equally possessed of the same divine excellences and the same divine empire, and are the object of the same adoration. *Bates.*

13. Abideth faith, hope, charity. Could there in the region of spirit be found a brighter triad than those with which the apostle closes and crowns his noble eulogy on charity? Exquisite picture! On the right hand, Faith clinging to the cross of salvation; on the left, Hope leaning on the infallible anchor; and in the center, Charity, bearing in hand the burning heart, devoted as a daily sacrifice to the God of love! And now these three are here below the *abiding* companions of the Christian, amid all that changes and withers around him. They can abide, since they form the unchanging

characteristic of every believer. They must abide, or all our Christianity would become form without life. They shall abide, because they are at once so sublimely Godlike and so truly human. Faith may have to wrestle with darkness; hope, with doubt; charity, with resistance; but, where Christ really lives in the heart, they can never disappear. *Van O.*

The greatest. Faith has its excellency in this, hope in that, and love in another thing. Faith will do that which hope can not do, hope can do that which faith can not do, and love can do things distinct from both their doings. Faith goes in the van, hope in the body, and love brings up the rear; and thus now abideth faith, hope, and charity. Faith is the mother-grace, for hope is born of her, but charity floweth from them both. *Bun.—* Love shall remain. Yea, not only shall it remain, but the narrow brook which in this life flowed from deeply hidden fountains will in that life become a wide stream. Here love could be preserved only while the eye of faith held the invisible world directly before itself. Shut for an instant this internal eye, look at nothing but the visible world, and thou wilt love only what thou seest. Ah! why dost thou hang solely upon creatures of the earth, and long after them; why but because thine eye of faith is not open, and thou seest not the invisible glory of the Father's image? Couldst thou see this, thou must love it also; to see the invisible and to love him is the same thing. But when there shall be no more need of this intellectual exertion, when the thick cloud of the earthly vale shall no longer press upon the eye of faith, when the very object in which we here faintly believe shall stand constantly before our vision, oh, how easy will it then be to love! *A. T.*

Section 273.

1 CORINTHIANS xiv. 1-40.

- 1 FOLLOW after charity, and desire spiritual *gifts*, but rather that ye may prophesy. For
 - 2 he that speaketh in an *unknown* tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man
 - 3 understandeth *him*; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. But he that prophesieth
 - 4 speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort. He that speaketh in an
 - 5 *unknown* tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church. I would
 - that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater *is* he that prophe-
 - 6 sieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive
 - edifying. Now, brethren, if I come unto you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit
 - you, except I shall speak to you either by revelation, or by knowledge, or by prophesying,
 - 7 or by doctrine? And even things without life giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except
 - 8 they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped? For
 - 9 if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? So like-
 - wise ye, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known
 - 10 what is spoken? for ye shall speak into the air. There are, it may be, so many kinds of
 - 11 voices in the world, and none of them *is* without signification. Therefore if I know not
- the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speak-

12 eth *shall be* a barbarian unto me. Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual *gifts*,
 13 seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church. Wherefore let him that speaketh in
 14 an *unknown* tongue pray that he may interpret. For if I pray in an *unknown* tongue, my
 15 spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the
 spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will
 16 sing with the understanding also. Else, when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he
 that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he un-
 17 derstandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not
 edified.

18 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all: yet in the church I had rather
 19 speak five words with my understanding, that *by my voice* I might teach others also, than
 20 ten thousand words in an *unknown* tongue. Brethren, be not children in understanding:
 21 howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. In the law it is written,
 With *men of* other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that
 22 will they not hear me, saith the Lord. Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that
 believe, but to them that believe not: but prophesying *serveth* not for them that believe
 23 not, but for them which believe. If therefore the whole church be come together into one
 place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in *those that are* unlearned, or unbe-
 24 lievers, will they not say that ye are mad? But if all prophesy, and there come in one
 25 that believeth not, or *one* unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: and thus are
 the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on *his* face he will worship
 26 God, and report that God is in you of a truth. How is it then, brethren? when ye come
 together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation,
 hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

27 If any man speak in an *unknown* tongue, *let it be* by two, or at the most *by* three, and
 28 *that* by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence
 29 in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God. Let the prophets speak two or
 30 three, and let the other judge. If *any thing* be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the
 31 first hold his peace. For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may
 32 be comforted. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is
 33 not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Let your women
 34 keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are com-*
 35 *manded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let
 them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.
 36 What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think
 37 himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto
 38 you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.
 39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. Let all
 40 things be done decently and in order.

THE Corinthians had no just ideas of the dignity and greatness of the divine life; they did not understand how those singular gifts in which they exulted were bestowed upon them for the benefit of others, not for their own personal glorification, and how they were to be exercised, therefore, with solemnity, wisdom, and great conscientiousness. The Christian Church became a theatre of display; and the Christian life, instead of being something serious and earnest, a work and a warfare, a building to be erected by strenuous exertion, an agony and struggle for life and death—instead of this, it put on the appearance of a boisterous holiday, and was as little dignified as a plaything or a song. But, worse than this, with the immaturity, vanity, and folly of boys, there mingled at Corinth the passions of men. They could not *all* be first; some must listen if others speak; where some lead, others must follow. But this is difficult where all are ambitious; and hence there were “envyings” and “strifes,” “jealousies” and “divisions.” The apostle reasons with the Corinthians. He tells them that “gifts” are a solemn trust, and bring with them a solemn responsibility; for that “the ministrations of the Spirit are given to every man for the profit of others.” He insists, therefore, that “everything should be done unto edifying,” that the Church may be benefited, and not that the actor or speaker may be glorified. He ridicules their ambition in all wishing for the best gifts, as if all the members of the body wished to be the eye, which, of course, would be the destruction of the body itself. He mourns over their strifes, their conceit, their jealousies and envyings of each other; and, looking upon these things as sure signs of ignorance and immaturity, of the want of an enlarged, well-informed mind, and of a properly disciplined and purified

heart, he embodies his feelings in the words, "Be not children in understanding"—mere boys, without deep and comprehensive views of duty. "In malice," indeed, and all foolish and angry passions, I wish you were even like "babes" who have not yet manifested these dispositions at all; but "in understanding," in wisdom and knowledge, in mastery of yourselves, and in calm devotedness to the great business of the Christian life, I wish you to be men—men not only in the sense of having arrived at full age, but of having attained maturity of character. T. B.

1. This verse contains a *résumé* of all that has been said in the twelfth and thirteenth chapters. And we observe that charity holds the first place, and then spiritual gifts follow in the second. And of spiritual gifts, some for certain reasons—as, for instance, prophecy—are preferable to others. Charity implies a certain character; but a gift, as that of tongues, does not. This distinction explains at once why graces are preferable to gifts. Graces are what the man *is*; but enumerate his gifts, and you will only know what he *has*. You can not contemplate the grace separate from the man; *he* is lovable or admirable, according as he has charity, faith, or self-control. And hence the apostle bids the Corinthians undervalue gifts in comparison with graces: "Follow after charity." **Rather that ye may prophesy.** Prophecy was a gift eminently useful; it was the power of expounding the will and the word of God. The deep insight into truth, the happy faculty of imparting truth: these two endowments together made up that which was essential to the prophet of the early Church. F. W. R.

2. In the gift of tongues, the high and ecstatic consciousness in respect to God alone predominated, while the consciousness of the world was wholly withdrawn. In this condition, the medium of communication between the deeply moved inward man and the external world was wholly wanting. What he spoke in this condition, from the strong impulse of his emotions and inward views, was not a connected discourse, nor an address adapted to the wants and circumstances of others. He was wholly occupied with the relation of his own soul to God. The soul was absorbed in adoration and devotion. Hence to this condition are ascribed prayer, songs of praise to God, and the attestation of his mighty deeds. Such a one prayed in spirit; the higher life of the soul and spirit predominated in him. When, therefore, in the midst of his peculiar emotions and spiritual contemplations he formed for himself a peculiar language, he was wanting in the power so to express himself as to be understood by the greater number. N.

5. Paul gives the preference to the gift of prophecy, which addressed itself directly and intelligibly to the congregation; whereas the Corinthians were disposed to overrate the gift of tongues, as it led to a refined egoism and indulgence in a spiritual intoxication of feeling. P. S.

19. The apostle considered that gift most desirable by which men might most edify one another. And hence that noble declaration of one of the most gifted of mankind, "I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." Our estimate is almost the reverse of this. We value a gift in proportion to its rarity, its distinctive character, separating its possessor from the rest of his fellow-men. Your lofty, incommunicable thoughts and aspirations, and contemplative raptures—in virtue of which you have estimated your-

self as the porcelain of the earth, of another nature altogether than the clay of common spirits—tried by the test of charity, what is there grand in these if they can not be applied as blessings to those that are beneath you? The most trifling act which is marked by usefulness to others is nobler in God's sight than the most brilliant accomplishment of genius. To teach a few Sunday-school children, week after week, commonplace, simple truths, persevering in spite of dullness and mean capacities, is a more glorious occupation than the highest meditations or creations of genius which edify or instruct only our own solitary soul. Gifts that are showy and gifts that please—before these the world yields her homage, while the lowly teachers of the poor and the ignorant are forgotten and unnoticed. Only remember that, in the sight of the everlasting Eye, the one is creating sounds which perish with the hour that gave them birth, the other is doing a work that is for ever—building and forming for the eternal world an immortal human spirit. F. W. R.

20. They who are children in understanding are proportionably apt to be men in malice; that is, in proportion as men neglect that which should be the guide of their lives, so are they left to the mastery of their passions; and as nature and outward circumstances do not allow these passions to remain as quiet and as little grown as they are in childhood—for they are sure to ripen without any trouble of ours—so men are left with nothing but the evils of both ages, the vices of the man and the unripeness and ignorance of the child. T. A.—The understanding needs to be opened and cultivated, the passions grow of themselves. The one requires to be encouraged and stimulated, the others to be repressed and restrained. The consequence is, that in early life, before the higher parts of humanity can have been ripened by knowledge and experience, the inferior parts are strong and active, as by the force of an internal impulse. Hence we have the phenomena that so often distinguish immaturity of character—folly, vanity, conceit, selfishness, ignorance, indiscretion, the want of common sense, the absence of large knowledge, of just views, of intelligent apprehension of the ends and duties of life, of all those things, in fact, which make up that moral "understanding" in which the apostle wished the Corinthians to be *men*, but which is seldom found to be the characteristic of youths or boys. T. B.—But too many are children in inconstancy, affection to sensible things, and love of toys; but how few are such in innocency, simplicity, ignorance of evil, and docility! Q.

23. There is great danger in ungoverned feeling; and hence religious life may degenerate into mere indulgence of feeling, the excitement of religious meetings, or the *utterance* of strong emotion. In this sickly strife life wastes away, and the man or woman becomes weak instead of strong. What a lesson! These divine, high feelings in the Church of Corinth, to what had they degenerated! Loud,

tumultuous, disorderly cries, such that a stranger coming in would pronounce of the speakers that they were mad! F. W. R.

27. To the gift of tongues is immediately attached that of *interpretation*. It is the gift of translating the language of ecstasy or of the Spirit into the language of the ordinary consciousness, and bringing it down to the comprehension of the whole congregation. For this reason Paul requires this gift as the complement to that of tongues; as by it alone the latter is made edifying to the hearers and conducive to the general good. 31. To prevent disorder and abuse the apostle directs, as in the case of speaking with tongues, that the prophets should prophesy not all at once, but one after another, that all may receive instruction and exhortation. 34. Every public act of this kind implies for the time being a superiority of the speaker over the hearers, and is also contrary to true feminine delicacy. Christianity has, indeed, vastly improved the condition of woman. It has brought the highest blessings of heaven within her reach. But it has not, in so doing, abolished the divine order of nature which restricts her to the sphere of private life. Here, in the quiet circle of the family, woman has the freest scope for the display of the fairest virtues. P. S.

37. Now, as in those apostolic days, he which is spiritual can show that he is so only "by acknowledging that the things which" those appointed teachers "wrote to us are the commandments of the Lord"; for the gift of the Holy Ghost to others is not a gift whereby they originate the knowledge

of new truths, but a gift whereby they recognize and apprehend the old unchanging mystery, still receiving afresh the one revelation of Christ, ever approaching, never surpassing the comprehensive but immovable boundaries of the faith once delivered to the saints. This is the gift, the only gift, which we desire for our Church and for ourselves; for it is one which makes the written word a living word, which fills a church with joy, and seals a soul for glory. T. D. B.

40. Under this dispensation, worship is to be presented in spirit and in truth, not with many outward visible signs as under the law, but with two simple ordinances; the whole subject to the law of Christ, with the general rules given afterward by his apostles, ordaining that all things should "be done decently and in order," and "for the edifying of the church." J. A.—Some power the Church has in rites of decency and expediency and order, by virtue of this general canon (though it carries the face of a restraint rather than an allowance, and does not so much enlarge as moderate church-power), but, in the main matters, the Church can only *declare* laws, not *make* them; and, though in matters indifferent she can direct to what is suitable to order and decency, yet these directions should be so managed that they do not take away the nature of the thing, for though Christian liberty be *restrained* it must not be *infringed*. It is the sin of antichrist to usurp an authority over the Church of God; and it is the very spirit of antichristianism to *give laws to the conscience*. T. M.

Section 274.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 1-34.

1 MOREOVER, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also
2 ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory
3 what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first
4 of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scrip-
5 tures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scrip-
6 tures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above
7 five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some
8 are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of
9 all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the
10 apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.
11 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which *was bestowed* upon me was
not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God
12 which was with me. Therefore whether *it were* I or they, so we preach, and so ye be-
lieved.

12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that
13 there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then
14 is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then *is* our preaching vain, and your faith *is*
15 also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God
16 that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if
17 the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith *is* vain;
18 ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If
19 in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept.
21 For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. For as in
22 Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order.
23 Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then *cometh* the

24 end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall
 25 have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put
 26 all enemies under his feet. The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death. For he hath
 27 put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under *him*, *it is* mani-
 28 fest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall
 be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all
 things under him, that God may be all in all.

29 Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why
 30 are they then baptized for the dead? and why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest
 31 by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner
 32 of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?
 33 let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die. Be not deceived: evil communications cor-
 34 rupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowl-
 edge of God: I speak *this* to your shame.

DEATH separates us. The saints cease from their beneficent service. The prophets do not live for ever. Can we bear it? In imagination—thank God, not otherwise—we can put ourselves out into that bleak desert, a Christless world. We ask there, and then ask here, Will these graves ever open? Shall I see the face of my mother, my child, my friend, whose spirit was rich in the gifts and graces of God? See it in an eternity of blessed, unbroken, undivided life? I know I shall. Jesus Christ has come, has died, has risen from the dead. Because he lives, his followers, one with him, shall live also. The resurrection is not only his. It is the resurrection of every believer on earth. The life-power is common to both. It is within the Christian heart. When the undying Christ liveth in us, we can never die. Be his, and you are already immortal, mortality being swallowed up of life. The glorious expectation enlarges itself. In the day of his appearing you shall appear, and with him. We know not what we shall be, but we know that we shall be like him. F. D. H.

CHAPTER 15 is reserved for the treatment of a great foundation doctrine of Christianity, the Resurrection of the Body. Seeing that this doctrine was repudiated by some at Corinth, it became necessary that it should be thoroughly expounded, as to its grounds, its analogies, its necessity. And thus we obtain one of the grandest and most precious portions of the apostolic writings. For record of the appearances of the Lord after his resurrection, for cogent argument binding his resurrection to ours, for assertion and implication of the great doctrine of his inclusive humanity, for revelation of holy mysteries imparted by special inspiration, for triumphant application of the phenomena and analogies of nature, no extant writing can compare with this chapter in its value to the Church, its power of convincing the mind and awakening Christian hope, its far-seeing confutation of the cavils and scoffs of all after-ages against the doctrine of the resurrection. A.

The First Epistle to the Corinthians—written before the earliest gospel—exhibits the resurrection as already part of an apostolical creed. According to Paul, the resurrection then rested upon the testimony of more than two hundred and fifty still living eye-witnesses. According to Paul, the resurrection is the very corner-stone of the whole fabric of Christian teaching. According to Paul, if the resurrection could be disproved, the apostles had propagated a lie in the name of God, and the idea that God had pardoned sin was an empty delusion. This unchallenged Epistle, you will observe, as no other book in the New Testament, rests the doctrine of the resurrection upon its historical base, and pursues it to its extreme theological consequences. In the light of this great truth we behold the whole multitude of the glorified and risen dead gathered at length beneath the throne of their risen Redeemer;

and in them, according to no merely idealistic representation, but as an objective and literal fact foretold by the apostle, death is swallowed up by the victory of Triumphant Life. H. P. L.

1. The gospel which I preached. All along, the apostle refers to what the Corinthians *knew*; to what he had "*preached*" among them; what they had "*received*" and "*believed*," and "*in which they stood*." This personal, oral teaching of his, of which he reminds them, had commenced about five or six years before, and had continued for about two years; for three or four years he had been absent from Corinth. During the whole of that time the Corinthians, so far as we know, had not in their possession a single apostolic writing, except, it might be, copies of the Epistles to the Thessalonians, which Paul wrote from Corinth soon after his settlement there, and with which his course of sacred authorship began. Though the Corinthians, however, had no Christian *books*, they had the Christian *truth*. They had no New Testament, but they had the ideas it was one day to contain. They had no *written* evangel, but they had the gospel itself; they "*knew*" it and "*believed*" it. Paul appeals to that knowledge and belief. He refers to the fact of his vocal instructions and living ministry.

3, 4. The substance of Paul's testimony was that the Christ died for our sins—was buried and revived. To these two things, which the apostle asserted and testified of Christ, everything in theology, religion, and morals—everything belonging to spiritual truth, human duty, hopes and prospects—may be referred. God, law, sin, penalty, divine government, future retribution, merciful arrangement, with all kindred and correlative truths, gather round the first; spiritual life, sonship, salvation,

access to God, worship, song, favorable help, religious virtue, light in darkness, hope in death, faith apprehending and laying hold of "the things not seen"—these and all similar beliefs, experiences, and affections grow out of the second. Well considered, it ceases to be wonderful that Paul should compress into these two things the sum and substance of all he taught; that through them he expected to meet and to help humanity, to infuse into it a spiritual and divine life—"the life of God in the soul of man." T. B.

5. He was seen of Cephas. What passed then is hidden from all eyes. The secrets of that hour of deep contrition and healing love Peter kept secretly curtained from sight in the innermost chamber of his memory. But we may be sure that then forgiveness was sought and granted, and the bond that fastened him to his Lord was welded together again where it had snapped, and was the stronger because it had been broken, and at the point of fracture. A. M.—The Lord appears to the *fallen* Simon, and shows himself thus also in his second life the Saviour of sinners. He appears to Simon, *first* of all the apostles. Thus he is then really the Chief Shepherd of the sheep, who hath brought back with him from the dead the faithful shepherd heart.

7. Most probably the James here meant is the same who wrote the general Epistle, the brother of the Lord, held in high honor in the apostolic Church. He was thus one of those brethren who at one time did not believe on Jesus. The Saviour repays the life-long misjudgment of his brethren after the flesh by a special revelation to the eldest of them! What then took place between Him and James is surrounded with the veil of secrecy; enough: he casts the honest doubter down at his feet, and forthwith raises him to arise as witness of his resurrection. Not only Peter the penitent sinner, but also James the honest doubter, he sought out in their solitude. He *wins* those who thus grope about in twilight, if only they have a sincere desire after higher light in the soul. He who deliberately *will* not believe, ends, alas, by not *being able* to believe; yet—as we see in the case of James—to the upright ariseth light in the darkness. Van O.

10. More abundantly than they all. We are astonished at the amount accomplished by a man, a single man. The wonderful activity of our apostle imparts to him a kind of omnipresence in all the Roman Empire, over the vast extent of which the name of Paul projects everywhere its immense shadow. What would have been the changes in the history of the world if this single man had not been born? Without Paul, who can estimate the immense results of this change in the maxims, the morals, the literature, the history, the entire development of the race? *Monod.*—Work you, and God is working in you mightily. Labor more abundantly than they all, and God's grace is laboring in you. You

are not to wait for God, but to work; for God is beforehand with you all the while. You are to wait *upon* God, but you are not to wait *for* God before you obey his command to work, for God is already waiting for you, and always working. Work while the day lasts, work in reliance upon God, work in expectation of a glorious harvest, and the more you work, and the more earnestly you work, the easier it will be, and by and by your reward and your rejoicing shall be great in the Lord. G. B. C.—With what grand confidence, then, may the weakest of us go to his task. We have a right to feel that in all our labor God works with us; that in all our words for him it is not we that speak but the Spirit of our Father that speaks in us; that if humbly and prayerfully, with self-distrust and resolute effort to crucify our own intrusive individuality, we wait for him to enshrine himself within us, strength will come to us, drawn from the deep fountains of God, and we, too, shall be able to say, "Not I, but the grace of God in me." How this sublime confidence should tell on our characters, destroying all self-confidence, repressing all pride, calming all impatience, brightening all despondency, and ever stirring us anew to deeds worthy of the exceeding greatness of the power which worketh in us! A. M.

Verse 11 concludes what is preliminary to the main discussion, namely, that the message respecting the death and resurrection of Christ was taught unanimously by all the apostles, and was by them received as the foundation of their faith. "So ye believed." Thus ye put confidence in it; that is, in this message ye received Christianity. *Ruckert.*—In verses 12-19, Paul's object is to overset that unbelief in the resurrection of the dead by heaping one upon another the conclusions to which, if fully and legitimately carried out, that unbelief would lead. W. H.

12. How say some no resurrection. It is an appeal to men on their own principles. They believed one thing, that Christ rose, they denied another thing, the resurrection of man from death; but the belief of the first carried with it the second, the denial of the second destroyed the first. An argument this which would not be felt by philosophers who denied both things, but which, in respect to the men in question, admitted of no reply, and was adapted to excite the most serious apprehensions. As an appeal to their understanding, it convicted them of inconsistency and absurdity; as an appeal to their faith, it revealed to them issues which they had not considered and did not foresee. Putting together the different topics which the apostle rapidly touches—looking at their combined force as linked together in his cumulative argument—the result would seem to be this: That the error combated, if logically carried out, would just destroy

Christianity altogether—destroy it in its *facts*, its *doctrines*, its *hopes*, and its *evidence*. T. B.

14. Our preaching. This preaching related to Christ, the reconciler of man with God, the liberator from the guilt of sin, the author of the right to eternal life for those united to him, and the founder of the Church of God, which embraces all nations without distinction. Paul avers that this preaching would be useless if Christ were not risen. If the work of redemption had not been accomplished, then the merits of Christ would have been of no service whatever, and the proclamation of his grace, failing in objective truth, would have been a declaration of falsehood.

15. False witnesses. False testimony is the crime which is forbidden in the decalogue; how much more if this testimony relate to what God has done? The expressions are finely chosen so as to place the crime in as clear a light as possible. "We are found false witnesses." We are not only such, but we are discovered to be such; we stand in that position. "False witnesses," not deluded but deceivers—those who testify that they have seen what they have not seen. "False witnesses of God." *Ruckert*.—They affirm an impossibility. And they affirm that *God* did it! that he did what he did not do; "that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up." This pretended "testimony" could not, under the circumstances, be a mistaken opinion, an innocent mental error. It was a falsehood. We told a lie. We were "false witnesses"—false witnesses *for God!* the God of our fathers, whom we had been taught to reverence as "the God of truth"; by whom "words" and "actions" are "weighed"; whose "eyes behold" and approve the "upright"; and who "hates every false way!" T. B.—Yea, and among these men branded thus as false witnesses, if Christ did not really rise, Paul himself must be reckoned. That *he* should ever have such a brand affixed to him, that he should ever once be thought of as an impostor or deceiver, is there not something in the very manner of Paul's speech here that tells us how monstrous to himself, and surely as incredible to others, the very supposition seemed? W. H.

16. This argument is founded on the union between Christ and his members: they so share his life that because he lives for ever they must live also; and conversely, if we deny their immortality, we deny his. C.

Is not Christ raised. But who is Jesus, if his sepulchre remains closed and he lives in no other manner than all the God-fearing dead? In no case the only Son of God, in the scriptural sense of the word, but a man of like passions as we, incapable even as the least of his brethren to subdue the united power of sin and death. Even

less the faithful and true witness; because, if his unequivocal predictions concerning his resurrection have remained absolutely unfulfilled, there is no reason why men should thenceforth give unconditional credence to his word. Least of all, the absolutely sinless one; because, having died and remained in death, he may indeed on the cross have borne the penalty of our sins, but can not possibly have atoned for them. But thus neither is he the Redeemer, the Saviour of those lost but for him; and those who, with the hymn upon their lips, "Jesus lives, and we with him," bravely face eternity, are indeed the simplest of the simple. *Van O.*

17. Christianity is nothing else than the fact and the message that in the death of Christ the sin of the world is expiated and taken away, and in his resurrection a new life of the spirit and of glory is restored. Christ, the crucified and risen, is the foundation of the Christian Church. If Christ is not risen, it is not this or that point in Christianity, but Christianity itself, that goes. *An.*

18. The dying believer sleeps in Jesus. How incomparably refreshing this language of Paul, "they which are fallen asleep in Christ"! What a fragrance exhales from the sacred urn! How does it embalm the very bodies of those whom we have given in charge to Christ! They sleep in Jesus. It is in his arms they have fainted away, and he holds, sustains, and embraces them. This, which seemed a calamity, is foreseen and contemplated in the covenant. Their very dying has a connection with the blessed Saviour, for it is joined to his dying. J. W. A.

If there be no resurrection of the dead, then they "who have fallen asleep in Christ" have perished. In other words, the best, the purest, the noblest of the human race have lived only to die for ever. For even our adversaries will grant us this, that since the days of Christ there have been exhibited to the world a purity, a self-sacrifice, a humility such as the world never saw before. Earth in all its ages has nothing which can be compared with "the noble army of martyrs." Now you are called upon to believe that all these have perished everlastingly; that they served God, loved him, did his will, and that he sent *them* down like the Son of God into annihilation! You are required to believe that the pure and wise of this world have all been wrong, and the selfish and sensual all right. F. W. R.

19, 20. We not only sacrifice everything for nothing, but the sublime virtue which we suppose is promoted within us, why even that is a dream and a delusion! We are not made for it; we are not God-born, and can not be God-like, if we were only created to perish. And that is all, "if there be no resurrection of the dead." In this way, in effect,

Paul appeals to his own conduct, and to that of others like him, as a proof of the depth and intensity of their convictions in respect to the certainty of a future life. His asserted experience gave a character and weight to his words that made them a "testimony"; his consciousness of his veracity as a witness, and his confidence in the hopes that animated and upheld him, justified to himself the grand burst of feeling with which—waving off the sophistries of science, and presenting the truth as the explanation of his conduct—he uttered what embodied, in one pregnant sentence, the two ideas which had all along been interwoven into the texture of his argument: "But now *is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that sleep.*" T. B.

20. If those portions of the evangelic history which reach to the moment of the death of Christ are, in a critical sense, of the same historic quality as those which run on to the moment of his ascension, and if the former absolutely command our assent, if they carry it as by force, then, by a most direct inference, "is Christ risen indeed," and become the first-fruits of immortality to the human race. Then is it true that, "as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." No narrative is anywhere extant comparable to that of the days and hours immediately preceding the crucifixion; and the several accounts of the hurried events of those days present the minute discordances which are always found to belong to genuine memoirs compiled by eye-witnesses. The Last Supper and its sublime discourses, the agony in the garden, the behavior of the traitor, the scenes in the hall of the chief priest, and before the judgment-seat of the Roman procurator, and in the palace of Herod, and in the place called the Pavement, and on the way from the city, and the scene on Calvary, are true, if anything in the compass of history be true. I. T.

The Lord is risen indeed! Such, we are told, were the joy-inspiring words with which each Lord's-day morning, as they met for worship, the early Christians were wont to salute one another. And when we count over, as brought out in this wonderful chapter, all the benefits and blessings which that rising of the Lord secured, could they, we ask ourselves, have fixed upon a fitter phrase to express at once how rich their heritage, how full their joy, how bright their hope, how firm the foundation of their trust? W. H.—If Jesus Christ risen is indeed the object of our faith, then our religion is not merely the critical study of an ancient sacred literature. It is a vitally distinct thing from that. It is the communion of our spirits with a divine and everlasting being. Jesus Christ risen from his grave, arrayed in his glorious manhood, is seated on the throne of heaven. He is the mid-

point, the center of the great empire of living souls. He is in communication, constant and intimate, with ~~myriads of beings~~ to whom, by his death, and by his triumph over death, and by his enduring and exhaustless life, he is made wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. ~~Yes,~~ to believe in the risen Jesus is to live beneath a sky which is indeed bright. This is to believe that he is alive for evermore, and that he has the keys of hell and of death. H. P. L.—Now Jesus lives, and the resurrection is at the same time the amen of God and the subject of hallelujah to redeemed humanity. And this hallelujah shall never cease; for here triumphs, last and most glorious of all, the victory of life over death. Sing then now, O my soul, the psalm of life in this valley of the shadow of death! Arise with the Prince of Life to a new life, in which the old power of sin and death is overcome; and journey onward dauntless toward thine own grave, lighted on the way by the glory of Christ's resurrection! Van O.

22. The cause of death is Adam, and we die in him; therefore Christ, whose office is to restore what we lost in Adam, is to us the cause of life, and his resurrection is the foundation and pledge of ours. As the one was the original of death, so the other is of life. The apostle pursues the same comparison in the fifth chapter to the Romans, with this difference, that there he treats of spiritual life and death, but here of the resurrection of the body, which is the fruit of spiritual life. Calv.—As in Adam all die (his natural descendants are involved in his condemnation) even so in Christ shall all be made alive; that is, all that are spiritually united to him shall partake of his glorious resurrection. This glorious life is not given to all, but only to those who are united to him. As Adam, the principle of the carnal, corrupt nature, derives guilt and death to all his progeny, so Jesus Christ (who is opposed to him), the head and prince of the renewed state, communicates life and glory to his people. Bates.—The substitution of the suffering Christ for the perishing sinner arose directly out of the terms of the incarnation. The human nature which our Lord assumed was none other than the very nature of the sinner, only without its sin. The Son of God took on him human nature, not a human personality. As human nature was present in Adam when by his representative sin he ruined his posterity, so was human nature present in Christ our Lord, when, by his voluntary offering of his sinless self, He "bare our sins in his own body on the tree." Christ is thus the second Head of our race. Our nature is his own. He carried it with him through life to death. H. P. L.

As certainly as all men died in Adam, so certainly shall all saints be made alive in Christ. We-

are to believe the one as steadfastly as we believe the other. We have *perfect* evidence that all men die a natural death. On an equally solid foundation rests the proof of the restoration to life of all who believe in Jesus. The nature of the argument is such as not to admit the allusion to the wicked. The apostle is comparing Adam and Christ as the heads or representatives of two races or series. In consequence of the sin of Adam all men die a natural death. Through Christ the bodies of all, that is of all believers, shall be made alive. Adam is placed at the head of one series or race. All his descendants suffer by virtue of their connection with him. Christ is the leader of another series, not identical in number with the other, for it is expressly limited. In the very next verse we read, "Each in his own order, Christ the first-fruits, afterward they who are Christ's at his coming." The wicked are not Christ's; they do not belong to him. Christ is the first-fruits of all who sleep in him. The wicked are never said to fall asleep in Jesus. B. B. E.

24. What strictly belongs to the discussion is ended, for there is nothing more said of the resurrection. But the spirit of the apostle having once mounted up to that time when the resurrection has passed, or is about to take place, and the great spectacle has presented itself to his vision, then he feels constrained to finish the picture fully to that point, where all thought ceases, where all our imaginations fade away in the shoreless sea of eternity. *Then the end!* Not the end of all existence, but the end of this world as at present organized, the moment of the completion of all those things which belong to the divine plan of redemption, the end of time and the beginning of eternity, of which the apostle can say nothing further than "thus we shall be ever with the Lord." *Ruckert.*—At the end the work given him to do shall have been finished. Those given him by the Father shall have been found out, redeemed, sanctified, saved, and gathered all together into one; their enemies, even death itself, shall have been subdued; and the whole scheme of providence shall have been developed and wound up. The mediator shall then appear and give in to the Father a full account of his mediatorial undertaking, presenting to him the kingdom in that state of consummation to which he shall then have brought it, and receiving from him a clear testimony of his approbation. This is perfectly consonant with the idea that the Son shall retain and exercise his mediatorial authority over his own proper kingdom for ever. "This kingdom," says Theophylact, "he delivers to his Father by achieving and accomplishing the purposes of it." We may add the language of Calvin, who says, "He only intends that in that perfect glory the administration of the kingdom will not be the same as it is at present." W. S.

26. Christ is the Master and Lord of Death; he commits to his custody the bodies of his saints. As a shepherd keepeth watch over his flock by night, so is the "last enemy" compelled to watch over the dust of the holy dead; so is he stationed and commanded to serve, that they may be safe and undisturbed during their season of rest, and be raised again when the morning dawns! When that morning cometh, Death, having delivered up his trust, shall himself die; or, rather, he shall be destroyed and perish. Life will be conferred in every sense in which it will be possible. The gospel reveals not merely the immortality of the spirit, but the immortality of *humanity*; our whole nature, "body, soul, and spirit," shall be purified and perfected, and endowed with endless and incorruptible life! T. B.

27. The words, "he hath subjected all things under his feet," are borrowed from Ps. 8 : 7, and thus God is to be understood in the otherwise very remarkable omission of the subject. The "subjection" is nothing else than the act of the divine will, by which the Son is clothed with the power and the right to rule over all, and to subdue all enemies, as Jesus says of himself, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." *Ruckert.*

29. The punctuation should stand thus: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead? If the dead rise not at all, why are they then baptized for them?" A.—The following is the commentary of Ambrose: "Paul, in order to show that the doctrine of the resurrection was perfectly established, quoted the example of those persons who were so secure of a future resurrection that they were even baptized for the dead if one died before having received that rite, fearing either that the deceased would not rise at all or only to condemnation. Thus a living man was baptized in the name of the dead. Whence Paul subjoins, 'Why are they baptized for them?' By this example, he did not approve their custom, but by it he wished to show how firm was the faith in a resurrection." Paul speaks of a usage which was perfectly well known to the Corinthians, while contemporary notices of it are wanting to us. In favor of the interpretation above maintained, we have the very important consideration that every word is taken in its *natural* sense, and thus the exposition originates from the words themselves. Most, if not all, the other modes of solution do violence, in a greater or less degree, to some one if not to all the words in the clause. B. B. E.

30, 31. A second argument, which has no connection with verse 29, except what exists in the kindred nature of the object. The exertions of the Corinthians in their baptism for the benefit of others were futile if there were no resurrection; so likewise would the labors and sacrifices of the

apostle and his associates be folly if there were no resurrection. *Ruckert.*

31. By your rejoicing. This should read, "by the glorying which I have of you." A.—**I die daily.** Jesus Christ has not abolished our sufferings and our mortality, but he has made them what they never could have been without him, a bitter dew which develops and matures in our souls the blessed germ of faith. A. V.—Were this crucial test of discipleship the willing surrender of self in all its forms, its will, its pleasure, its righteousness, insisted on in the Church as it is in the gospel, we fear it would be found that the offense of the cross had not ceased. But, on the other hand, were all who are Christ's to show the holy triumph there is in giving up all for him, the deep joy in being partakers of his sufferings, the blessed life that comes through daily death in him, how powerfully would the ancient glory of the cross be vindicated. A. J. G.

32. The punctuation should stand, "What doth it profit me? If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink." A.—We must take the expression figuratively, as referring to some collision with hostile and infuriated men, not less painful to him—in some instances scarce less perilous—than if he had been cast among those hungry monsters from the desert, beneath whose bloody fangs so many of the earliest martyrs died. W. H.—If the future life were no Christian doctrine, then the whole apostolic life, nay, the whole Christian life, were a monstrous and senseless folly. For Paul's life was one great living death; he was ever on the brink of martyrdom. Figuratively, speaking popularly, "after the manner of men," he had fought as with wild beasts at Ephesus. Grant an immortality, and all this has a meaning; deny it, and it was in him a gratuitous folly. And again, if the soul be not immortal, Christian life, not merely apostolic devotedness, is "a grand impertinence." "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," was the motto and epitaph of Sardapalus; and if this life be *all* we defy you to dis-

prove the wisdom of such reasoning. How many of the myriads of the human race would do right for the *sake* of right, if they were only to live fifty years and then die for evermore? Besides, with our hopes of immortality gone, the value of humanity ceases, and people become not worth living for. We have not got a motive strong enough to keep us from sin. Christianity is to redeem from evil; it loses its power if the idea of immortal life be taken away. No! If there be in us only that which is born of the flesh, only the mortal Adam, and not the immortal Christ, if to-morrow we die, then the conclusion can not be put aside, "Let us eat and drink, for the present is our all." F. W. R.

Let but the day come when it shall be fearlessly and commonly professed that "Death is annihilation," and that therefore the pleasures of appetite, graced by intelligence, are the whole portion of man, and this horrible opinion shall quickly become parent to a giant cruelty, loftier in stature, and more malign than any the earth has hitherto beheld. Even the most sanguinary superstitions have had some profession of sanctity to maintain; a reserve, a saving hypocrisy, a balance of sentiments, which has set bounds to their demand of blood. But atheism is a simple element; it has no restraining motive, and must act *like itself*, with a dreadful ingenuousness. And with what vehemence of spite shall this monster, should he ever win the scepter of the world, turn and search on all sides for the residue of those who, by their testimony in favor of the future life, sicken his gust of pleasure, and make pallid his joyous and florid health. I. T.

33, 34. Here we have the conclusion of the discussion whether the dead are raised, together with a delineation of the moral corruption to which skepticism, on this subject, would lead, coupled with a solemn warning. The discussion is conducted before the whole, in order to confirm the believers, to restore the wavering to confidence, to confute the opponents, and, if not to convert them, at least to render them harmless. *Ruckert.*

Section 275.

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 35-58.

- 35 But some *man* will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?
 36 *Thou* fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou
 37 sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or
 38 of some other *grain*: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.
 39 All flesh *is* not the same flesh: but *there is* one *kind of* flesh of men, another flesh of
 40 beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. *There are* also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial *is* one, and the *glory* of the terrestrial *is* another.
 41 *There is* one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for *one* star differeth from *another* star in glory.

42 So also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorrup-
 43 tion: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in
 44 power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body,
 45 and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living
 46 soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit. Howbeit that *was* not first which is
 47 spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man
 48 *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven. As *is* the earthy, such
 49 *are* they also that are earthy: and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly.
 50 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.
 51 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nei-
 52 ther doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not
 53 all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last
 54 trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall
 55 be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on
 56 immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall
 57 have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is
 58 swallowed up in victory. O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?
 59 The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. But thanks *be* to God, which
 60 giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be
 61 ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know
 62 that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

HERE, on a lowly bed, in an English village by the sea, fades out the earthly life of one of God's hum-
 blest but noblest servants. Worn with the patient care of deserted prisoners and malefactors in the town
 jail for twenty-four years of unthanked service, earning her bread with her hands, and putting songs of
 worship on the lips of these penitent criminals—she is dying; and as the night falls some friend asks,
 "What shall I read?" The answer of the short breath is one firm syllable, "Praise!" To the ques-
 tion, "Are there no clouds?" "None; he never hides his face. It is our sins which form the cloud
 between us and him. He is all love, all light." And when the hour of her departure was fully come,
 "Thank God, thank God!" And there, in his princely residence, surrounded with the insignia of power,
 but in equal weakness before God, expired a guileless statesman, nobleman by rank and character, calmly
 resigning back all his power into the Giver's hands, saying, at the end, "I have been the happiest of men,
 yet I feel that death will be gain to me, through Christ who died for me." Blessed be God for the mani-
 fold features of triumphant faith! that he suffers his children to walk toward him through ways so vari-
 ous in their outward look: Sarah Martin from her cottage bed, Earl Spencer from his gorgeous couch,
 little children in their innocence, unpretending women in the quiet ministrations of faithful love, strong
 and useful and honored men whom suffering households and institutions and churches mourn—all bend-
 ing their faces toward the Everlasting Light, in one faith, one cheering hope, called by one Lord, who has
 overcome the world, and dieth no more! The sun sets; the autumn fades; life hastens with us all. But
 we stand yet in our Master's vineyard. All the days of our appointed time let us labor righteously, and
 pray and wait, till our change come, that we may change only from virtue to virtue, from faith to faith,
 and thus from glory to glory! F. D. H.

In following the train of argument contained in this chapter it must be clearly kept in remembrance that the error combated by Paul was not the denial of immortality but the denial of a resurrection. The ultra-spiritualizers in Corinth did not say, "Man perishes for ever in the grave," but, "The form in which the spirit lives shall never be restored." F. W. R.

35. Having now sufficiently considered the question respecting the *fact* of a resurrection, the apostle proceeds to the second inquiry respecting the *man-ner* of it, and the condition of the bodies which shall be raised. The transition to this point he

effects by raising an objection, "but here some one may say." We may conclude that the *mode*, the *how*, occasioned the principal difficulty to the speculating Corinthians; that the inconceivableness, the impossibility of the resuscitation of a dead and wasted corpse was perhaps the great stone of stumbling. Two questions are suggested. In the first place, how are the dead raised, and secondly, with what bodies do they come forth from the tomb? In the following verses the apostle gives the answer. *Ruckert*.

36. The emphasis should be laid on "thou" before "sowest." This would be effectually pro-

vided for if we rendered "that which thou thyself sowest." A.

37-44. The apostle distinctly states—it is indeed the only piece of positive information that he conveys—that the body which is to be raised is not to be the same body as was buried. It is to be as different from it as the seed which corrupts beneath the sod is from the blade and stem and leaf and flower and fruit which spring out of it. And why should it be thought wonderful that out of death a new life should spring, when we have in nature before our eyes such wonderful transformations in the vegetable and the insect worlds? Why should it be thought a wonderful thing that the new body, with which the soul in its new estate is to be clothed, should be a very different kind of body from what it wore before, when we have before us thus in nature such an endless variety of bodies of all kinds, as if in the exuberance of his creative power the Almighty delighted to spread out innumerable specimens of diversity, in form and qualities and functions, in the bodies celestial and terrestrial which his hand hath formed. Has that abounding, overflowing energy of the Great Creator expended, exhausted itself in things as they now are? Are no further, no higher illustrations and exhibitions of itself to be made in that new stage and state of things toward which our present mundane economy is progressing? If so great a change is coming as that these heavens and this earth are to undergo some mighty revolution, and to be transformed into the new heavens and new earth, wherein righteousness is to reign with undivided empire, might we not expect that the redeemed, ennobled, purified spirits that are to dwell upon that new earth and beneath those new heavens shall be wedded to corporeal frames of a constitution very different from that of our earthly bodies? And so the apostle teaches us it is to be: the weakness, the dishonor, the corruptibility of the present body to be exchanged for the power, the glory, the incorruptibility of a body so very different from the present, that to express that difference the apostle has to make use of language bordering upon the self-contradictory, and to call it, as distinguished from the existing one, a spiritual body. W. H.

38. Though the kernel die, be buried, and meet with all this change in these things, yet none of them can cause the nature of the kernel to cease; it is wheat still. Wheat was sown, and wheat arises; only it was sown dead, dry, and barren wheat, and riseth living, beautiful, and fruitful wheat. "God giveth it a body as it pleaseth him; but to every seed his own body." *Bun.*—The bodies of believers are lost only in the sense in which seed is lost which we cast into the ground. It returns to dust; but the day is coming when it shall be raised

and glorified. It is the day when our Lord shall bring with him all those who sleep in Jesus. They are as safe as the very angels. Their bodies in the tomb, their souls in paradise. J. W. A.

43. The body is sown in dishonor. When laid in the grave it is disfigured. With the principle of life its comeliness has also departed. But it shall be raised in glory. It shall shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of its Father. The most lofty and unattainable ideal of beauty which ever floated before the vision of the great masters of poetry and painting will doubtless fall far short of that which shall be realized when this mortal shall put on immortality. B. B. E.—Glory is the sweetness, comeliness, purity, and perfection of a thing. The light is the glory of the sun, strength is the glory of youth, and gray hairs are the glory of old age. That is, it is the excellency of these things and that which makes them shine. Therefore, to arise in glory, it is to arise in all the beauty and utmost completeness that is possible for a human creature to possess, in all its features and members inconceivably beautiful. *Bun.*—To the Christian, death is the liberation of the life-principle for an untold career of power and glory. The utmost grandeur of existence is opened to him whose "life is hid with Christ in God." Where science speaks of improvement, Christianity speaks of renovation; where science speaks of development, Christianity speaks of sanctification; where science speaks of progress, Christianity speaks of perfection. And where, in the whole vocabulary of science, are terms to match these three—incorruption, glory, power? J. P. T.

44. The natural body is such as is appropriate to the *psyché*, the animal *soul*, the life, anima, as it occurs in the three terms, 1 Thes. 5 : 23. The natural body is fitted to be an abode and an instrument for this animal life, being earthly and sensual like this life. Thus, also, the spiritual body is such as is fitted to the *pneuma*, the higher, the spiritual nature of man, being such in its material and its form as qualifies it to serve the spirit in its destined higher and nobler existence, which first begins in perfection when the spirit is released from the *body of death* (Rom. 7 : 24), and at the same time from the *psyché*, the animal life, which is probably regarded by the apostle as not destined to a continued existence. A clear description of such a body Paul was as little able to give as we ourselves. He naturally contemplated it as made of finer and more delicate materials than this earthly body. Besides this mere comparative indication of resemblance, he has asserted nothing in respect to its nature. Paul contents himself with a single thing, which he makes it necessary for man to believe, namely, that the new life is a purer, better life than this present one; it is a life of the spirit. *Ruckert.*—As the

soul, with all those instincts, appetites, capacities, desires, which fit it for the present scene of things, has got in this body of flesh and blood an instrument admirably adapted to its uses and ends, so he affirms shall the regenerated *spirit* be yet supplied with an instrument of its own, still more fully and exquisitely adapted to its higher, future, eternal life. There is the *soul-body* now; there shall be that *spirit-body* hereafter.

45. Our soul-being, or our natural being, he traces up to our first parent, derived from him by inheritance; our spiritual being he traces up to Jesus Christ, derived from him in an altogether different way. The first man Adam was made a living soul, and such a living soul as he got from his Creator, and turned it into by transgression, he has transmitted to all our race. The last Adam—the second great head or center of our humanity—is a quickening Spirit. W. H.

45-47. All that the first Adam had brought upon us of ignominy, degradation, and death, the second Adam took upon himself, and by taking it he put it for ever away. Sin had made human nature corrupt and foul, and the sinless Man cleansed it from the awful taint. Death had made man his prey, and set up, as it seemed, a universal empire, and the human Lord of Life broke in pieces that dread dominion. He did not merely reverse the sentence of death by an arbitrary annulling of it, but he did so by the actual victory of life over death, in the same nature which had become subject to death. The Life of God in man vanquished death; it was impossible that that life could be holden of death. The first Adam was made "a living soul," and therefore could only transmit to his posterity the natural life, tainted with sin, and containing in it the seed of death. The second Adam was "a quickening spirit," having life in Himself, and of power to impart that life to others: because the first Adam was "of the earth, earthy"; the second Adam was "the Lord from heaven." *Perovinc.*

49. **We shall bear the image of the heavenly.** It is a part of the plan of redemption that the *bodies* of believers shall rise. The mission of the Son of God will not be complete till every one of his followers shall have a glorified body like that of the risen Redeemer. He can not witness the full travail of his soul till the sea has given up her dead, till every tomb, where were deposited the remains of the feeblest of his disciples, has restored its trust, till those little ones, millions of whom fell asleep in his dear arms, shall spring to new life in their Father's house. There is no land of *forgetfulness*. The grave is vital now. It is a region of soft and pleasant slumbers. There is an almighty and an omniscient Watcher over all these sleepers. B. B. E.

If, even upon the rude materials which such hearts as ours present, that holy image of Jesus has begun to be formed, then let us be assured that, as fully and as perfectly as we ever bore the image of the earthy, the image of the heavenly shall yet be borne by us; for, though we know not what we shall be hereafter, we do know this, that when he shall appear we shall then be like him, for we shall see him as he is, body, soul, and spirit, all then transformed, transfigured, this very dull, opaque, corporeal frame wrought into the same image, radiant with the same glory, the whole man raised up to meet the Lord at his coming, and, by that seeing of him as he is, to be translated into his likeness. W. H.

50. It is nowhere asserted in the New Testament that we shall rise again *with our bodies*. Unless a man will say that the stalk, the blade, and the ear of corn are actually the same thing with the single grain which is put into the ground, he can not quote Paul as saying that we shall rise again with the same bodies. Nothing can be plainer than the expression which he uses, *Thou sowest not that body that shall be*. He says also, with equal plainness, of the body, *It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body; there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body*. These words require to be examined closely, and involve remotely a deep metaphysical question. In common language, the terms *body* and *spirit* are accustomed to be opposed, and are used to represent two things which are totally distinct. But Paul here brings the two expressions together, and speaks of a *spiritual body*. Paul therefore did not oppose *body* to *spirit*; and though the looseness of modern language may allow us to do so, and yet to be correct in our ideas, it may save some confusion if we consider *spirit* as opposed to *matter*, and if we take *body* to be a generic term, which comprises both. A *body*, therefore, in the language of Paul, is something which has a distinct individual existence. Paul tells us that every individual, when he rises again, will have a spiritual body; but the remarks which I have made may show how different is the idea conveyed by these words from the notions which some persons entertain, that we shall rise again with the *same identical body*. Paul appears effectually to preclude this notion, when he says, *Flesh and blood can not inherit the kingdom of God*. *Burton.*—In opposition to a gross identification of the present body with the resurrection body, which lies at the ground of the objection urged, Paul asserts a distinction between the two—a distinction, however, which does not exclude the identity of the fundamental substance or germ. Amid the constant change in our bodies, there is something fixed, which makes us recognizable as the same from the cradle to the grave—something which gives form, feature, and organization to this ever-moving current of matter which is momentarily condensed into what we call our bodies. And what is this but the plastic principle of life which is ever shaping the materials which nature gives it for its own uses, and in accordance with an inward law which molds us after our kind. *Lange.*

51. **All be changed.** *The better life, which the dead in Christ are living now, leads on to a still*

fuller life when they get back their glorified bodies. The perfection of man is body, soul, and spirit. That is man, as God made him. The spirit perfected, the soul perfected, *without* the bodily life, is but part of the whole. For the future world, in all its glory, we have the firm basis laid that it, too, is to be in a real sense a material world, where men once more are to possess bodies as they did before, only bodies through which the spirit shall work conscious of no disproportion, bodies which shall be fit servants and adequate organs of the immortal souls within, bodies which shall never break down, bodies which shall never hem in nor refuse to obey the spirits that dwell in them, but which shall add to their power, and deepen their blessedness, and draw them closer to the God whom they serve and the Christ after the likeness of whose glorious body they are fashioned and conformed. "Body, soul, and spirit"—the old combination which was on earth is to be the perfect humanity of heaven. A. M.

We learn that the intermediate state of the believer between death and the resurrection is not in all respects absolutely perfect. Doubtless it is a state of unmingled enjoyment. The separated spirit is in that condition which Paul denominates "far better." In one sense it may be perfectly happy. Its existing capacities for enjoyment may all be filled. But still, in another sense, it has not reached its goal. It is not clothed upon with its spiritual body. It has not received its last accession of delight. It must be reunited to its transfigured companion before the measure of its joys shall be perfectly full. It can not, indeed, be imagined, that the soul is unhappy, that through anxiety it suffers any degree of disquiet or pain. We may rather suppose that it is in a state of calm expectation and hope; that it looks forward with pleasing anticipations to the period when it shall enter its new home, fitted up with divine skill for its reception. Thus this anticipation itself, or as it might be called, in one sense, imperfection, becomes a source of delight, while still a richer experience awaits it when the corruptible body shall put on incorruption. B. B. E.

52. The last trump. The word "last," as Billroth has correctly remarked, does not mean that there are to be several blasts of a trumpet on the final day, and that this was the last which should be blown, but simply that it would be the trumpet of the last day, after which no more would be heard. Then follow the resurrection and the transformation of the living, the certainty of which is again declared by the remark, that it was necessary that the corruptible should put on incorruption, and the mortal, immortality. *Ruckert.*

53. It is HUMAN NATURE, in its essential elements, that is to inherit eternity; not an ethereal rudiment, just saved from the wreck of the former

fabric, and just serving to connect, as by a film of identity, the earthly with the heavenly state. It is THIS MORTAL that must put on Immortality; the very nature now subject to dissolution is to escape from the power of death and to clothe itself in imperishable vigor. Do we want at once confirmation and exemplification of this doctrine? We have both in the resurrection of the Lord. I. T.—Let us therefore look upon this flesh, not so much with contempt of what it was and is, as with a joyful hope of what it shall be. And when our courage is assaulted, with the change of these bodies from healthful to weak, from living to dead, let us comfort ourselves with the assurance of this change from dust to incorruption. We are not so sure of death as of transfiguration. "All the days of our appointed time we will therefore wait, till our changing shall come." *Bp. H.*

54. The man, in dying, begins to be what he fully is when he is dead, "dead unto sin," dead unto the world, that he may "live unto God," that he may live with God, that he may live really. And so we can look upon that ending of life and say: "It is a very small thing; it only cuts off the fringes of my life; it does not touch *me* at all." It only strips off the circumferential mortality, but the soul rises up untouched by it, and shakes the bands of death from off its immortal arms, and flutters the stain of death from off its budding wings, and rises fuller of life *because of death*, and mightier in its vitality in the very act of submitting the body to the law, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Men speak about life as "a narrow neck of land betwixt two unbounded seas": they had better speak about *death* as that. It is an isthmus, narrow and almost impalpable, on which, for one brief instant, the soul poises itself; while behind it there lies the inland lake of past being, and before it the shoreless ocean of future life, all lighted with the glory of God, and making music as it breaks even upon these dark, rough rocks. Death is but a passage. It is not a house, it is only a vestibule. The grave has a door on its inner side. We roll the stone to its mouth and come away, thinking that we have left them there till the resurrection. But, when the outer access to earth is fast closed, the inner portal that opens on heaven is set wide. Death is a superficial thing, and a transitory thing—a darkness that is caused by the light, and a darkness that ends in the light—a trifle, if you measure it by duration; a trifle, if you measure it by depth. The death of the mortal is the emancipation and the life of the immortal! A. M.

55-57. The discussion is concluded. The apostle has arrived at the point when his spirit, standing at the portals of eternity, can think of nothing more than that for its finiteness and mor-

tality have ceased. His own soul is now full of the elevation and glory of the object, and as a fine conclusion there flows from his pen a brief but striking triumphal song. *Ruckert*.—The sight of these millions of the changed and the raised of that resurrection-day standing up clothed with incorruption and immortality, rescued fully and rescued for ever from the dominion of sin and death, the thought that he too and all those who already were one with him in Christ should be sharers in the triumph of that day, swell the apostle's breast with the present sense of victory. With brightening eye, elastic tread, and tones that tell of triumph, he turns upon the tyrant death and exclaims, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" No idle challenge this; no empty vaunt; no making light of death by one who knows not what death truly is, what makes it not only a sad thing but a terrible thing to die. In the very height and rapture of his triumph over the last enemy, he is calm enough between the challenge and the thanksgiving to interject the statement, "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law." The deep consciousness of transgression, not simply the remembrance of individual, distinct acts of guilt, but the agonizing, overwhelming consciousness of an unclean heart, an ungodly life, the going into the divine presence with all that accumulated weight of a lifetime's iniquity upon the soul—this it was that in Paul's judgment gave its true sting to death, made it an appalling thing to die—not the pains of dissolution, not the tearing away from all the well-known and familiar things of life, not the darkness and the loneliness of dying. The barbed and venomous dart which death holds in his hand, and which he is ready, if the poison be not beforehand taken out of it, to thrust stingingly, witheringly, consumingly into the soul, is *sin*. W. H.

57. The penitent at first may mournfully say, "The sting of death is sin—the strength of sin is the law"; 'Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me' from this double destruction?"—but, becoming a believer as well as a penitent, and awaking up to the apprehension of the gospel and the hope it inspires, his tone changes from mourning to music, from despair to exultation, as he bursts forth: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God that giveth me the victory *through our Lord Jesus Christ*." True, 'the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law,' but Christ by his atonement takes away, for every penitent that believeth on him, the sting from death and the strength from sin, by procuring for him pardon, *in harmony with*

the principles of that law which is itself the strength of the one, and which causes *it* to become the sting of the other." T. B.—Therefore it is a victory not won by the believer himself, not achieved by the strength of his own will or the power of his own faith, for which Paul here gives thanks—it is a victory given, won by another, won by our great Lord and Master for us over death and the grave; when by becoming sin for us he drew its poison out of that sting of death, and stripped it of its power to inflict the second death upon the soul; when by putting himself under the law, magnifying it both in its precept and in its penalty, he made it to be a just thing in God to justify all who believe in him, and turned the very law that gave its strength to sin into a bulwark of defense securing the safety of the redeemed—won by him when he burst the barriers of the tomb, writing deliverance for our race upon his empty sepulchre, and in his own resurrection securing that of all his followers. And it is both a present and a future victory thus won for us by Christ; a present victory—Paul speaks of it as such when he thanks God for the gift of it even here and now—yet a victory to be only consummated when this mortal shall have put on immortality. W. H.—Such are the prerogatives and splendors in store for us: immediately beyond the grave a disembodied life of holiness and bliss in the presence of our Lord, and on the morning of the resurrection a reëmbodied life in the new Jerusalem. And may this crowning vision of glory never fail us under any burden of sorrow, in any weariness of labor, in any sharpness of conflict. Let us keep clean the feet which aspire to the golden streets, and keep clean the hands which would grasp the palm-branches of that final triumph. R. D. H.

58. An exhortation to steadfast confidence on the one side; on the other, to inflexible loyalty. "Therefore, my beloved brethren," thus he concludes, "be ye steadfast, unmovable," that is to say, in your most holy faith, in which ye are strengthened anew. Steadfast against yourselves, immovable against influence from without which might undermine and shake you. And not merely steadfast in the fiercely contested confidence of faith, but inflexibly *loyal* to our earthly and heavenly calling: "Always abounding in the work of the Lord." The task may be difficult, the strength small, the resistance great, the temptation to stop in the middle of our course almost irresistible, yet it is only to him that endureth to the end that the crown of life is promised, and no fidelity shall fail wherever it is *known*, by well-assured belief, that labor in the Lord can not possibly be *vain*. Van O

Section 276.

1 CORINTHIANS xvi. 1-24.

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of
 2 Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in
 store, as *God* hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.
 3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by *your* letters, them will I send to
 4 bring your liberality unto Jerusalem. And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with
 5 me. Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass
 6 through Macedonia. And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye
 7 may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go. For I will not see you now by the way;
 8 but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit. But I will tarry at Ephesus until
 9 Pentecost. For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and *there are* many adver-
 10 saries. Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he work-
 11 eth the work of the Lord, as I also *do*. Let no man therefore despise him: but conduct him
 12 forth in peace, that he may come unto me: for I look for him with the brethren. As touch-
 ing *our* brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you with the brethren: but his
 will was not at all to come at this time; but he will come when he shall have convenient
 time.
 13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be
 14 done with charity. I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is
 15 the firstfruits of Achaia, and *that* they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the
 16 saints,) that ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with *us*, and
 17 laboreth. I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that
 18 which was lacking on your part they have supplied. For they have refreshed my spirit
 19 and your's: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such. The churches of Asia salute
 you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church: that is in their
 20 house. All the brethren greet you. Greet ye one another with an holy kiss. The saluta-
 21 tion of *me* Paul with mine own hand. If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be
 22 Anathema Maran-atha. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. My *love* *be* with
 23 you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

SPIRITUAL indolence is, in these times, the worst enemy the Church has to encounter. It is not that men openly reject and make war upon her, but that they drowsily sleep around her altar. It is that men are content with such paltry satisfactions and tinsel comforts as the senses can bribe them with, heedless of the inward instincts that claim communion with the skies. It is that eternity has no awfulness to them, life no depth of meaning, enjoyment no obligations, bereavement no solemnity, suffering and sorrow no prophetic suggestions of an hereafter, the soul no aspirations, conscience no echo of God, Christ no enrapturing beauty in his holiness, the resurrection no pledge of heaven. It is that men can stretch themselves on their couches of ease, and slumber amid the sublimest mysteries and most stirring revelations of Providence. What we need, then, to bring back the Church to her life is to awake and arise, to harken and watch, to wait on the Holy Spirit, to snatch the film from our eyeballs, to lift our waiting souls to God like flowers parched with drought to the rain, to breathe in his blessed life, to be regenerated and consecrated by his inspiration of love communicated through Jesus Christ our Lord. Where the Church *lives*—where it holds its Master's spirit and truth, not as the mortuary of a deceased and buried benefactor, but as the inbreathing of a present inspiration—it will never suffer its members to sit idly with folded hands, looking lazily out on the white fields of harvest, where no reaper's sickle rings against the wheat, but it will send them forth to work, nerved with an impulse that no disappointment can palsy, no misgivings keep back. F. D. H.

THE way in which Paul in this chapter enters on new ground is very characteristic of the abrupt style of the Epistle. The solemn topic of the resurrection is closed, and now the apostle gives directions respecting a certain charitable collection to be

made by the Corinthians, in conjunction with other Gentile churches, for the poor at Jerusalem and in Judea. We have here an illustration of one peculiar use of Scripture. The event recorded here has long since passed; the temporary distress spoken of

here was long since relieved; even the apostle himself has written simply and entirely for his own time. And yet the whole account is living, and fresh, and pregnant with instruction to us to-day. We find that which was written for a church at Corinth contains lessons for the Church of all ages.

1. The collection for the saints. The Jewish converts in Jerusalem, being excommunicated and persecuted, were in great distress, and Paul summoned the Gentile converts in Achaia, Galatia, and at Rome to alleviate their difficulties. Observe how all distinctions of race had melted away before Christianity. Christianity unites first to Christ, and then, through Christ, each to the other. So it was that Galatia and Corinth worked together for Jerusalem, inspired with a common sympathy, a common affection, and therefore the Galatians loved the Corinthians and the Corinthians the Galatians. F. W. R.—The churches of Galatia and Phrygia were the last churches which Paul had visited before the writing of this Epistle. He was now at Ephesus, and he came thither immediately from visiting these churches (Acts 18: 23; 19: 1). These, therefore, probably were the last churches at which he left directions for their public conduct during his absence. *Paley.*

2. "Gatherings" would better be expressed "collections," a word universally understood. The apostle sets his face peremptorily against the great sham of charity sermons, and will have no part in stimulating Christians up to their ordinary duty of almsgiving. A.

The first day of the week. Christ, in the interval between the resurrection and ascension, keeps day with his disciples, meeting them by a weekly manifestation of his presence, as if purposely to give them stated times. All the teachers after him made it a point, in the same manner, to institute a piety whose rule is order, and whose liberty itself is regularity. Thus John is in the Spirit, and meets the vision even of his prophecy on the Lord's day. Paul observes that day, and gives it as a good rule to lay by what may go for charity on that day, that so there may be order in charity. H. B.

This simple rule decides *who shall give*: "Every one of you," rich and poor. It tells *when and how the consecration shall be made*: "Upon the first day of the week." Upon the Christian Sabbath the laying aside was to be done, that out of it the Sabbath offering, which was an essential part of the Christian worship, might be made. It directs *how much to give*. "As God hath prospered him," or as God has made him able to give. The rule is altogether a plain one to the man in whose heart the love of Christ reigns supreme. There is need of no more specific legislation even touching the amount to be given. A.

The principle is to be systematic, regular, and methodical in our alms, instead of casual and impulsive. All that is necessary in order to this is a little time, a little trouble (very little of either), and perhaps a little moral courage. Let us first settle with our own minds, as in the sight of God, what proportion of our income is due to works of piety and charity. The proportion will vary much; for it is clear that the same proportion will be much more severely felt when subtracted from a very narrow income than when it is the mere exuberant overflow of a very large one. No one man can lay down a rule for another in this respect; the only point of importance is, that we would satisfy, not the expectations of others, but the requirements of an enlightened and a pure conscience in ourselves, or, in other words, the claims of God. The proportion having been settled, all that follows is more or less mechanical, and may be done with a very slight expenditure of time. E. M. G.

Instead of waiting for one stirring apostolic appeal, they were to make charity the business of their lives. Week by week they were to build up a sum for Paul to send to Jerusalem. This contribution, slowly, systematically gathered, was to be a matter of principle and not of impulse. It is possible that one burning speech of Paul's might have elicited a larger sum. But Paul preferred the effects of steady perseverance to those of vehement emotion. F. W. R.—Such a rule insured to the givers a gradual discipline in Christian benevolence which would be far more beneficial to them and a far greater test of character than one great effort of it. A great effort may be made in a moment of excitement, but continual little efforts can only be made on principle. E. M. G.

This systematic plan of Paul's costs something and teaches something. It teaches, first, the habit of a thoughtful life; it reminds us continually that there is something which is owed to God, and therefore is not our own. In this world we are recipients, the pensioners of our Father; and it is well that, by an outward system, we should train our inward spirit to the unforgetful thought of our debt to him. It is well that we should remember this, not to wake our fear of his austerity, but to kindle our gratitude in answer to his love. It teaches, secondly, self-denial. It gradually lays the foundation of a life of Christian economy, not that which sacrifices one pleasure for another, for this is but mere prudence, but that which abridges pleasure in order that we may be able to give to God.

The measure of liberality was "as God hath prospered him." Observe, Paul establishes a *principle* here, and not a rule. He lays down no rabbinical maxim of one tenth or one fourth. He leaves the measure of each man's charity to his own con-

science. "Ask thyself," he says to each, "how much owest thou unto the Lord?" Men do not give as God hath prospered them, because they do not give systematically; that is, they who have the most are not they who give most, but the reverse. The reason of this strange difference is, that system is easier with little than with much. The man of thousands squanders. His luxury and his extra expenditure grow into necessities, and he then complains of his larger liabilities and establishment. Yet, withal, it would be a startling thing if well-meaning persons, who say they *can not* give, were only to compute how much annually is spent in that mere waste which the slightest self-denial would have spared.

5-10. He hoped to visit them, and to winter with them, but not yet, for he was to stay at Ephesus until Pentecost. He remained there, he says, "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." So it was not pleasure but duty which kept him there. Ephesus was his post, and at Ephesus he would stay. F. W. R.

10, 11. "If Timotheus come, let no man despise him." Why *despise* him? This charge is not given concerning any other messenger whom Paul sent: and, in the different Epistles, many such messengers are mentioned. Turn to 1 Tim. 4 : 12, and you will find that Timotheus was a *young man*, younger probably than those who were usually employed in the Christian mission; and that Paul, apprehending lest he should on that account be exposed to contempt, urges upon him the caution, which is there inserted, "Let no man despise thy youth." Paley.

12. Compare this passage with his earnest rebuke of the party of Apollos in the first chapter. On reading that, it might appear natural to say, "Oh, he can not bear a rival!" But behold, it was zeal for Christ, and not jealousy of Apollos. With Apollos he felt only hearty fellowship, for he greatly "desired him to come to them with the brethren." These are some of the fine touches by which we learn what that sublime apostle was, and what the grace of God had made him. We can but admire, too, the apostle's earnest desire to make Apollos stand well with the Corinthians. A meaner spirit, feeling that Apollos was a dangerous rival, would either have left his conduct unexplained, or would have caught at, and been even glad of, the suspicion resting on him: *why* did he stay away? But Paul would leave no misunderstanding to smolder. He simply stated that Apollos had reasons for not coming: "But he *will* come." This is magnanimity and true delicacy of heart. F. W. R.

13. **Watch ye.** Watch and pray against failures; but take heed of desponding under them. Be

content to travel as you are able. The oak springs from the acorn; but does it become a tree at once? The mushroom springs up in a night; but what is a mushroom? Cecil.—**Stand fast.** There is a courage that springs from an unspotted conscience, and wins the triumphs of generous good-will; the courage that goes into and out of all companies, counting-houses, caucuses, and churches, with an uprightness not to be bent, whether you bring threats, or sneers, or golden baits to tempt it; a courage that lifts up an unblenched face in the most formidable array of difficulties, satisfied to stand on the platform of the New Testament, and on God's side, to listen to the encouragement of the beatitudes and to hold to the breastplate of righteousness. **In the faith.** Manliness without faith, at its best estate, is all frailty; at its surest strength, it is unsteady; at its fairest promise, it is treacherous; at its fullest joy, it is empty. No doubt, on the other hand, there is such a thing as religion without manliness, pietism and not piety. Religion without manliness acts as if Providence were a tyrant, the world a prison, and man a slave. Instead of holding its clear look up with conscious and grateful dignity to the light, and standing face to face with all the cheerful and solemn facts of life, and looking straight into the eyes of every creature, as faith gives it a supreme right to do, it creeps to the prayer-meeting abjectly, is half afraid to own its cause, and shows its meager mind by abusive and unilluminated criticisms. Why can not the disciples of Christ show the world specimens of human character, as broad in proportions, as free in outline, as magnanimous in temper, as sensible in practice, as appreciative in taste, as liberal in accomplishments, as they are superior by their celestial calling? F. D. H.

Quit you like men, be strong. *Be men* in knowledge, in faith, in self-denial, in endurance, in effort, in diligence, in perseverance, in love. That which contributes to your inward piety will secure your strength. No increase of outward labor, no pragmatism hurrying from toil to toil, no forwardness of mere act, no almsgiving or other beneficence, will certainly make you mighty men of God. All these may exist where grace is low or even absent. But devoted attention to the Word and prayer will do it; faith and vigilance and love will do it; communion with a dying Saviour will do it; the "unction from the Holy One" will do it. J. W. A.—Let not your biography be summed up: "He turned to God in his youth, he then became lukewarm, being engrossed in the cares and the business and the social demands of the world, and a short time before his death he saw his mistake, and felt that one thing was needful. For years his spiritual life was barely sustained by the prayers of

friends and the weekly services of the sanctuary. He might have been a pillar in the Church, but he was only a weight." This be far from you. Oh, serve the Lord with gladness, be strong, quit yourselves like men, and abound in the work of the Lord! A. S.

19. Aquila and Priscilla. With Paul personal considerations were not lost in general philanthropy. It is common enough to be zealous about a cause, about some scheme of social good, and yet to be careless respecting individual welfare. But Paul's love was from Christ's own Spirit. It was love to the Church generally, and besides, it was love to Aquila and Priscilla. F. W. R.

22. There should probably be a full stop at "Anathema." Maranatha, "The Lord cometh," appears to have been a sort of Christian watchword, having no connection with the word before. Anathema, a curse, is Greek; Maranatha is Hebrew (Aramaic). It would be best to keep the former word in its Greek form, as being more generally un-

derstood by us, and to render the latter by, "The Lord cometh." A.—**Anathema.** Undoubtedly a curse, and may well awaken deep anxiety. It predicts the deepest misery; it includes absolutely every one who bears no love to Christ, although in the estimation of all he may be blameless. **Maranatha.** Jesus comes! Thus has the faithful Church exclaimed in joy through centuries, both to the believing and the unbelieving world. The promise of his coming is *certain*. It is guaranteed by the power, the majesty, the faithfulness of God, who never leaves his promise unfulfilled. His coming is inevitable for individuals and for all, for friends and foes, for time and for eternity. Oh, day of glory, when at last the veil shall be removed, and when the king shall be beheld in his full beauty by all such as love him with a pure heart fervently. But yet, oh, day of consternation and remorse, when all hidden things shall be revealed, all different fates decided, all doing and all leaving undone closed for eternity! *Van O.*

Section 277.

2 CORINTHIANS i. 1-14.

1 PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy *our* brother, unto the
2 church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia: grace *be* to
3 you and peace from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed *be* God,
even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all com-
4 fort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which
5 are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as
6 the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And
whether we be afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the
enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, *it is*
7 for your consolation and salvation. And our hope of you *is* stedfast, knowing, that as ye are
8 partakers of the sufferings, so *shall ye be* also of the consolation. For we would not, brethren,
have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out
9 of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth
10 the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that
11 he will yet deliver *us*; ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift *bestowed*
12 upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf. For
our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity,
not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the
13 world, and more abundantly to you-ward. For we write none other things unto you, than
14 what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end; as also ye
have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also *are* our's in the
day of the Lord Jesus.

THE style of life that is wanted now, to gain for the ideas and the spirit of our common faith a fair and cordial reception, is a life that flows evermore from the divine spring of a living and personal communion with the Father, and goes to help every brother, and to bless every neighbor; that, while it is hid with Christ in God, walks among men with the tenderness and dignity of the Son of man; that asks no

deference for its profession, but professes simply because it can not help telling its trust, owning its gratitude, honoring the Master; that by open and solemn reverence for the times and places of God's worship obeys the manliest of instincts; that finds an exercise for its Christian principle in all the companies, associations, resorts, employments of the world, and a temple for its praise in every scene of joy; that brings an added grace to all the innocent amenities and hopes of youth, and sets a more splendid crown on the saintly head of age; that sanctifies society and kneels in the closet; and that everywhere bears with it this meek, brave testimony, that "by the grace of God" it has had its conversation in the world. F. D. H.

THE CHARACTER AND OCCASION OF THIS EPISTLE.

If the First Epistle to the Corinthians is the most varied and comprehensive of Paul's letters, the Second is the most personal and impassioned. It is not systematic, argumentative, or expository, though full of matter and of force. Its distinctive merit is that, while everywhere exalting Christ, it shows us the man Paul of Tarsus, the follower of Christ, as he actually was in labors, anxieties, suspense, and suffering, how sensitive and emotional how tender and generous, and yet against false teachers how stern and resolute! It is not at all a treatise or essay constructed on a plan, but a warm outpouring of the apostle's heart. The letter was written in Macedonia, and very likely in the city of Philippi. D. F.

Paul had left Ephesus, where his First Epistle to the Corinthians had been written, and crossed over into Europe. The news of the effect of his former Epistle had been anxiously looked for by him, and he had sent Titus probably for the purpose of ascertaining it. At Troas, on his way from Ephesus, he had expected to meet Titus (2: 13); and, not finding him there, he crossed into Macedonia, where the meeting took place, and the expected tidings were announced to him. The general reception given to his letter had been favorable, but all had not submitted themselves quietly to it. A.—The majority of the Corinthian Church had submitted to the injunctions of Paul, and testified the deepest repentance for the sins into which they had fallen. They had passed sentence of excommunication upon the incestuous person, and they had already contributed toward the collection for the poor Christians of Palestine. But there was still a minority whose opposition seems to have been rather embittered than humbled by the submission which the great body of the Church had thus yielded. They proclaimed in a louder and more contemptuous tone than ever their accusations against the apostle. They charged him with craft in his designs, and with selfish and mercenary motives; accused him of vanity and weakness; declared that he was continually threatening without striking, and promising without performing.

Titus, having delivered to Paul this mixed intelligence of the state of Corinth, was immediately directed to return thither—in company with two deputies specially elected, to take charge of their contribution, by the Macedonian churches (8: 18, 22)—in order to continue the business of the collection. Paul made him the bearer of this second letter, which is addressed (still more distinctly than the First Epistle), not to Corinth only, but to all the churches in the whole province of Achaia, including Athens and Cenchrea and other neighboring towns, all of which probably shared more or less in the agitation which so powerfully affected the Christian community at Corinth. The twofold character of this Epistle is easily explained by the existence of

the majority and minority which we have described in the Corinthian Church. Toward the former the Epistle overflows with love; toward the latter it abounds with warning and menace. The purpose of the apostle was to encourage and tranquilize the great body of the Church; but, at the same time, he was constrained to maintain his authority against those who persisted in despising the commands of Christ delivered by his mouth. It was needful also that he should notice their false accusations, and that he should vindicate his apostolic character by a statement of facts and a threat of punishment to be inflicted on the contumacious. C.

It was under these circumstances, and with these objects, that he wrote this Epistle, and with a view of breaking the severity which he was apprehensive of being compelled to employ against the rebellious (see 13: 10) by, if possible, winning them over before his arrival. Hardly any of the Epistles is so various in character and style and so difficult to enter into and appreciate as this. "Consolation and rebuke, gentleness and severity, earnestness and irony, succeed one another at very short intervals and without notice." Of all the considerable Epistles in the New Testament, this, at first sight, and on our ordinary impression, contains the least matter of great and universal interest to the Christian Church. But first sight and our ordinary impression give way upon more mature examination. We shall find that—even exclusive of the very important passages which here and there meet us, full of weighty revelations and of comfort for all ages of the Church—in the midst of the personal portions we have continually precious texts of world-wide import occurring.

1. The Epistle opens with the customary greeting, the Apostle associating with himself Timothy, as he had done Sosthenes in the former letter. This mention of Timothy was opportune here, as we learn from 1 Cor. 4: 17 that he had been sent to Corinth to "bring them to remembrance of the apostle's ways in Christ." These associations of others with himself are never allowed to interfere in the least degree with the individuality of the Epistles in which they occur. A.

3. **Blessed be God.** There is no mistaking what is the inner spirit of Paul, by watching the ready gushings of his soul, the sentiments that first spring to his tongue when it is set free. On his heart was the image of his King, the King of kings; penetrating all his powers was the spirit of that King, his heart glowed with love, his life was filled with service, and when he spoke his lips were filled with blessing. **Father of mercies.** The begetter of them, the fountain from which they all spring, Christ the channel in which they all run,

flowing here, flowing there, irrigating a parched world like the streams of the East watering its arid plains. Father of mercies; no mercy in the earth of which he is not the Father. It is to be emphasized that it is as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ that He is presented to us as the Father of mercies, and also as the God of all comfort. J. D.

4. God had not failed him, but had matched his consolation to his servant's need with a redundancy which testified its source. Paul offers himself to their confidence, not as a self-cured physician, but as one whom God had first emptied and then filled with the fullness of his own effectual grace. The strength of his language is according to the depth from whence it comes, for he is speaking in the Holy Ghost; in the name of his Almighty Comforter he undertakes what God alone can truly do. Such is the rich fruit of an experimental faith, which out of weakness is made strong, not for himself only, but to bear in willing love the burdens of the weak. *Bonar*.—Christianity says, Your suffering blesses others; it teaches *you* sympathy, it gives *them* firmness and example, and reminds them of their frailty. How high a truth! for here is the law of the cross: "No man dieth to himself," for his pain and loss is *for* others, and, unconsciously to himself, brings with it *to* others joy and gain. F. W. R.

5. Suffering Christians are happy in the rich supplies of spiritual comfort and joy that in times of suffering are usual; so that, as *their sufferings for Christ do abound, their consolations in him abound much more*, as the apostle testifies. God is speaking most peace to the soul when the world speaks most war and enmity against it; and this compensates abundantly. The world can not but misjudge the state of suffering Christians; it sees, as Bernard speaks, their crosses but not their anointings. L. —As frankincense, when put into the fire, giveth the greater perfume; as spice, if it be beaten, smelleth the sweeter; as the earth, when it is torn up by the plough, becometh more fruitful; the seed in the ground, after frost and snow and winter storms, springeth the ranker; the nigher the vine is pruned to the stock, the greater grape it yieldeth; the grape, when it is most pressed and beaten, maketh the sweetest wine; linen, when it is washed, wrung, and beaten, is so made fairer and whiter; even so the children of God receive great benefit by tribulation; for by it God washeth and cleanseth, schooleth and nurtureth them, that so they may enter into their rest. *Cuvdray*.

6. This is a very profound text. The thought, stripped of the warm and genial language in which the apostle clothes it, and put into modern phraseology, is this: God teaches Christian people through the experience of Christian ministers. If God af-

flicts one of his ministers, it is that he may instruct many through that single stroke of discipline, and bring lessons for the flock out of the trials of the pastor. If he comforts one of his ministers, it is that the man so comforted "may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith he himself is comforted of God." According to this view, the doctrine of Christ would come to the people through the experience of one, whose difficulties and trials were their own. And coming to them thus, it would surely come to them with a living power. "For as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." E. M. G.

7. **Of the consolation.** God puts us to the school of sorrow here, and gives us the opportunity of "suffering with Christ," that by the daily crucifixion of our old nature, by the lessons and blessings of outward calamities and change, there may grow up in us a still nobler and purer Divine life; and that we may so be made capable—more capable, and capable of more—of that inheritance for which the only necessary thing is the death of Christ, and the only fitness is faith in his name. A. M.

9. **Sentence of death.** The shadow of this great death was permitted to come over him, not only to demonstrate the power and faithfulness of God as his deliverer, but for the more effectual destruction of all self-reliant confidence, and a corresponding increase of positive and simple trust in God. *Bonar*.—There is nothing so hard to force upon the soul as the conviction that life is a real, earnest, awful thing. Only see the butterfly life of pleasure men and women are living day by day, hour by hour, flitting from one enjoyment to another; living, working, spending, and exhausting themselves for nothing else but the seen and temporal and unreal. And yet these are undying souls, with feelings and faculties which death can not rob them of; their chance swiftly passing, and no second chance for ever! F. W. R.

10. **Delivered and doth deliver.** Salvation, though a work wrought already for eternity, is the daily lesson of a growing faith. He that is our God is a God of salvation, and our changes are ordered for the proving of his many names. Sickness, privation, and trouble of any kind are permitted as occasions of sustaining and delivering love. Grace knows how to deliver even from those snares in which our own folly or carelessness may have entangled our feet.

11. **Ye helping us.** He disarms their unfriendliness by calling for their help; by making them his intercessors he tries the surest method of rekindling their waning love. And thus the partial estrangement of which he had complained in his former letter, and which lingered still, though in a less degree, would be replaced by a deeper and

kindlier sympathy when God had shown himself attentive to their prayers on Paul's behalf. *Bonar.*

12. These words have the charm of *life* in them. They tell us how a man *lived*, not in smooth circumstances, in sunny weather, but how he lived when he was beset by many enemies, and girded round about by difficulties and sorrows; how he lived, not in conspicuous places merely, but everywhere, and through and through; how he lived, not for a short time, but *always*; for, manifestly, he is here giving information as to the settled principles and continuous moral character of his whole life. Here is the kind of life which each one of us should live or endeavor after as his own. A. R.

Our rejoicing. Not that we are to seek in ourselves for joy and peace when suffering under a consciousness of sin; not that we are to seek relief from the burden of guilt in our own virtues or graces; not that we are to look to our own works for justifying righteousness: in all these views of our case, we must rejoice only *in the Lord*; but, as those who are justified and at peace with God through Christ, we are to do the work of righteousness, which is peace, and enjoy the effect of righteousness, which is quietness and assurance for ever; we are to covet the rejoicing which Paul speaks of as arising from "the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world." There is the joy of justification and the joy of sanctification: one, the delight of being restored to God's favor by the work of Christ, and the other the joy of being restored to God's image by the work of the Spirit. J. A. J.

Testimony of conscience. It was not faultlessness Paul meant by the testimony of conscience, but integrity, moral earnestness in his work; he had been straightforward in his ministry, and his worst enemies could be refuted if they said that he was

insincere. F. W. R.—"In simplicity" this man had lived and was living. The word means singleness—singleness of mind, purpose, character, life. The opposite of this is *duplicity*, doubleness in speech, behavior, heart. Linked with "simplicity" is "godly sincerity," which perhaps brings in no characteristically different element. For the two are much akin. The word sincerity means, literally, translucence, clearness of mind. Such is the sincerity of a devout soul. It is called "godly sincerity" (literally, "the sincerity of God"), either because it is like his own or because it comes directly *from* him into the heart and life of its possessor. It is sincerity which comes from God, who thus gives us of his own and makes us partakers of the Divine nature. In making us good, he makes us like himself. By his own holy and sincere spirit he fills us with "godly sincerity." A. R.—The kind of Christian action and Christian speech wanted for the best exhibition of Christian truth is that where the word and the deed just follow and obey the meaning of the soul; where the feeling or conviction of the truth exactly measures, spaces, and shapes the outward profession; where the disciple holds it an equal infidelity to pretend to more or to less faith than he possesses; where, in fact, the expression is not nicely regulated by a conscious reference to its external effect, as being exemplary, but by a spontaneous and irresistible impulse of a holy purpose in the breast. F. D. H.

But by the grace of God. By its cleansings, its kindlings, its renewings, its growths; by its whole drift and discipline; by its gentle commiserations and unrelenting severities; by its inward strengths drawn immediately from the immortal strength of God, and by its outward leadings and guidings through duties and difficulties and changing days—by this grace of God we live, we have "our conversation in the world." A. R.

Section 278.

2 CORINTHIANS i. 15-24; ii. 1-17.

15 AND in this confidence I was minded to come unto you before, that ye might have a second benefit; and to pass by you into Macedonia, and to come again out of Macedonia unto you, and of you to be brought on my way toward Judæa. When I therefore was thus minded, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay? But *as* God *is* true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, *even* by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.

20 For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, *is* God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth. Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

1 But I determined this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness.
 2 For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made
 3 sorry by me? And I wrote this same unto you, lest, when I came, I should have sorrow
 4 of you all. For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many
 5 tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more
 6 abundantly unto you. But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in
 7 part: that I may not overcharge you all. Sufficient to such a man *is* this punishment,
 8 which *was* inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye *ought* rather to forgive *him*, and
 9 comfort *him*, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.
 10 Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm *your* love toward him. For to this end
 11 also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.
 12 To whom ye forgive any thing, I *forgive* also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave
 13 *it*, for your sakes *forgave I it* in the person of Christ; lest Satan should get an advantage
 14 of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices. Furthermore, when I came to Troas to
 15 *preach* Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my
 16 spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from
 17 thence into Macedonia.

14 Now thanks *be* unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh
 15 manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet
 16 savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one *we are* the
 17 savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who *is* suf-
 18 ficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as
 19 of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

THE same message comes to us all, offering us the same terms. Christ stands before each of us in the same attitude. And what is the consequence? A parting of the whole mass of us, some on one side and some on the other. "I, if I be lifted up," said He, "will draw all men unto me." The attractive power will go out over the whole race of his brethren; but in some hearts there will be no yielding to the attraction. Some will remain rooted, obstinate, steadfast in their place; and to some the lightest word will be mighty enough to stir all the slumbering pulses of their sin-ridden hearts, and to bring them, broken and penitent, for mercy to his feet. To the one He is "a savor of life unto life, and to the other a savor of death unto death." The broadest doctrine of the universal adaptation, and the universal intention too of the gospel as the "power of God unto salvation," contains hidden in its depths this undeniable fact, that, be the cause what it may (and I believe the cause lies with us), this separating, judging effect follows from all faithful preaching of Christ's words. He came to judge the world, "that they which see not (as he himself said) might see, and they which see might be made blind." And on the cross that process went on in two men, alike in necessity, alike in criminality, alike in this, that death's icy finger was just being laid upon their heart, to stop all the flow of its wild blood and passion, but different in this, that the one of them turned himself, by God's grace, and laid hold on the gospel that was offered to him, and the other turned himself away, and derided, and died. A. M.

15-19. Paul had intended to come to Corinth somewhat before the time when he was writing, and he had let the Corinthians know of his intention; but for reasons of sufficient weight he changed his intention, and so his opponents accused him of lightness, and with saying yea one day and nay another. He replies that the Son of God, the object of all his preaching, and, therefore, at once the orderer and the pattern of all his steps, was incapable of anything like vacillation. An unchangeable purpose could be read in the life and character of the Lord, and that purpose was the fulfillment of the promises of God—a fulfillment which God himself was ever working out in all Christians by the power of the Spirit, whereby we are all sealed as his. Paul could

not be capricious because his Lord and Master could not, and because that Lord and Master had sent his Spirit into the hearts of his disciples to be their guide and strength.

20. The promises are yea. We doubt whether these promises have strength as well as truth, and whether they are not mocking voices calling us over mountains which we can never climb. And still to us there is the same answer, and that answer is the life of Christ. To every doubt about our duty, and about our Father's love, and about our own hope of reaching him, the life of Christ for ever answers "Yea," and for ever, "Amen." Yea, they are the promises of God; yea, they are certain to be fulfilled; yea, you shall have strength to share

in their fulfillment. You may trust them when they call; you may follow them where they lead; you may hold by them in the darkness; you may call upon their aid when you are defeated: for to all of them the life of Christ, the love and holiness that speak in his life and death, for ever say "Yea," and for ever, "Amen." This is the fixed purpose of Christ, to fulfill the promises of God; and so the servants of Christ will reflect in their lives the same fixed purpose, which shall grow with their growth, and increase with their strength, and give steadiness to their youth, and energy to their manhood, and fire to their old age. For how can he vacillate or change who has the deep purpose of his life at once called into activity, and upheld with unchanging firmness, by the knowledge of the power of Christ? F. T.

21. Christ, says Paul, was true; and God has established us in Christ. Therefore, fickleness, duplicity, or deceit is impossible to us. Observe, too, that he does not assert his truth because of his apostleship, but because of his Christianity; for he associates the Corinthians with himself—"us with you."

23. **To spare you.** Had Paul gone to Corinth while they were unrepentant, his apostolic duty would have required from him severe animadversion. Now, it was to spare them this that he changed his intention. It was no caprice, no fickleness, it was simply tenderness to them.

24. The mere priest wishes to save men by his own official powers and prerogatives, while the minister wishes to help them to save themselves. See how exactly this verse expresses the distinction between these two spirits: "Dominion over your faith"; there is the very spirit of the priest. "Helpers of your joy"; there is the spirit of the minister—a desire, not to be a ruler, but a helper; not that *he* shall hold men up, but that they shall *stand*." Whenever you find a man anxious and striving to make men independent of himself, yea, independent of all *men*; desiring to help them, not to rest on his authority, but to stand on their own faith, that they may be elevated, instructed, and educated; *there* you have the Christian minister, the servant, the "helper of your joy."

3. He distinctly says, he had written to pain *them*, in order that *he* might have joy. Very selfish, as at first it sounds; but if we look closely into it, it only sheds a brighter and fresher light upon the exquisite unselfishness and delicacy of Paul's character. He desired to save himself pain, because it gave them pain. He desired joy for himself, because his joy was theirs. He will not separate himself from them for a moment: it is not *I* and *you*, but *we*; "my joy is your joy, as your grief was my grief." And so knit together are we beloved—minister and congregation! F. W. R.

4. Paul spake with tears; nor is it easy to withhold such expressions of grief when a man reposes in the bosom of a church, bearing simply the name of Christian; a stranger to its feelings, to its plans, and to its spiritual peace; a man whose power is felt in the political and commercial world *always*; in the religious world—*never*. A. B.

5. One of those cases where the delicacy of the apostle's blame has been obliterated by the translators. What he says is this, that the offender has not wronged *him*, but in a measure (he will not say this without qualification, lest he bear too hardly on him) all of them—the whole Corinthian Church. This meaning would be expressed thus: "But, if any hath caused sorrow, he hath not caused sorrow to me, but in part (that I press not too heavily) to you all." A.

6-11. The main defense of the apostle against the charge of fickleness in the non-fulfillment of his promise was, that he had abstained from going to Corinth in order to spare them the sharp rebuke he must have administered had he gone thither. A great crime had been committed; the Church had been compromised, more especially as some of the Corinthians had defended the iniquity on the ground of liberty, and Paul had staid away after giving his advice, that not he, but they themselves, might do the work of punishment. He gave sentence—that the wicked person should be put away, but he wished them to execute the sentence. For it was a matter of greater importance to Paul that the Corinthians should feel rightly the necessity of punishment than merely that the offender should be punished. It was not to vindicate *his* authority that he wrote, but that they should feel the authority of right; and the Corinthians obeyed. They excommunicated the incestuous person; for the Epistle of the apostle stirred up their languid consciences into active exercise. Accordingly he applauds their conduct, and recommends them now to forgive the offender whom they had punished. The forgiveness of man is an echo and an earnest of God's forgiveness. Even the mercifulness of one good man sounds like a voice of pardon from heaven. The man whom society will not forgive nor restore is driven into recklessness. This is the true Christian doctrine of absolution, as here expounded by the apostle. The degrading power of severity, the restoring power of pardon is vested in the Christian community.

12, 13. Paul gives an additional proof that it was not forgetfulness of them which had made him change his mind: this proof was his unrest at Troas. While there one subject engrossed all his thoughts, the state of Corinth; and the question, What would be the result of the letter he had sent? At Troas he expected to meet Titus, who was bear-

ing the reply; but, not finding him there, he could not rest, he could not take full comfort even from "the door which had been opened" for success. He left his work half finished, and he hastened into Macedonia to meet Titus. His argument therefore is, Did this look like forgetfulness? Did this make it probable that he "had used lightness or purposed according to the flesh"? Or did it show that he was absent unwillingly, putting force on himself, like a wise parent who refuses to see his child, though his heart is all the while bleeding at what he inflicts? This is the connection between the 12th and 13th verses. F. W. R.

14. Triumph in Christ. The words mean to lead captive in a triumph over the enemies of Christ. The metaphor is taken from the triumphal procession of a victorious general. God is celebrating his triumph over his enemies; Paul (who had been so great an opponent of the gospel) is a captive following in the train of the triumphal procession, yet (at the same time, by a characteristic change of metaphor) an incense-bearer, scattering incense (which was always done on these occasions) as the procession moves on. Some of the conquered enemies were put to death when the procession reached the Capitol. To them the smell of the incense was a savor of death unto death; to the rest who were spared, a savor of life unto life. The metaphor appears to have been a favorite one with Paul; it occurs again Col. 2: 15. C.

14-16. How finely characteristic of this apostle is the sudden rising out of his own distress into exultation over the gospel and the preciousness of Christ! Even that journey which Paul took in such depression of spirit was a triumphal march for the gospel, and spread a fragrant "savor of Christ," like the incense in the public procession of ancient conquerors. Sweet and life-giving was that savor to believers; unwelcome and so deadly to unbelievers. Thus the apostolic preacher felt himself to be lifted above the common range of things. He was on a mission of life or death in every place; and, far from viewing this as a function easily fulfilled, wondered and trembled at the charge—"And who is sufficient for these things?" D. F.

16. God's word has two edges; it can cut back-stroke and fore-stroke. If it do thee no good, it will do thee hurt; it is the savor of life unto life to those that receive it, but of death unto death to them that refuse it. *Bun.*—There is no more waste in preaching than there has been in making an atonement which is not received. The precious seed which, Sabbath after Sabbath, is thrown out upon the moral desert, which resists and sets at naught all the diligence of the husbandman, is not lost. It will bring forth fruit—the broad field, upon which at last shall be gathered the sub-

lime, and awful, and mysterious, and stirring magnificence of the end, is white unto the harvest. Every grain is there giving produce; every particle of gospel truth springs up and waves on that awful field. E. M.—To all, God's universal love is ready to impart life, and earnestly that love desires that all should be helped through the preached word; but, nevertheless, those who *refuse* the love which speaks to them may not escape the power of God. Those who refuse to *believe* the word must stumble at it. They hinder, indeed, through their resisting obstinacy, the sanctifying of God *within* them, for He will *drive* no man to conversion; but the sanctifying of God *on* them they can not hinder. Because they do *not choose* to be softened and enlightened unto eternal life through his word, it has upon them a hardening operation unto death. *Beeser.*

Who is sufficient? Our mission is to unfold the mysteries of God's word, to preach Christ, and to save souls from death. Waving the smoking censer, we stand between the living and the dead, between hell and heaven, seeking to intercept the downward progress of sinners to the one, and allure them up to the other. Every sermon we deliver tells upon the changeless destiny of those who listen to us. Eyes that gaze up into ours while we proclaim to them the salvation of Christ will soon see the Judge of all the earth. Who, then, is sufficient for a work so great, for responsibilities so overwhelming, save he who is filled with the Spirit? In vain our talents, our learning, our eloquence, our carefully prepared and gracefully delivered discourses—all, all will be fruitless without the unction and power of the Holy Ghost. *Winslow.*—Carry your poor inadequate resources to Christ! In his hands they become sufficient. He multiplies them. He gives wisdom, strength, all that fits for the task to which he calls us. Bring your little faith to him; he will increase it. Bring your feeble love to him and ask him to kindle it from the pure flame of his own, and he will make your heart burn within you. Bring your partial understanding of his will and way to him, and he will be to you wisdom. Bring all the poverty of your natures, all the insufficiency of your religious character, all the inadequacy of your poor work to your Lord. Feel it all. Let the conviction of your nothingness sink into your soul. Then wait before him in simple faith, in lowly obedience, and power will come to you equal to your desire and to your duties, and he will put his Spirit upon you, and will anoint you to proclaim liberty to the captives and to give bread to all the hungry. "Who is sufficient for these things" must ever precede, and will ever be followed by, "our sufficiency is of God." A. M.

17. Truth would be to some "the savor of death unto death"; for there can be no doubt that the

faithful preaching of the gospel sometimes kills. And yet is this gospel which destroys a sweet and acceptable savor to God even in them that perish. An awful truth! The gospel preached in fidelity ruins human souls. A "banquet"!—oh! know ye what ye say? It is sometimes death to hear it! And yet we must not dilute it. How the apostle rejoiced in that day that he had been uncompromising, and firm, and true! "not dealing deceitfully with the Word of God." F. W. R.

Section 279.

2 CORINTHIANS iii. 1-18.

1 Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some *others*, epistles of com-
 2 mendation to you, or *letters* of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle written in our
 3 hearts, known and read of all men: *forasmuch as ye are* manifestly declared to be the epis-
 4 tle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God;
 5 not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. And such trust have we through
 6 Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of our-
 7 selves; but our sufficiency *is* of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new
 8 testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth
 9 life. But if the ministration of death, written *and* engraven in stones, was glorious, so
 10 that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his
 11 countenance; which *glory* was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the
 12 spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation *be* glory, much more
 13 doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made
 14 glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that
 15 which is done away *was* glorious, much more that which remaineth *is* glorious. Seeing then
 16 that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: and not as Moses, *which* put a
 17 veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that
 18 which is abolished: but their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same
 19 veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which *veil* is done away in Christ.
 20 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless
 21 when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit:
 22 and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty. But we all, with open face beholding
 23 as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory,
 24 *even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

THE Christian is the world's Bible, and the only one it reads. If we take care that in this book be plainly shown the loving spirit, the grandeur, and the winning friendliness of Christ, then we shall see many hearts open to receive this actual testimony of Christian life. The strongest argument for the truth of Christianity is the man filled with the Spirit of Christ. The best means of bringing back the world to a belief in miracles is to exhibit the miracle of regeneration and its power in our own life. The best proof of Christ's resurrection is a living Church, which itself is walking in new life, and drawing life from him who has overcome death. *Christlieb.*—The *living epistle* needs no translation to be understood in every country and clime; a humble, gentle, holy, Christlike life preaches to the common ear all the world over. Let a man reveal his soul in the inarticulate speech of an earnest, pure, and truthful life, and this will be a language which the profoundest must admire, while the simplest can appreciate. The most elaborate discourse on sanctification will prove tame and ineffective in comparison with the eloquence of a humble, holy walk with God. Instruct your children in the knowledge of God's great love and mercy, but let them see that love cheering, animating, hallowing your daily life; describe to them the divinity and glory of the Saviour's person and work, but let them note how daily you think of Him, hear with what profoundest reverence you name His name, see how the sense of a divine presence sheds a reflected moral beauty around your own—and this will be a living and breathing theology to them, without which formal teaching will avail but little. *Caird.*

1-6. The close of the second chapter looked like boasting—it seemed like a recommendation of himself. In these verses he is replying to the possible charge. He declares that he wanted no commendation to them, no praise, no recommendatory letters (v. 1). Hence he infers that there was no vanity in his assertion, though it looked like a boast. For (vs. 5, 6) the trust he had was not in himself—the writer—but in Christ, the Spirit, the Author of the work. “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament.” Then it is that from these words, “able ministers,” he breaks off into a digression which occupies all the chapter, and is descriptive of the Christian ministry in contradistinction to the Jewish. F. W. R.

1. As some others. Turn to Acts 18: 27, and you will find that, a short time before the writing of this Epistle, Apollos had gone to Corinth with letters of commendation from the Ephesian Christians; “and when Apollos was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote exhorting the disciples to receive him.” Here the words of the Epistle bear the appearance of alluding to some specific instance, and the history supplies that instance. Paley.

3. Epistle of Christ. In this dark world Christ's countenance shines through the spirit and life of his people. Here he has need of such witnesses. He needs vessels to bear his name about among men; and for this purpose he chooses earthen vessels, that the power may be known to be his own. The life of his own disciples is the epistle in which he desires to be read. The evidence with which he will convince the world is the walk of the people whom he has bought with his blood and renewed by his Spirit. Arnot.—What is any description of Christianity upon paper as compared to the living epistle which all men can read? *We want Christian men and women*, not their books or their money only, but *themselves*. The poor and needy ones who, in this great turmoil of life, have found no helper among their fellows; the wicked and outcast, whose hand is against every man's, because they have found, by dire experience of the world's selfishness, how every man's hand is against them; the prodigal and broken-hearted children of the human family, who have the bitterest thoughts of God and man, if they have any thoughts at all beyond their own busy contrivances how to live and how to indulge their craving passions—all these, by the mesmerism of the heart, and by means of that great witness, conscience, which God in mercy leaves as a light from heaven in the most abject dwelling on earth, can to some extent read the living epistle of a renewed soul, written in the divine characters

of the Holy Spirit. They can see and feel, as they never did anything else in this world, the love which calmly shines in that eye, telling of inward light and peace possessed, and of a place of rest found and enjoyed by the weary heart! They can perceive the reality of the piety, which also reads to them in touching tones the glory of him who came to seek and save the lost; and their souls can not refuse some amen, however faint, echoed by their very misery, and from their yearnings for a good they have never known, to that earnest prayer of faith uttered, in the bonds of a common brotherhood, to one who is addressed as a common Father through a common Lord. N. M.

This third verse is one of those many passages of Scripture in which each of the persons of the blessed Trinity is represented as concurring and sharing in the work of grace upon the heart. The act of one is the act of all who are united in nature and purpose. But this work of sanctification is commonly ascribed *in a peculiar manner* to God the Spirit. It is his special office, to which he has voluntarily condescended in the economy of redemption, to create this abiding, soul-transforming principle of holiness in the soul. Goode.

5. Not sufficient of ourselves. When we fall back from the earnest longing for a consecrated life to the littlenesses and distractions and failures of each passing day, when we contrast the power of our creed, as an ideal, with the actual effect which it produces upon our habitual manner of acting and judging, it is impossible that we should not be filled with a profound distrust of ourselves. And indeed so it must be, so long as we look at ourselves. In that contemplation of self lies weakness without the prospect of support; failure without the promise of redemption. But, if it be well that we should learn by sad experience what we can not do by our own power, still to rest in this knowledge of despair is to renounce our birthright. Discomfiture and defeat are means by which God draws us closer to himself. Each fresh discovery of our helplessness, if we use the opportunity, reveals to us at the same time a present source of succor. We are alone, as it may seem, in the midst of the world, which moves on its way with irresistible force; we are beset and baffled by circumstances which lie wholly without our control; we dishonor and discredit by our faintheartedness the name which it is our privilege to bear; yet, even so, in isolation, in failure, in dejection, only let the thought of self perish, and we shall know that we are not desolate: *our sufficiency is of God*. B. F. W.—The belief of our dependence on God as the source of all spiritual strength grows with our Christian growth. The believer does not receive at his ingrafting into Christ a supply of vital energy sufficient to influ-

ence him in a holy manner all his life long. The branch must abide in the vine. New streams of grace must flow hour by hour; and, if this communication is interrupted, he begins to languish. This is the lesson we are constantly learning. J. W. A.

6. "Who hath made us able ministers" gives a wrong idea; it should be, "who hath enabled us as ministers," "given us power to become ministers," or "made us sufficient as ministers," keeping the same expression as has been used before. A.—In these words the great apostle affirms two most important truths. Vindicating his own position, but including, doubtless, with himself, all who share his ministry, he asserts at once its authority and its object; the commission by which it is empowered to act, and the essential quality of the religion it is constituted to diffuse. "God hath made us ministers"—such is the source of our qualification; "ministers not of the letter, but of the spirit"—such is the nature of the doctrine we have to declare. W. A. B.

"The letter" here, according to all the necessities of the context, is the law, called "the letter" because *written* on tables of stone; the whole dispensation, commanding and threatening—yet not quickening, of the Old Testament. This, as the apostle, in harmony with all his other teaching, declares, "killeth"; not merely negatively, in which it does not make alive, but positively; for, as Augustine admirably brings out, the true parallel and interpretation of the words are to be found in those other words of Paul, "I was alive without the law once," etc.; while "the Spirit" here is that dispensation of the Spirit of which he speaks (Rom. 8 : 1-11) as that in which, and in which only, resides the power of making men alive unto God. T.

8. The gospel is the word of the Spirit; his great instrument in the conversion of sinners to God. Hence this gospel, in opposition to the old dispensation (which only made known the terms of the law, and was therefore one of condemnation), is called "the ministration of the Spirit." This is its peculiar glory. The Spirit of Christ accompanies it to the hearts of his people, effectually renewing them thereby in the spirit of their minds, and working in them what it requires of them. And as this is the chief instrument employed by the Spirit in first regenerating believers, so also in *carrying on* the work of their sanctification throughout their earthly pilgrimage. Goode.

9. **Ministration of condemnation.** As a rule of life, without the atoning blood to pardon sin and without the grace of the Spirit to make obedience possible, the law had been but a ministration of condemnation. As a typical system, it had been destined to pass away on the appearance of the antitype which fulfilled it. In either respect it con-

trasted disadvantageously with the Gospel, which was at once endowed with perpetuity and a ministration of spiritual righteousness. H. P. L.

10. The law condemns and can not justify a sinner; the Gospel justifies and can not condemn the sinner that believes in Jesus. In the law God appears in terrible threatenings of eternal death; in the Gospel he manifests himself in gracious promises of life eternal. That presents to the view of the sinner a throne of judgment; this presents "a throne of grace." Every sentence of condemnation in Scripture belongs to the law; every sentence of justification forms a part of the Gospel. The law condemns a sinner for his first offense, but the Gospel offers him the forgiveness of all his offenses. Thus, in every point of difference, "that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth." Colquhoun.

11. **That which remaineth.** The present reign of the Spirit is to close the period of our world's annals. Nothing of more palpable, imposing form is to come after it; nothing is to take its place; nothing is to intervene between it and the final judgment. We need not be told at this late day, and after all we have seen of the quiet, noiseless progress of truth and righteousness, that *Christ's kingdom is not of this world*. The only throne which the Redeemer is ever to set up on earth is a throne in the heart; and this is to be done so completely and universally under the present *ministration of the Spirit* that all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest. Magee.

12. **Plainness of speech.** Ours should be a ministry whose words are not compacted of baldness but boldness; whose very life is outspokenness and free fearlessness; a ministry which has no concealment, no reserve; which shrinks from the weakness of a mere cautiousness, but which exults even in failure, if the truth has been spoken, with a joyful confidence. For a man who sees into the heart of things speaks out not timidly, nor superstitiously, but with a brow unveiled, and with a speech as free as his spirit: "The truth has made him free." F. W. R.

13-16. Paul's immediate purpose seems to be to illustrate the frank openness which ought to mark the ministry of Christianity. He does this by reference to the veil which Moses wore when he came forth from talking with God. There, he says in effect, we have a picture of the old dispensation—a partial revelation, gleaming through a veil, flashing through symbols, expressed here in a rite, there in a type, there again in an obscure prophecy. Christianity is, and Christian teachers ought to be, the opposite of all this. It has, and they are to have, no reserve, no use of symbols and ceremonies to overlay truth, but an intelligible revelation in words and deeds, to men's understandings. But he gets far beyond this point in his uses of his illustration. It opens out into a series of contrasts between the two revelations. The veiled Moses

represents the clouded revelation of old. The vanishing gleam on his face recalls the fading glories of that which was abolished; and then, by a quick turn of association, he thinks of the veiled readers in the synagogues, copies, as it were, of the law-giver with the shrouded countenance; only too significant images of the souls obscured by prejudice and obstinate unbelief, with which Israel trifles over the uncomprehended letter of the old law. A. M.

14. Vail untaken away. More than fifteen centuries had passed since the revelation of Sinai, but in the days of Paul the face of Moses was still veiled from the eyes of Israel. The tallith, used during prayer and the reading of the law, still perpetuated the symbol in every synagogue. And that which met the eye too truly pictured the spiritual fact which the eye could not reach. H. P. L.—“He came unto *his own*, and his own received him not!” They, who through a long course of centuries had been educated into expectation of the ever-blessed Visitant, perverted the expectation, reading it by the corrupted glare of their own ambition; and, though miracles more wondrous than those of their greatest leaders were performed before their eyes—miracles that identified the Saviour with the Angel and Guide of their whole past history—yet the infidelity of the heart prevailed to poison the reason, and they rejected him! W. A. B.

16, 17. The darkness, however, was not to last. “When it [the heart of the people] shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.” This was the promise. It is explained by the assertion that, “where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” For the Spirit of the Lord dwells with all who are really converted to Christ, since “the Lord is that Spirit.” In other words, to possess the Lord Jesus Christ is to possess the Holy Ghost, who is the minister and guardian of Christ’s presence in the soul. The immediate and practical conclusion is, that to be converted to Jesus Christ is to have escaped from the veil which darkened the spiritual intelligence of Israel. The converting Spirit is the source of positive illumination; much more therefore does he give freedom from the veil of prejudice which denies to Jewish thought the exercise of any real insight into the deeper sense of Scripture. That sense is seized by the Christian student of the ancient law, because in the Church of Jesus Christ he possesses the Spirit, and “where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” Freedom is not an occasional largess of the divine Spirit. It is the invariable accompaniment of the Spirit’s true action. It is the very atmosphere of his presence. Wherever he really is, there is also freedom. This liberty comes with the gift of truth; it comes along with that gift of which in its fullness the Eternal Spirit is the only giver. He gives freedom from error for the reason; freedom from constraint for the affections; freedom from the will from the tyranny of sinful and human wills. Such freedom is, in fact, a creation of grace: the sons of God alone enjoy it. H. P. L.

18. The original word in this passage, in the opinion of Locke, Macknight, and others, should be rather translated “reflecting as a mirror,” instead of “beholding as in a mirror.” Both meanings may be united. The mirrors of the ancients were made of polished steel, and reflected therefore upon the countenances of those who looked upon them a luminous effulgence, or glory. The apostle beheld as in the mirror of the Scriptures the glory of Christ, and this glory shone upon the face of the apostle. Moses veiled the glory which had shone upon his face. The apostle, on the contrary, would not veil his face; but by contemplating more and more the glory of Christ, endeavored to diffuse the knowledge of that glory to the world. G. T.

The brightness on the face of Moses faded away and left no trace. It effaced none of the marks of sorrow and care, and changed none of the lines of that strong, stern face. But, says Paul, the glory which we behold sinks inward, and changes us; as we look, into its own image. The power to which is committed the perfecting of our characters lies in looking upon Jesus. It is not the mere beholding, but the gaze of love and trust that molds us by silent sympathy into the likeness of his wondrous beauty. Love makes us like. We learn *that* even in our earthly relationships, where habitual familiarity with parents and dear ones stamps some tone of voice or look, or little peculiarity of gesture, on a whole house. And, when the infinite reverence and aspiration which the Christian soul cherishes to its Lord are superadded, the transforming power of loving contemplation of Him becomes mighty beyond all analogies in human friendship. A. M.—“There is a subtle law of assimilation whereby man, in his deepest life, receives an impress from the object on which his gaze is habitually fixed. Those who gaze heavenward are, as the apostle tells us, changed by the image of perfect beauty from one to another degree of glory. Those who look downward and earthward receive as certainly the stamp and likeness of the things beneath them; they lose their hold by a progressive declension on all that sublimates and ennobles human life. They sink downward and deeper, till at length they positively can see before them nothing but the animal, gifted doubtless with strange accomplishments, yet, after all and at bottom, only the self-seeking, perishing animal. H. P. L.

Judaism had the one lawgiver who beheld God, while the people tarried below. Christianity leads *us all* to the mount of vision, and lets the lowliest pass through the fences, and go up where the blazing glory is seen. Moses veiled the face that shone with the irradiation of Deity. We with unveiled face are to shine among men. He had a momentary gleam, a transient brightness; we have a perpetual light. Moses’s face shone, but the luster was but skin deep. But the light that we have is inward, and works transformation into its own likeness. So there is here set forth the very loftiest conception of the Christian life as direct vision, universal, manifest to men, permanent, transforming. A. M.

Section 280.

2 CORINTHIANS iv. 1-14.

1 THEREFORE seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but
 2 have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the
 word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to
 3 every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that
 4 are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe
 not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine
 5 unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your
 6 servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness,
 hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the
 7 face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of
 8 the power may be of God, and not of us. *We are* troubled on every side, yet not distressed;
 9 *we are* perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not
 10 destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also
 11 of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered
 unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal
 12 flesh. So then death worketh in us, but life in you. We having the same spirit of faith,
 13 according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and
 14 therefore speak; knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by
 Jesus, and shall present *us* with you.

Nor only will our fellowship with Christ show itself in our characters, and beauty born of that communion "shall pass into our face," but we are also called on, as Paul puts it here, to make direct conscious efforts for the communication of the light which we behold. God hath shined in our hearts, that we might give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus. Away with all veils! No reserve, no fear of the consequences of plain speaking! Our power and our duty lie in the full exhibition of the truth. We are only clear from the blood of men when we make sure that if any of it be hid it is hid, not by reason of obscurity or silence on our parts, but only by reason of the blind eyes, before which the full-orbed radiance gleams in vain. All this is as true for every one possessing that universal prerogative of seeing the glory of Christ as it is for an apostle. The business of all such is to make known the name of Jesus; and, if from idleness, or carelessness, or selfishness, they shirk that plain duty, they are counteracting God's very purpose in shining on their hearts, and going far to quench the light which they darken. Then, Christian men and women, you are bound to manifest what you believe, and to make the secret of your lives, in so far as possible, an open secret. Show Him forth, not your own emotions about him. Self-respect and reverence for the sanctities of our deepest emotions forbid our proclaiming these from the house-tops. Let these be curtained from all eyes but God's, but let no folds hang before the picture of your Saviour that is drawn on your heart. See to it that you have the unveiled face turned toward Christ to be irradiated by His brightness, and the unveiled face turned toward men, from which shall shine every beam of the light which you have caught from your Lord. A. M.

1-4. The first two verses of this chapter contain the principles of the Christian ministry; they embrace its motives—a sense of mercy and a sense of hope; they declare its straightforwardness, its scorn of craft and secrecy, its rejection of pious frauds and adroit casuistry. The connection of these two verses with the third is through the word "every." For a reply suggested itself to Paul's mind from some objector: "Every man's conscience has *not* acknowledged the truth of the message, nor the heavenly sincerity of the messengers." To

which the apostle answers, The exceptions do not weaken the truth of the general assertion; to every man whose heart is in a healthy state, to all but the blinded, the gospel is God's light; and those to whom it is not light are themselves dark, for the obscurity is in themselves and not in the truth. And then, having replied to this objection, Paul proceeds with the same subject, the apostolic ministry. F. W. R.

2. To every man's conscience. In the original structure of the soul there is an unwritten

revelation which accords with the external revelation of Scripture. Within the depths of the heart there is a silent oracle which needs only to be rightly questioned to elicit from it a response in accordance with that voice which issues from the lively oracles of God. In one word, the appeal of Scripture to the unbiased conscience or consciousness of man is, in great part, direct, immediate, irresistible. *Caird*.—It can not be that the ministrations of the truth are powerless upon the conscience, or the appeals of the gospel without effect upon the mind. It can not be that the providence of God in vain seconds these ministrations, or to no purpose adds its enforcements to the truth. Experience has proved that uniformly in these circumstances thought is awakened, and feeling more or less deep is kindled, and that men have evidence within them of the reality of that mighty agency which works upon the mind and heart in connection with a preached gospel. *E. M.*

3. Here the same image of the veil is again recurred to. It ought to stand, "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to them that are perishing." *A.*—Instead of reading, "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost," we may read, without violating any of the rules of the language, "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid by these perishable objects, by which," etc. The same word is used by Christ when he urges that we labor not for meat which perisheth. There is no veil on the gospel as in the days of Moses. If there is any veiling, it is done by the god of this world interposing those "perishable objects" that he may secure the destruction of the soul. *W. A.*

4. These are strong words, but they are those of the Holy Ghost; and no words are too strong to represent the absence of all spiritual light in most of those who live amid the clear shining of Christian day. It is an incantation, and the illusory process is ascribed to the evil one. Part of the malady, and its most fearful symptom, is that the blind man does not know that he is blind. *J. W. A.*—An awful thought! "The light of the glorious gospel" is shut out by ourselves from our lives, apart even from immortality. For worldliness does not consist merely in distinct acts, nor in thoughts of transgression, but it is the spirit of a whole life, which hides all that is invisible, real, and eternal, because it is devoted to the visible, the transient, and the unreal. Christ and the world can not exist in the same heart. Men who find their all in the world—how can they, fevered by its business, excited by its pleasures, petrified by its maxims, see God in his purity, or comprehend the calm radiance of eternity? *F. W. R.*

5. A rush for your praise or dispraise of us! only receive Jesus Christ, and esteem highly of

him, and it is enough. *We preach not ourselves*, says the apostle, *but Christ Jesus the Lord*. That is our errand, not to catch either at base gain or vain applause for ourselves, but to exalt our Lord Jesus in the hearts of men. *L.*—What Paul taught was not simply "God, man, nature, law, Supreme will, benevolent purpose, *all right*, right for everybody." Nor was it a sentimental Theism: "God, man, nature; love, beauty, trust, song; *all safe*, or very few having anything to fear." Nor was it a pure, simple, Christian Theism: "God, man, law, sin; a great prophet; a loving message; a verbal assurance; something said, taught; uttered in words, confirmed and ratified by miracle and martyrdom; a declaration and promise; repentance on one side, securing of itself forgiveness on the other." It was not these, or anything like these things. It might include something belonging to them all, but in itself it was something more. It was the assertion of a Divine *act*, not merely the assurance of the Divine *disposition*; a work done, not a thing said; something transacted, not uttered; something embodied in a person and a fact, not merely breathed forth and clothed in speech. It was a *supernatural* something, something done by God in raising up and sending forth a Christ; something done by the Christ as the sent of God. It was the manifested might of a Messiah, not merely the word or wisdom of a prophet, however inspired, and whatever he might reveal! *T. B.*

6. A more powerful figure of illustration could not be employed. The mind goes back to the sublime days of creation; to periods when no sun, moon, or stars beamed upon our chaotic globe, and then to the moment when light was born out of dread obscurity. Such was the utter darkness of the unrenewed soul; such is the work of grace. *J. W. A.*—The Gospel did not *make* God our Father; it revealed what He had ever been, is, and ever shall be; it disclosed him as a Father; and in the life of Christ the love of God has become intelligible to us. The Gospel threw light on God: light unknown before, even to the holiest hearts among the Jews. "Clouds and darkness are the habitation of his seat," spoke the Old Testament; "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all," declared the New. For out of Christ our God is only a dark, dim, and dreadful mystery. There is only an awful silence, which is never broken by an articulate voice. But all is brightness in the Redeemer's life and death. The Gospel threw light, too, upon man's own nature. Man—a dark enigma, a contradiction to himself, with Godlike aspirations and animal cravings—asks his own heart in terror, "Am I a god or beast?" And the Gospel answers: "You are a glorious temple in ruins, to be rebuilt into a habitation of God and the Spirit, your soul to be the home

of the High and Holy One, your body to be the temple of the Holy Ghost." It threw light upon the grave; for "life and immortality" were "brought to light through the gospel." The darkness of the tomb was irradiated, and the things of that undiscovered land shone clear and tranquil then to the eye of faith; but not until *then*, for immortality before was but a mournful *perhaps*. F. W. R.

Shined in our hearts. The first touch is that of God. While he does no violence to freedom; while he conducts his greatest marvel in new creation according to the laws he has impressed on the human mind; while he draws by the bands of a man; while he allows the soul to move agreeably to vision of truth—it is God who begins. It is the same God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness that hath shined in our hearts. In the first motion our hearts have no activity. The irradiation is of God. **The glory of God.** A phrase which in Hebrew idiom brings along with it ideas of surpassing light, such as transfigured the high priest within the veil when it radiated from the cherubic propitiatory throne. Such splendor demands a curtain or a mirror to dim and modify the blaze of godhead, and this has been afforded in the humanity of the Son of God. From amidst the central and consuming disk of insufferable deity there smiles and weeps on us a brother's countenance. It is "the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Our eye confronts, not the absolute godhead, but the mirrored and subdued glory of incarnation. Let that face, in that glory, by that light, be once beheld, and sight melts into believing, faith expands into salvation. J. W. A.—If Christ and heaven do not fill the heart, the world and self will; no man can get self out but by letting Christ in; you can not possibly remove the darkness but by letting in the light; and where this heavenly light is not admitted to reign spiritual depravity and darkness will reign. G. B. C.

7. The great Head of the Church has ordained three grand repositories of his truth. In the Scriptures he has preserved it by his providence against all hostile attacks. In the hearts of Christians he has maintained it by the almighty energy of his Spirit, even under every outward token of general apostasy. And in the Christian ministry has he deposited "the treasure in earthen vessels" for the edification and enriching of the Church in successive ages. *Bridges*.—Christ's ministers are no more than *earthen vessels*, which derive their whole importance from the preciousness of the treasure which they contain; and this treasure has been put in such frail receivers for the very purpose of making it thereby the more manifest that the whole excellency of the power felt in preaching the gospel is of *God* and not of *us*. J. S. S.

8-10. On the one side we see feebleness, trembling, ignorance, perplexity, a dying body, earthen vessels; on the other side, strength, courage, the demonstration of the Spirit, the excellency of the power, the immortal life of Christ. In that contrast, made a personal experience in our Christian discipline, lie the trial of character, the ministry of temptation, the shame and splendor of the cross, and the victory of faith which overcometh the world. Something like this we are continually seeing, as the common working of God's Spirit, in the characters of men. Not one in fifty of those who have their hearts made alive and earnest for Christian service are led that way by increased prosperity, by high health, by having their own way, by any personal advantages whatever. How many there are who first take firmly hold of the everlasting Hand, when they have felt all around them in the dark and could find no other hand! F. D. H.

10. It is in vain for us to say that we are relying on Christ, unless Christ be in us, slaying the old man and quickening the new. The one test of true faith is the inward possession of the Lord's Spirit; and between the sacrifice on the cross and me the sinful man there is no real union effected, nor any imputation and transference of merits, unless with it, proof of it, and consequence of it—and proof of it *because* consequence of it—there be likewise the *flowing over* from the cross to me of the life that was in him and of the death that he died. A. M.

11. Paul could bear to look on his own decay; it was but the passing of the human; and, meantime, there was ever going on within him the strengthening of the Divine. Thus his own contracted, isolated existence was gone; it had been absorbed into communion with a higher life; it had been dignified by its union with the life of lives. Pain was sacred, since Christ had also suffered. Life became grand when viewed as a repetition of the life of Christ. The apostle lived, "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in" his "mortal flesh." F. W. R.

13. Spirituality is always fresh, always vital, always real. No soul that has been touched with the simple majesty of the Sermon on the Mount, that has sat at the feet of the truthful Jesus, that takes its spiritual draughts from that fountain of which if a man drink he shall never thirst again, can consent to affront the eternal veracity by offering as a plea for piety, or a prayer to the Father, a hollow phrase, a sanctimonious manner, a technical expostulation, a language caught from the ancient lips of faith, but emptied of all its living significance and dwindled now into the drivle of make-believe. Paul's justification of his apostleship, "I believed,

and therefore have I spoken," is the only decent pretext for any preaching or any prayer. F. D. H.

Strong belief makes strong characters. We see this in common life. The man who clings to some great conviction, even though it be of error, becomes a man of energy. He has a hidden fire perpetually urging him to act. His motive power is sometimes wonderful to all beholders. Genuine belief propels its subject to a degree far beyond all that can be imitated by simulation and hypocrisy. The fixed idea is always driving on the wheels of fervid action. Men are strong and influential just so far as they have some immovable conviction, some urgent belief. And their strength lies in the precise direction

of this their inward judgment. It ought to encourage every believer who has a strong conviction. Let the truth which lies within his breast be raised to a red heat, and its influence becomes decisive. Where the truths which animate him are grand truths—where he holds them with a grasp that nothing can disengage or relax—where his soul is steeped in them day and night—where he delights in them—communication follows spontaneously. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, the manner speaketh, the behavior speaketh, the very visage speaketh. A man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost sends forth influence at every pore. His whole body is full of light, which he radiates on every side. J. W. A.

Section 281.

2 CORINTHIANS iv. 15-18 ; v. 1-10.

15 For all things *are* for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not ; but though our
16 outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us 'a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of
17 glory : while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen : for the things which are seen *are* temporal ; but the things which are not seen *are*
18 eternal. For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have
1 a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we
2 groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven : if so be
3 that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in *this* tabernacle do
4 groan, being burdened ; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing
5 *is* God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the spirit. Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord : (for
6 we walk by faith, not by sight :) we are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent
7 from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present
8 or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he
9 hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.

BEFORE every man, on his right hand and on his left, thronging, clamorous, and importunate, are the things "seen and temporal" ; those *single facts*, those special occasions which urge themselves upon his regard, but always with a false argument, because it is a *partial* argument. But there are also within the knowledge of every man more or less distinctly the things "unseen and eternal," or those universal and unalterable truths which must in the end rule his destiny for the better or the worse. To follow and to comply with the solicitations of the things "seen and temporal" is, in all cases, and with an infallible certainty, to go on toward damage, overthrow, misery. Nothing can avert the ruin, nothing dissolve the connection between the course and its issue, if that course be persisted in. But, on the contrary, to draw our motives from those principles that are universal, "unseen and eternal" is to follow a road which, by a like infallible necessity, leads to perfection and felicity. The line of truth and virtue is always (find it where we may) a line drawn from the circumference to the center ; and to no other center than that of the divine purity and blessedness. Scriptures, by a multitude of intelligible decisions, adapted to all occasions, distinguish between the things seen and temporal and those that are unseen and eternal ; and to take them always as our directory is to walk upon a path which, whether rugged or smooth, overshadowed or illuminated, shall bring us at length to immortality and joy. I. T.

15. The teaching of Christ contemplated the coming of a day for his disciples in which many things should be said to them which they could not bear then. In the later teaching that day is come. At first they are taught as those who are *with* Jesus, afterward as those who are *in* Christ. They know now that he is in the Father, and they in him, and he in them. When that consciousness is given, a standing-point is reached from which new worlds of thought may be surveyed. They are surveyed in the Epistles, and there the chosen teachers spread before us the unsearchable riches of Christ. They say to us, "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus"; and they show us what that state implies, of capacities, possessions, responsibilities, duties, and destinies; of relations to God and man, of connection with things in earth and things in heaven. They show that to produce and to perfect this state are the ends of the preaching of the word, of the institution of the sacraments, of the ordinance of the ministry, of the life and order of the Church; yea, of the divine government of the world, and of all that bears on human history: "All things are for your sakes." T. D. B.

16. By "the outward man" is meant the body—the body with its physical, organic, natural life. "The inward man" is not the soul merely—the spiritual part of our constitution as distinct from the material—it is *that*, as animated by that new and divine life which belongs to the regenerate. "The inward man is renewed *day by day*." This language not only implies that daily or regular renewal is needed, but that it can be had, and that it is the will of Christ that it *should* be had. There is a daily waste of spiritual energy which makes necessary to us a daily renewal. The Christian is not only called to duty and service which may in one sense invigorate while in another they exhaust; he is exposed to temptations which may suddenly take him at an advantage, to perils and dangers which he may not always pass through unhurt. All this occasions a sense of exhaustion, which needs to be met by a fresh supply of Divine strength. Every new day brings with it its demand for service, and its exposures to peril. The grace of yesterday will not do for to-day; the strength of yesterday was needed for itself, and was expended, we may hope, in doing whatever the day required. It will not be possible to meet the demands of a new morning in the wasted condition in which the man may have been left on the preceding night. Hence the force of the apostle's expression, and its beauty also, in presenting us with the idea of the renewal of the inward man *day by day*. T. B.

As a man does not make himself spiritually alive, so neither can he keep himself so. He can feed on spiritual food, and so preserve his spiritual strength;

he can walk in the commandments of the Lord, and so enjoy rest and peace; but still the inner life is dependent upon the Spirit as much for its after existence as for its first begetting. C. H. S.—That divine fire kindled within them is daily refining and sublimating them. Life from their Lord is still flowing and causing them grow, abating the power of sin, strengthening a fainting faith, quickening a languishing love, teaching the soul the ways of wounding strong corruptions and fortifying its weak graces; yea, in wonderful ways, raising them by their falls, and strengthening them by their very troubles; working them up to humility and vigilance, and sending them to Christ for strength by the experience of their weaknesses and failings. L.—This remains the law of life: *daily* renewal. Where no renewal of the Holy Ghost takes place, there the hand of faith is a withered hand, which can neither hold the old grace nor grasp the new; there tears of repentance are at best but tears of duty, or of a self-righteous deception of the soul. Ye who go about with the withered hand of faith and the dying fire of love, ye have neglected the law of life—*daily* renewal. A. C.

17. Paul recounts his manifold trials as things that had done him good, wherein he only gloried. In the full strength and at the lofty height of his joyous Christian life he speaks of these tribulations as working out present Christian graces and future Christian glories—as if from the very gate of heaven, casting a brief glance downward upon all that troublous sea of conflict and agony, "*These light afflictions which are but for a moment!*" and then lifting his eyes upward, crying, "*That far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*" C. W.—These sufferings are but temporary, nay, but momentary, this glory eternal. What heart is big enough to comprehend the full sense of these words? How might I dwell upon every syllable, light affliction, weighty glory, *exceeding weight*; affliction for a moment, eternal weight of glory! Hove.—The glory above is true real glory, and bears weight, and so bears aright the name of glory, which in the Hebrew signifies *weight*; and the apostle's expression seems to allude to that sense. Speaking of this same glory to come, he calls it *a far more excellent weight of glory*. It weighs down all labor and sufferings in the way, so far that they are not worth the speaking of in respect of it. Other glory is over-spoke, but this glory, over-glorious to be duly spoke, it exceeds and rises above all that can be spoke of it. L.

Afflictions speak convincingly. Many a poor Christian is sometimes bending his thoughts to wealth, or flesh-pleasing, or applause, and so loses his relish of Christ and the joy above, till God break in upon his riches, or children, or conscience, or health, and break down his mountain which he

thought so strong. And then, when he lieth in Manasseh's fetters, or is fastened to his bed with pining sickness, the world is nothing, and heaven is something. *If our dear Lord did not put these thorns under our head, we should sleep out our lives, and lose our glory.* *Baz.*—Our afflictions work out blessing for us, not only because there is laid up a reward for the afflicted according to the measure of affliction, but because afflictions make the heart more deep, more experimental, more knowing and profound, and so more able to hold and contain more. *Bun.*

18. Not at the things seen. The apostle looks not on the things that are temporal, even while admiring the display in them of God's invisible and eternal realities. He looks on them only as seeing through; uses them only as a medium of training, exercise, access unto God. Their value to him is not in what they are but in what they signify. Thus it is a true use of things temporal, that they are to put us under the constant all-dominating impression of things eternal. And we are to live in them, as in a transparency, looking through, every moment, and in all life's works and ways, acting through, into the grand reality-world of the life to come. *H. B.*—**At the things not seen.** The man like Paul that admits and believes in a world of truth and duty and spiritual reality, who converses daily with the invisible and the eternal; a man to whom all the material universe is but a glass through which the soul reads lessons of hope and faith and love; one whose eye ranges beyond the horizon of time and sense, and takes in an infinite prospect; one who sinks the body into subservience to the spirit, and who makes all the experience of life, its pains and pleasures, toil and rest, trials and triumphs, help to the development of a holy life and preparation for final blessedness: such a one is carrying out God's plan in his education. He looks to things that are unseen. *E. H. G.*

Things not seen are eternal. If there be anything in the world eternal, then that which is perishable, even though it may last for many years or many ages, must become infinitely insignificant in comparison. Conceive of things eternal, and we are at once in the presence of God. There is a love and there is a work which shall not pass away—a love which may be felt daily; a work which may be done daily. Surely we do not live without loving some one; but all our love, pure as it is, will certainly pass away if we do not love God. Certainly there will be a time when those who do not love God will love no one at all, nor be loved by any one. Nor do we live without doing something; nor yet, even the happiest of us, without having something to bear. A work of infinite vanity, a suffering of endless increase, unless we work in Christ, and bear

with Christ and for Christ and through Christ; but a work never to perish, a suffering yielding a multiplied harvest of blessing, if we work and suffer as the heirs of life eternal; if we firmly believe that there are things which shall not pass away. *T. A.*

1. "*House of this tabernacle*" should be "*tabernacle wherein we dwell*." The introduction of the word "*house*" here sadly mars the imagery. The apostle was a *tent-maker*; and the tents were made of the Cilician haircloth, which was also used for *clothing*. Hence the mingling of the images of dwelling and clothing, which in our version is unintelligible, because we do not wear the materials of which houses are built. "*Of God*" should be "*from God*." And after "*eternal*" a comma should be placed. *A.*

1-4. Is it not as easy to raise the dead as to make heaven, and earth, and all—of nothing? Look not on the dead bones, and dust, and difficulty, but at the promise. Let us lie down in peace and take our rest; it will not be an everlasting night nor endless sleep. If unclothing be the thing thou fearest, it is that thou mayest have better clothing. If to be turned out of doors be the thing thou fearest, remember that when the earthly house is dissolved thou hast a building of God, eternal in the heavens.

Baz.—If these things were apprehended and laid hold on, Christ made ours, and the first resurrection manifest in us, were we quickened by his Spirit to newness of life, certainly there would not be a more welcome and refreshing thought, nor a sweeter discourse to us, than that of death; and no matter for the kind of it. Welcome shall that day be, that day of deliverance! To be out of this woful prison, I regard not at what door I go out, being at once freed from so many deaths, and let in to enjoy Him who is my life. *L.*—Let dissolution come when it will, it can do the Christian no harm; for it will be but only a passage out of a prison into a palace; out of trouble into rest; to an innumerable company of true, loving, and faithful friends; into exceeding great and eternal glory. *Bun.*

If the grave is becoming populous, so is the region of life and light beyond its confines. That better land in one sense is becoming less and less unknown. The distance diminishes as the avenues are multiplying, along which throng holy desires, earnest sympathies, longing aspirations. *That* is not the world of doubts and phantoms. It is by eminence the land of life and of conscious existence. Its happy shores are even now *thronged* by earthly natures, perfected in love, happy in final exemption from sin; who still, from the very necessity of the sympathizing remembrances with which their bosoms overflow, cast down looks of loving solicitude to their old friends and companions, and would, if it were possible, break the mysterious silence, and utter audible voices of

encouragement, and reach forth signals of welcome. These, in the view of faith, are undoubted realities, facts which have a stable foundation, truths most comprehensive and fruitful. The contemplation of these realities serves to give new vigor to faith, a fresh reality to that communion of which Christ is the source and the center; to enable one to feel that, however weak and unworthy he may be, he is still a citizen of a mighty commonwealth, an inmate of an imperial household, connected by bonds over which chance and time and death have no power, with those who are now pillars in the temple of God. B. B. E.

6. Absent from the Lord. If you have indeed laid Christ, God-man, for your foundation, then you do lay the hope of your felicity and joy on this, that the Son of Mary is now absent from his children in his person and humanity, making intercession for them and for thee in the presence of his Father. And the reason that thou canst rejoice hereat is, because thou hast not only heard of it with thine ear, but dost enjoy the sweet hope and faith of it in thy heart; which hope and faith are begotten by the Spirit of Christ. *Bun.*

7. We all of us either live by faith or by sight; either upon things heavenly or things earthly. If upon the former, let us go forward; on the word of a God, everlasting glory is before us. But if upon the latter, alas, our store will be soon exhausted! *A. Fuller.*—**Not by sight.** Not yet, not yet can we behold face to face! Few eyes have seen deeper into God's majestic disclosures than those piercing ones that looked out from under the dark Hebrew brow of the Christian historian, Neander. But this was the motto that he kept inscribed on his study wall, making his library to open upward into heaven: "Now we see through a glass darkly, but *then* face to face." *F. D. H.*—After all, faith is life. Sight is royalty; but in order to reign, and before reigning, it is necessary to live; and sight is glory and felicity only to him to whom long before seeing it has been given to believe. *A. V.*—We read that death shall be swallowed up in victory, but never that faith shall be swallowed up in sight. So far is this from being the case, that in reality the sight which the soul shall enjoy in heaven will only prepare it for the exercise of still greater faith, and faith must continue to be the life of the soul for ever. Faith will indeed cease in regard to certain things, of which there will be experience. But that absolute *knowledge*, for which the soul is prepared by a life of faith here, is to be the ground, in connection with this precious discipline, of still higher *faith* hereafter. *G. B. C.*

8. We are confident. There is such a thing as Christian assurance. We may not feel it; but we must not lower the standard of Christian attain-

ment to suit our narrow lives. To Paul, ever on the brink of that world to come, his own immortality of blessedness was no peradventure. It was not a matter of doubt with him whether he was Christ's or not. *F. W. R.*—Surely the walk through the earthly life is very calm and peaceful when one has nothing to fear, but everything to hope; when by faith the sting is taken from death, by the fear of which countless men are slaves for their whole life; when the natural dread of this great, wondrous event is swallowed up in the joyful courage of Christian hope, which sees in death only a birth into a more perfect life. Those who long for home know that to them beyond death life is made sure, in communion with Him who says to his disciples: "Because I live, ye shall live also." Yes, "we are always confident," whether in life or in death. With calm longing, our glance rests upon the blessed home which lies before us, and life appears to us peaceful, and death sweet. The thorns of our pilgrim-path no longer wound us, and the entrance to the Father's house is no more narrow and fearful. The waste blooms into a garden of the Lord, and the dark valley becomes a light, lovely path. With refreshing peace within, praising God with heart and mouth, we joyfully walk toward the beloved home. *Muller.*

9. Wherefore we labor. Men intensely conscious of their own heavenly immortality, and profoundly in love with it, will act with an inextinguishable earnestness in behalf of fellow-men destined also to live for ever; in behalf of fellow-men under an eternal government; invested with eternal duties; constructed for eternal purity; susceptible of eternal happiness; exposed to eternal woes. What ardor of zeal and action, what pressure of responsibility attends the man who knows he is doing now, and is constantly to do hereafter, eternal deeds in behalf of eternal spirits. He is in fact, and he feels himself to be, an associate worker with the Deity, in a sphere crowded with objects immeasurable and interests unending and infinite. His whole great soul is given to the Lord's service. *White.*

10. We must all appear. The words should be rendered, "we must all be *manifested* before the judgment-seat of Christ"—a far more searching thought. If we were to employ a homely expression and say, "turned inside out," it would exactly express the intention of Paul: all that is inward now, and thus hidden, becoming outward then; all secret things searched out; every mask stripped off; every disguise torn away; whatever any man's work has been, that day declaring it; for it shall be eminently a day of *unveiling*, or drawing back the veil which now covers and conceals so much. It shall be a day of *revelation*, in respect of the hidden things of *glory* and of *shame*. *T.*

In the body. It is not for what we have done (taking the word in its literal meaning) that we shall be judged, but for what we have willed, in other words, done internally; that is, for the actions of our soul. It is not said that we shall receive according to what we have done *with* our body, but according to what we shall have done *being in* the body. But in every case it is the internal action which will be judged, the heart which will be sifted. A. V.

Good or bad. As sin is sin, everywhere and in all forms, the respectable and the unrespectable, the same in principle, and, when the appearances are different, the same often in criminality, the world of future retribution must, of course, be a world of strange companionships. We are expressly told, and it seems a matter of reason also to suppose, that the spirits of guilty men will not be assorted there by their tastes, but by their character and demerits. Death is the limit and end of all mere conventionalities. The fictitious assortments of the earthly state never pass that limit. Rank, caste, fashion, disgust, fastidiousness, delicacy of sin—these are able to draw their social lines no longer. Proximity now is held to the stern, impartial principle of inward demerit, that all may receive according to the

deeds done in the body. This is the level of adjustment, and there appears to be no other. H. B.—If the government of Jesus Christ over men is to be revealed on that day, it is clear that all men without exception must be judged. So linked, indeed, is the history of each man with that of others; so necessarily is each man's condition and character affected by that of all who have gone before him, up to his first parents; so truly do all human beings make up *one* race, *one* family, from the life of each being more or less connected with that of all, that the knowledge of the real history of even one man almost implies an examination into the real history of the whole human race. N. M.

The Scriptures do not deal much in elaborate descriptions of that great Day of reckoning, or of the sufferings beyond. What they are earnest to have us all know, and feel, and remember, is, that there is a reckoning, and that the justice and love of the Son of God and Son of man will control and guide it. What they would make certain to us is that our everlasting life is in actual peril from our daily temptations, that the Judge is just, and that there can be no change in his judgment. Grounded in these certainties, their one entreaty is, "Be ye ready." F. D. H.

Section 282.

2 CORINTHIANS V. 11-21.

11 **KNOWING** therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest
12 unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences. For we commend not
ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have
13 somewhat to *answer* them which glory in appearance, and not in heart. For whether we
14 be beside ourselves, *it is* to God: or whether we be sober, *it is* for your cause. For the
love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were
15 all dead: and *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto them-
selves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we
no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now hence-
17 forth know we *him* no more. Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature:
18 old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things *are* of God,
who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of
19 reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not im-
puting their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.
20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray
21 *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who
knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

To be reconciled to God! It is necessarily the first and greatest want of all his intelligent and immortal creatures who are in any way alienated from him. It is, as human history testifies, the vague, but real and imperative, longing of human nature itself, underlying all others more permanent than they. All systems of heathenism, with their sacrifices and penances, their instituted priesthoods, their costly offer-

ings, their destroying pilgrimages, their smoking piles and bloody immolations, are built at the base on this desire: to be reconciled to God! A sense of severance and remoteness from God, a vague impression of responsive repellency and condemnation on his part—this is at the bottom of all the unrest, the fearful apprehension, the dark anticipation, the swayings back and forth of religious opinion, oscillating for ever between skepticism and superstition, which confront us in history. And this each man will find for himself, in his own moral consciousness, as he calmly considers it, or lets it frankly and freely speak. It is, then, the instant suggestion of reason, it is the imperative mandate of prudence, that we should seek in some way at once, and in some sufficient and authorized way, to be "reconciled" to God. It is death to be at war with him! death certain, remediless, perfect, fearful! and, as it is the one infinite evil and mischief to be in any way dis severed from him, so to be in heart affiliated with God, to feel his strength, wisdom, and grace flowing in upon us, and filling our souls as with rivers of peace, every mind must instinctively recognize that as the highest possible attainment of our nature, in which that nature is consummated and crowned, made free of the world, supreme above chance, and ready for immortality! R. S. S.

In these verses the conclusion is drawn which the earlier verses had introduced—the high and self-denying position of the Christian ministry, and the nature of its work as a reconciliation of man to God. A.

The terror of the Lord. God hates sin as much as his awful threatenings say he does; and they who deny it deny the God of heaven. They deny his holiness, his real abhorrence of sin. They exhibit a false God to the human mind—a God without principle, a God without character. Such a God on the throne of the universe, and every angel would drop his harp, every devil shout in ecstasy. The bands of God's moral dominion would be broken, the pillars of eternal justice would fall, and heaven fall with them; the fires of hell burst forth unchecked, and rebellion stand triumphant on the ruins. Such is not the God of heaven. N. W. T.

Persuade men. We should expect that this loving Lord and Master, who knows so well what is in man, would present not a part but *all* of the grand motives that constrain men to newness of life, to repentance and faith, to the conquest of self, and the glory of goodness; and therefore that he would sometimes take away the veil from the misery and horror that belong to the second death; that he would bid his servants sometimes call men to "flee from the wrath to come," and by "the terrors of the Lord"—of the Lord—to persuade men; that he would show that God has not forgotten to be just, *because* he has not forgotten to be gracious, but that he governs the world by law—blessed and righteous law—which is "the mother of our peace and joy," just as truly now as before the gospel pity and redemption came. So He came, testifying of the judgment to come, of the sifting and separating, and shutting doors, and sundering of soul from soul, and opening of the house of torment, and punishment everlasting. Let us at least receive our Master's words as they stand. And, since we must all stand before his judgment-seat, he has told us beforehand, so that, repenting and believing, we might stand there with joy—not with grief—to pass from it to the right hand, and not the left, of the Son of man in his glory, our Shepherd and our King. F. D. H.

To speak efficaciously of the holiness and justice of Almighty God and of its future consequences—to speak in modesty, tenderness, and power of the approaching doom of the impenitent—must be left to those whose spirits have had much communion with the dread majesty on high. As the punish-

ment of sin springs by an ineffable harmony from the first principles of the Divine Nature, and infringes not at all upon benevolence, so must he who would rightly speak of that punishment have attained to a far more intimate perception of the coincidence of holiness and love than language can convey, or that can be made the subject of communication between man and man. As often as we set foot upon the region which sin has replenished with terrors, we have need of all the strength we can derive from the very firmest convictions. Fatal to his influence as reprover of sin must be a lurking skepticism in the breast of the public teacher. No care will avail to conceal the inward misgiving of the mind. The tongue of the speaker will falter, and the reserve, the indecision, the vagueness of his manner, or, still more, his artificial vehemence, will betray the secret of his doubts; and the infection of these doubts will pass into the heart of the hearer, and will serve to harden each transgressor in his impenitence. Not less necessary to the minister of truth is an unaffected, *sensitive* compassion toward his fellow-men—a compassion of that efficient kind which nothing has ever produced in the world but the gospel. The servant of heaven can execute his commission only so far as he gains access to the human heart; and there is no other path of access, no other law of affinity, no sympathy, but that of love. The compassions of man have a special property, which imparts pathos and persuasion to the awful announcement of God's displeasure against sin. The end of all reproof is mercy. If there were no redemption at hand, it were idle or cruel to talk of judgment. But the reprover is the very same as the herald of peace, and must draw his arguments, whether of terror or entreaty, from his own blended conviction of the certainty of the future punishment, and the reality of the means of escape. I. T.

12. The false teachers gloried "in appearance," in outward demonstration, such as eloquence, or they prided themselves in a superabundance of spiritual gifts. Paul says that the true apostolic credentials are those of the heart; and accordingly the proofs he had given were his truth, his sufferings, his persuasiveness, his simplicity, his boldness, and his life as being an image of Christ's. F. W. R.

14. "*The love of Christ*" should have been expressed "Christ's love." It is not our love to

Christ, but His to us which is spoken of. "*The love of Christ*" may mean this, but is ambiguous. "*Then all were dead*" should be "then all died." It does not follow, because one dies for another, that that other *was dead*, but it does follow that that other *died* by substitution, virtually died, inasmuch as one died *for him*. And thus we all died in Christ's death *for us*. A.—Under the law the great argument for obedience was God's sovereignty: "Thus and thus ye shall do"; "I am the Lord." Now, the argument is gratitude—God's love—God's love in Christ. "The love of Christ constraineth us." Paul often persuades by that motive, "Be God's servants for Christ's sake." T. M.—It is not our limited and weak love to God which gives us confidence, which casts out all fear, which begets hope, that maketh not ashamed, and which is the constraining power of our life; it is *God's love to us* which dwells in us, the infinite and eternal love of the Father through the self-sacrifice of the Son, revealed and imparted by the coequal Spirit. A. S.

15. Shall we think that faith will leave him who by it has received Christ to be as unconcerned as a stock or stone, or that its utmost excellency is to provoke the soul to a lip-labor, and to give Christ a few fair words for his pains and grace? No, no; the love of Christ to us constraineth us thus to judge that it is but reasonable since he gave his all for us that we should give our some for him. Bun.—To gaze on the great Sufferer must be for all hearts that are not utterly hard and dull to learn a higher unselfishness, a lowlier humility, a severer standard of Christian life. Jesus Christ did not die upon the cross that we might lead a self-seeking life, whether by indulging our lower appetites, or by wasting intellectual power upon subjects which, however gratifying to ourselves, achieve nothing for the honor of God or for the good of men. Only when we devote ourselves according to our measure to God's glory, and to the enlightening or cheering or supporting our brethren, do we enter into the practical spirit of our Lord's death. Self-renouncement is the temper of which his death was the highest expression. H. P. L.—His cross teaches us, not that each one is to be looking out for a selfish salvation, but that self is to be forgotten in hearty consecration to Him, and in free service to our brethren. It carries us clear of the belittling notions of escaping hell as a punishment or earning heaven as a reward. It makes the lofty sentiment of gratitude the mainspring of piety, faith the pure inspiration of righteousness, love the sacred secret of beneficence. F. D. H.

16. Though *He* was "of the seed of David," by genealogy a Jew, that he might be the Messiah ("for salvation is of the Jews"), now that he is "declared to be the Son of God with power," and

"appears in the presence of God for us," henceforth we know him as a *Jew* no more. He is of no nation, for "he died for all." The world is redeemed. The Christ of God was "a ransom for all." All nations are equal. "In him let the Gentiles trust." T. B.—"If I *go not away*," said the Saviour before he ascended, "the Spirit can not come"; if he *be away*, then, the Spirit is in the Church; the absence of the one is the presence of the other. Let me rather say that there is *no* absence, no distance, no departure, no separation! Christ *Himself* is one with his own Spirit, and with him templed in the heart of his mystic body. As Paul declares, we "know him no longer after the flesh"—we know him not by sensible perception or miraculous vision, but by a deeper, a better, an inward and abiding sense. W. A. B.

17. In Christ a new creature. When it is said that in Emmanuel God is *with us*, it is meant that his very nature is wrought into our nature, if in faith we *receive Him*, and ours into His. F. D. H.—Wherever the birth is, the life will more or less follow, and wherever the new life shows itself, the new birth must in some way have preceded it. Repentance is the look which such a man casts backward, contrition is the turning of his eye within, and the setting of his life upon a new basis, or what is termed sanctification, is his aim as he looks forward. Humility, and self-distrust, and dependence on God, and endeavor after an obedience not of the letter but of the spirit, and not of fear but gratitude, will be some of the features which mark this life. *Ker.*

18. Reconciled us to himself. It is by personal faith in his Son; a faith which each is competent to exercise; a faith which bath in it submission and sympathy; which leads us to devote ourselves entirely to Christ, and which carries us spontaneously into all such actions as we know will be dear and beautiful to him. This is the power, this the act, by which, through Christ, we are "reconciled to God." We are thenceforth, whether we ourselves are at once and fully aware of it or not—from that moment onward, if the faith has been a real one, the submission complete, we are the friends, the children of God; his children and heirs; partakers of his favor, and expectants of his home! R. S. S.

19. The Redeemer's work took its peculiar form as much to meet the feelings of the human heart as to meet the requirements of God's justice and truth. Our feelings toward God are naturally those of distrust and opposition, and that simply because we are sinners; and these feelings must be mastered before we can be saved; and they must be mastered by an unequivocal, overwhelming demonstration of love; and we have it in the cross,

for there "God is in Christ, reconciling man unto Himself." E. M.—Christ crucified is voluntarily devoted and accursed. He is paying the penalty which sin inevitably merits. He is reconciling sinful man to a holy, loving, but offended God. The truth which underlies and illuminates the apostolical language is the truth of our Saviour's Godhead. "It is," says Hooker, "the Son of God condemned, the Son of God, and no other person, crucified; which only one point of Christian belief, *the infinite worth of the Son of God*, is the very ground of all things believed concerning life and salvation, by that which Christ either did or suffered as man in our behalf." H. P. L.—God in Christ reaches down to help, save us; only asking that we, by love and faith to the Saviour, and corresponding or outflowing faithful moral effort, will let ourselves be saved. The gospel is an offer from above us. It is a divine interposition of deliverance embodied in a Divine Redeemer. If Christ were only man, he could not mediate between man and God. If he were only God, he could not mediate between God and man. Here is the eternal, inherent necessity of the mystery of the Incarnation, reaching back before Abraham was, into the bosom of the Everlasting Father, and there deriving the purchase-power to lift humanity to heaven. The vital point of the whole Christian system is the inspiring contact it establishes between the life of God and the life of man by a mediating Christ; a Christ qualified to mediate by bringing over the forces of the almighty Spirit to reinvigorate the wasted spirituality of the race, to restore and comfort the individual soul that will receive him. F. D. H.

20. The gospel may be described in two sentences: GOD IS RECONCILED, FOR MAN IS REDEEMED. God is reconciled, not because sin is made light of or forgotten, but because it has been expiated at an infinite cost in the person of his only-begotten Son. The gospel is the good news of the reconciliation to all men everywhere; and the men who are commissioned to declare it to their fellows convey the *word of reconciliation*, praying men in Christ's stead to be *reconciled to God*. A. W. T.—It was Christ's work to reconcile God to man. That is done, and done for ever. "By one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." So far, then, as we represent anything besides this as *necessary*, so far do we frustrate it, and turn the Christian ministry into a sacrificial priesthood. We are doing as did the Galatians of old. Therefore the whole work of the Christian ministry consists in declaring God as reconciled to man, and in beseeching with every variety of illustration, and every degree of earnestness, men to become reconciled to God. F. W. R.

This is the marvel, that peace has been made by

God himself, though justly offended, yet beseeching us. "For we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us." What is this? Has He been outraged, and yet does He beseech us? Yes, for he is God, and therefore he beseeches us as a benignant Father. And see what happens; the Son of Him that beseeches us—not a man, not an angel, nor an archangel, nor a servant of any kind, is the Mediator *Chrys.*—God is suppliant to his creature. He who agonized beneath created hands—still, in the perpetuated spirit of that miraculous love, as it were protracts his own humiliation, and beseeches the beings he has made to make him happy by making themselves blessed. It is his highest glory to conciliate divine omnipotence with the unimpaired freedom of man, that "his people" should be "*willing in the day of his power.*" His offer is *universal*, for he would be absolved before heaven and earth when that offer is despised. W. A. B.

21. **Made sin for us.** As we stand in spirit by the side of the sleeping disciples, and watch their suffering Lord; as we hear him cry from the cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* we feel we are entering into the communion of a deeper and more mysterious sorrow than the world has ever known, which becomes bright with an awful meaning then, and only then, when we recognize in it the reality of a Divine sacrifice for the sins of the world; the offering up of Him, who "though He knew no sin, yet was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." *Tulloch.*—How was Christ made sin? There is no other explanation conceivable than that of saying that the sin of the world was imputed to Him, or, which amounts to the same thing, that the word *sin* is here, as elsewhere, equivalent to sin-offering: *Christ was made a sin-offering for us.* This sin-offering turns away that wrath of God which had thrown sinners to an infinite distance from him. It is called a propitiation: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and *he is the propitiation for our sins.*" E. M. G.

Made the righteousness of God in him. What is *ours* passes over to him; what is *his* passes over to us. We become righteousness! As if, from the moment that we believe God's testimony to the righteous one and his work, we and righteousness become one and the same thing. So completely are we justified, and lifted up into the same righteous level or standing which the righteous one himself occupies in the sight of God. Thus are we "complete in him," "found in him," recognized as one with him in righteousness, and entitled to possess all he possesses. *Bonar.*

19-21. This is one of the happiest summaries on record of the gospel; of the true character of the ministry; and of the manner in which this min-

istry should be exercised. Precious gospel ! a reconciling God in Christ. Solemn ministry ! ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us. Touching discharge of our high function ! pleading with men, for Christ's sake, to be reconciled to him, against whom they have rebelled, but who yet seeks to cover them, through faith in the Crucified, with the rich robe of his own perfect righteousness. J. S. S.

Section 283.

2 CORINTHIANS vi. 1-18 ; vii. 1.

- 1 We then, *as* workers together *with him*, beseech *you* also that ye receive not the grace
2 of God in vain. (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee : behold, now *is* the accepted time ; behold, now *is* the day of salvation.)
- 3 Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed : but in all *things* approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings ; by
4 pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the
5 right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report : as deceivers, and *yet* true ; as unknown, and *yet* well known ; as dying, and, behold, we live ; as
6 chastened, and not killed ; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing ; as poor, yet making many rich ; as having nothing, and *yet* possessing all things.
- 7 O *ye* Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged. Ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels. Now for a recompense in the same,
8 (I speak as unto *my* children,) be ye also enlarged. Be ye not unequally yoked together
9 with unbelievers : for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness ? and what communion hath light with darkness ? And what concord hath Christ with Belial ? or
10 what part hath he that believeth with an infidel ? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols ? for ye are the temple of the living God ; as God hath said, I will dwell in
11 them, and walk in *them* ; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean
12 thing ; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and
13 daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

HAVING glanced from the earthly tabernacle to the "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," from the "light affliction" befalling the "outward" man that faints and perishes to the "eternal weight of glory" yet invisible, showing how, in every soul that is new-created in Christ Jesus, "mortality is swallowed up of life," because that "inward man is renewed day by day," and then setting forth the mighty *motive* to that conversion, viz., that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," he comes at last to that close point in the process where he defines the essential contradiction between the spiritual and the earthly man. By a succession of quick, sharp questions, the sword of his doctrine cuts asunder the sophistry which would mix up worldly self-will with Christian consecration, and shows the world to be made up of two sorts of persons. "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness ? What part hath he that believeth with an infidel ?" And then, the crowning conclusion : "*Wherefore* come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, saith the Lord" ; for it is this, "*Thus saith the Lord*," that seals the promise. "And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." . . . In order to a Christian position there must be a special act—an act so personal, positive, and comprehensive, that it determines on which side of one fixed line the rest of our actions shall stand. You may call it by whatever name bears most significance to your own mind. The Scriptures furnish as great a variety as you can desire : "renewal of the mind," "conversion," "believing on the Lord Jesus Christ," "getting a new heart and spirit," "putting off the works of darkness and putting on the armor of light," "forsaking idols," "coming out and being

separate"—these are the Biblical terms for a single fact. What is essential is that conscious choice of the soul by which it gathers up its powers and resolves—God's grace helping it, as He ever will help—to be on Christ's side in this fronting of armies and this awful battle of our life. F. D. H.

1. Workers together with him. These words seem to express the idea of true labor, such as God calls us to, and in the doing of which there is a great reward. They imply that the living God has a work to do on earth, in men and by men; that in this work he has—if I may so express it—a deep personal interest, because it is one worthy of himself, and for the advancement of his own glory, and the good and happiness of man. And it is only when we know God's work on earth, and when, from a will and character brought into harmony with his, we see how excellent the work is, that we can be, not laborers only, but "fellow-laborers" with God; not workers only, but workers together with him. N. M.—God does not need our help. Why then does he put us to the trouble of working for him, why put us to the strain of giving for him, why put us to the long endurance of patiently planning and waiting that we may accomplish his design? Because thus he develops us. The man who has wrought and planned and endured for the accomplishment of God's plan in the world sees the greatness of it, the divinity and glory of it, and is himself more perfectly assimilated to it. R. S. S.

There is a special ministry of the word, beginning with the apostles, descending from them to those who are now preachers of righteousness, and destined to endure to the end of time. But there is also a wider ministry of the universal brotherhood of believers. We are all of us ambassadors of Christ. Just so soon as we are brought, by the grace of God, to a saving knowledge of the gospel, we are called to be dispensers of it to others; taking first those who are nearest to us, but pausing not till we have touched the farthest boundaries of the globe. In these Christian cities there is a frightful waste of heathenism weltering at our very feet. We must subdue it to the cross of Christ. Over the seas are millions of heathen, darkening the continents. To them also must we send the light of life. Such is the commandment of our Lord. Such is the service laid upon us, to be the test and measure of our faith. R. D. H.

Grace of God in vain. As long as thou hast but good resolutions thou art still fostering a secret confidence in thine own strength. As a naked and unprotected sinner, who can bring to our dear God nothing that is good, and as one who is unable to answer Him in anything, must thou entreat for grace and forgiveness of sins, and as a sinner must thou suffer thyself to be pardoned. *Hollaz.*

2. The accepted time is the time of bounty, the

time of grace, when we are not called upon to answer for our sins nor to suffer punishment; but besides being released from it, to enjoy innumerable blessings, righteousness, sanctification, and everything else. Let us draw near at such a time as this, in which such exuberant bounty is poured forth. *Chrys.*—The word of life is in your dwellings and in your hands; the lamp of salvation shines on your way. There will be no new prophet sent into the world; there will be no new miracle; no voice will be uttered from heaven to remove your perplexity; and the dead will not be raised to resolve your doubts. You have Moses, and the prophets and the apostles, and the Redeemer; and *were* the dead to rise, if you will not hear the risen Son of God, you would not be persuaded though a man should come now from the tomb. A. B.—The question is not, "How long may I put off being blessed with peace and glory in Christ Jesus, and then have it after all?" but it is, "How soon may I make sure of that power and that peace, and let that glory fall in on my saved and thankful heart?" It is a present command; not for yesterday, not for to-morrow; not a message of despair that the great work was not done sooner; not a message of delay, as if it could as well be done later. It is for the passing hour. F. D. H.—The only moment of duration in which our Sovereign promises and pledges himself to exert his mercy and his power is the present moment. Concerning the next instant, or the morrow, he has given no assurance or certainty whatever. *Shedd.*

3-10. Throughout three most memorable chapters, the 3d, 4th, and 5th, the apostle expatiates on the ministry which he had received, and which sustained him in every place, so that he fainted not. It was of the New Testament excelling the Old Covenant in life and glory. It was a dispensation of light and clearness, not of veiled faces. Paul was intrusted with a manifestation of the truth in men's consciences—a message of reconciliation to their hearts. Invested with such a ministry, he bore all things for Jesus' sake. D. F.

10. A believing man is a man of large possessions. Silver and gold he may have none; but not the less on that account are his possessions great. "Having nothing, and yet possessing all things," is the apostle's description of him. There is no end, no measure of his possessions, for they are summed up in the fullness of him that filleth all in all. *Bonar.*

11-13. They were his "children." How could he resent even unmerited reproach from them, bound as

they were to him by so dear a tie? He had suffered for them; he pardoned them, for they did it ignorantly. His spirit sought for them the only excuse it could. How worthy a successor of his Master's spirit! What a well-spring of love, inexhaustible in its freshness as in its life! And this is the true test of *gracious* charity. Hold fast to love. If men wound your heart, let them not sour or embitter it; let them not shut up or narrow it; let them only expand it more and more, and be able always to say with Paul, "My heart is enlarged." F. W. R.

15. On one side *we must be*, Christ's or Belial's. Righteousness refuses fellowship with unrighteousness. Light offers no hospitality to darkness. If idols have our heart's secret worship, the true temple of God shuts its doors upon us. We must touch and handle the unclean thing or let it alone. We do assort with the unbelievers, or come out from among them and be separate; and the Judge knows which we do. F. D. H.—The atheist is not merely he who professes unbelief, but, strictly speaking, every one who lives without God in the world. And the heretic is not merely he who has mistaken some Christian doctrine, but rather he who causes divisions among the brethren. And the idolater is not merely he who worships images, but he who gives his heart to something which is less than God; for a man's god is that which has his whole soul and worship, that which he obeys and reverences as his highest. F. W. R.

We take our *names* from Christ and the Scriptures; but we take our *views* from the world, i. e., from that class of people among whom our lives are spent. We are "disciples," but we do not follow Christ at any inconvenience. We are soldiers, but we do not run any risks in fighting for him. We are a priesthood—where are our sacrifices? We are fellow-workers with God—what are we doing with God? Many of us hardly ever think of the obligation to labor for the Lord. Fashion can command us. Pleasure can command us. Money can command us. Society can command us. God speaks to us, and we are deaf. J. Hall.—Is there a new heart; a new life; a new conversation? Are there new hopes; new joys; new objects of pursuit? Or is there some plan for compromising matters with God, and an inquiry how the hold on the world may be continued? Is there still a purpose, while the decencies of the Christian profession shall be maintained, to grasp still as much of the world as possible; to be as gay and as happy in the world as may possibly consist with the Christian profession? I tremble when I think of such an endeavor to make a compromise with God, and a league with the world; attempting to make light and darkness meet. A. B.

17. **Come out, be separate.** Both a beginning and a continuing; both a revolution and a habit; both a new principle and a new life is this great decisive act of the Christian. A *coming out* from irreligious associations is one part; it implies energy of purpose kindled by faith. Being *separate* implies the maintenance of the ground thus taken against all opponents, whether they frown or laugh, sneer or slight, reason or threaten. "Come out" from the bonds of vicious compliance and ungodly habit is a call to the courage and faith of the awakened heart. "Be separate" from sin is a command to the persevering will. "Touch not" the renounced pollution is an adjuration to the sanctified conscience. And these are the three daily heroisms in the discipline of the soldier of Jesus Christ.

18. Sons and daughters! What a power of personal endearment is lodged in that particularity of speech! Not "children" merely, losing individual consolation in the generality of the family! God uses names that come nearer to personal affection, and meet a personal want. F. D. H.—Meditate often and deeply on his Fatherhood, and on the filial relation in which we stand to him. This of itself is sufficient to stir in the heart an emotion of love toward him. But when God is presented to us as the gospel presents him—when we are assured that his love was so true, so clinging, that even when we were in the depths of our degradation and ruin, fighting against him with all the force of our will, he gave his Only-begotten Son to be the propitiation for our sins, then indeed the sentiment of love to him begins to claim for itself a supremacy over the will, and to establish itself as a principle of action. E. M. G.—Then you will put your faith into honest and faithful work, and, being in the world, will not be of the world. The stamp of another loyalty will be upon you. The spring of another joy and liberty will be in you. And then, not till then, will the great end and object of your creation as a spiritual being, a son or daughter of God, begin to be realized in your life. F. D. H.

1. The real Christian is not merely satisfied with outward reformation, but pants also for inward purity. His desire is not only to keep the flesh and body free from *the show of sin*, but *the heart pure from the guilt of sin*. Paul dissuades his converts from sin by reminding them of the promises of God; which promises are, that he will work with them *by his Spirit* and give them "a new heart and a new spirit"; and "renew them in the spirit of their minds." "Having, therefore," he says, "such promises, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit." T. M.—Observe the gospel principle of action. It is not, Separate yourself from all uncleanness in order that you may *get a right of sonship*; but, *Because ye are sons of God,*

therefore be pure. It is not, Work in order to be saved ; but, Because you *are* saved, therefore work out your salvation. It is not, Labor that you may be accepted ; but, Labor because you are accepted in the beloved. F. W. R.

Those who do not mourn under their imperfections, and unfeignedly desire and endeavor to be

better, were never really good. It is a perfect contradiction for any man to think he is sincere in his choice, and prepared in his affections for the pure glorious felicity in heaven, that does not labor to "cleanse himself from all pollutions of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God." *Bates.*

Section 284.

2 CORINTHIANS vii. 2-16.

- 2 RECEIVE us ; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded
3 no man. I speak not *this* to condemn *you* : for I have said before, that ye are in our hearts
4 to die and live with *you*. Great *is* my boldness of speech toward you, great *is* my glorying
5 of you : I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation. For, when
6 we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side ;
7 without *were* fightings, within *were* fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that
8 are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus ; and not by his coming only, but by
9 the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire,
10 your mourning, your fervent mind toward me ; so that I rejoiced the more. For though
11 I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent : for I perceive that
12 the same epistle hath made you sorry, though *it were* but for a season.
- 9 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance : for ye
were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.
10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of : but the sorrow
11 of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a
godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, *what* clearing of yourselves, yea, *what*
indignation, yea, *what* fear, yea, *what* vehement desire, yea, *what* zeal, yea, *what* revenge !
12 In all *things* ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter. Wherefore, though I
wrote unto you, *I did it* not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that
13 suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you. There-
fore we were comforted in your comfort : yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the
14 joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all. For if I have boasted any thing to
him of you, I am not ashamed ; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our
15 boasting, which *I made* before Titus, is found a truth. And his inward affection is more
abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and
16 trembling ye received him. I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all *things*.

Godly sorrow is an inward moral force which produces a real transformation of life and conduct. It does not expend itself in the tears, the moans, and the nervous excitements of a barren pietism. As the Scripture saith, "It worketh effectual reformation not to be repented of." "Fruits meet for repentance," or a course of life and action congruous with this interior moral change, must surely follow this ingenuous sorrow under the light of a gospel which reveals the fullness of the divine mercy set forth by an all-sufficient atonement. For to the sorrowing heart the gospel reveals free pardon as the gift of God's munificence ; reveals the Divine Spirit as waiting to impart strength ; reveals the sympathetic love of angels as waiting to break forth into songs of welcome, that shall hail the converted soul's accession to the ranks of the redeemed ones. When the heart is touched with healthful grief for sin, these revelations reach its deepest springs of action, and awaken sentiments of love and gratitude which must express themselves in acts of joyous obedience. Deliverance, emancipation, redemption, freedom, salvation—these are the words which fall like heavenly music upon the listening ear, and furnish an adequate supply of motive-power to meet the soul's most urgent wants. *Hague.*

The simplest way in which the *sorrow of the world* works death is seen in the effect of mere regret for worldly loss. There are certain advantages with which we come into the world. Youth, health, friends, and sometimes property. So long as these are continued, we are happy ; and because happy, fancy

ourselves very grateful to God. But, when these blessings are removed, we count ourselves hardly treated, as if we had been defrauded of a right; rebellious, hard feelings come; then it is you see people become bitter, spiteful, discontented. At every step in the solemn path of life, something must be mourned which will come back no more; the temper that was so smooth becomes rugged and uneven; the benevolence that expanded upon all narrows into an ever-dwindling selfishness—we are alone; and then that death-like loneliness deepens as life goes on. The course of man is downward, and he moves with slow and ever more solitary steps down to the dark silence—the silence of the grave. This is the death of heart; the sorrow of the world has worked death. F. W. R.

5. Without, fightings; within, fears.

The great trials of faith and patience find themselves represented in miniature in the little crosses, ruggednesses, unpleasant collisions of one day's walk. Temptations in the heat of conversation to overstate things, or to use acrimonious language, or to throw out (for the sake of amusement) words bordering on the profane—temptations to lose one's temper, to indulge appetite in eating, to resign one's self to calls of ease and sloth, or to harbor thoughts of impurity—all this is the miniature crucible, in which day by day the faith and patience of God's children are tried and approved. There are fightings without and fears within, oppositions, vexations, annoyances, anxieties, apprehensions. It is painful to thwart natural inclinations, as a Christian must do several times in each day; it is called in Scripture "crucifixion of the flesh," and crucifixion can not but be painful. But comfort thee, faithful soul! the night is coming when, if thou wilt endure patiently at present the fever-fit of passion or excitement, thy anxiety shall have worn off, and the Saviour shall fold thee under his wing, and thou shalt sit down under his shadow with great delight. E. M. G.

To say that doubts and fears are sinful, is not the way to remove them, but to increase them; inasmuch as the sincere soul will fear more and more, by thinking it has more sin to answer for. The very doubts and fears of weak believers evidence that they are in covenant with God, and have already the faith of his own elect, though they want such a degree of it as to make them comfortable in their own consciences. If there was no faith, there would be no doubting; for these two are at once working in the heart, the one opposing the actings of the other; so that my very fears that I have not faith prove that I have it. If doubts are traced to their origin, no culpable unbelief, no consent of the will, can ever be found at the bottom of them, but real faith will always be discovered at their root. For why does the soul doubt? Not because it disbelieves the promises therein contained; but because, seeing its own sin and depravity, and God's holiness and purity, and not having clear views of the Lord's method of justifying the ungodly without money and without price, it distresses and perplexes itself with the notion that its great vileness is a bar to the

mercy of God. Nature must, in a manner, be reversed, before this great Scriptural truth will be received, viz., that *sin, not goodness, qualifies every person for the gospel salvation*. The verity of the promises, then, is not questioned by the feeble, doubting Christian; but what he doubts and fears is, that he himself has no interest in them; and so far is Christ from being displeased with such weaklings, that he yearns with a more than common tenderness over them. Hill.

6. He that comforteth "those that are cast down" really shows that he is aware of his servant's great need. Not through the coming of an angel with radiant wings, but through that of a fellow-laborer with favorable tidings, He raises the cast-down heart from the dust. Van O.

7. So that I rather rejoiced. The Corinthians had given a hearty welcome to Titus, and on receiving the first Epistle had been grieved and sorry for the evil which they had previously connived at. As to the particular case of which the apostle had written, they had subjected the man "who had done the wrong" to a discipline severe yet not inexorable. On hearing these tidings, Paul feels renewed confidence in the Corinthians, and, with his characteristic generosity of temper, tells them so. D. F.

8. The beautiful law is, that in proportion as the repentance increases the grief diminishes. "I rejoice," says Paul, that "I made you sorry, though it were but for a time." And few things more signally prove the wisdom of this apostle than his way of dealing with this grief of the Corinthian. He tried no artificial means of intensifying it—did not urge the duty of dwelling upon it, magnifying it, or even of gauging and examining it. So soon as grief had done its work, the apostle was anxious to dry useless tears. A proud remorse does not forgive itself the forfeiture of its own dignity; but it is the very beauty of the penitence which is according to God, that at last the sinner, realizing God's forgiveness, does learn to forgive himself. What is meant by the publican's going down to his house justified, but that he felt at peace with himself and God? F. W. R.

9. Sorrow may produce two kinds of reformation, a transient or a permanent one; an alteration

in habits which, originating in emotion, will last so long as that emotion continues, and then, after a few fruitless efforts, be given up—a repentance which will be repented of; or again, a permanent change, which will be reversed by no after-thought—a repentance not to be repented of.

10. Godly sorrow. Sorrowing according to God. God sees sin, not in its consequences, but in itself; a thing infinitely evil, even if the consequences were happiness to the guilty instead of misery. So sorrow, according to God, is to see sin as God sees it. It is not a microscopic self-examination, nor a mourning in which self is ever uppermost; *my* character gone; the greatness of *my* sin; the forfeiture of *my* salvation. The thought of God absorbs all that. And the Christian—gazing not on what he is, but on what he desires to be—dares, even when the recollection of his sin is most vivid and most poignant, to say with Peter, thinking less of himself than of God, “Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.” F. W. R.

Repentance. The simple meaning of this word, which was so familiar to the lips of the first preachers of the gospel, is “a change of mind.” Whosoever the term *metanoia*, which was usually employed by the apostles to designate this change, fell upon the ear of a Greek, it was always understood to denote some kind of conversion. His idea of the nature of the change intended would be naturally modified by the connection in which the word occurred; but whosoever it was used by a *Christian* teacher, in connection with the startling narrative of his master's life, death, and resurrection, it always denoted such a change in one's habits of thought, feeling, and conduct, as constituted a necessary preparation for the heartfelt reception of Christ as the true Teacher, the only Saviour, and the rightful Sovereign of the soul. *Hague.*

Not to be repented of. Coming to Christ is the crown of repentance. It is the only kind of repentance that really gives rest and peace. It is the only repentance that stills the tumult of the soul, and makes repenting sweet instead of bitter. We must endeavor, not merely to see that we have done wrong—much grievous wrong—but to come to Christ himself to be forgiven. We must think of him as of one who deeply loved us, who still yearns after our love, whom we have not thought of as we ought. We have done wrong, but let all other wrong be swallowed up in the thought of the pain that we have given, that we are giving, to the soul of the most loving Friend of ours that ever lived. That only will give us rest. All other repentance is hard work; wearisome, cheerless; at the best it gives a sort of relief from pain. But coming to Christ gives real joy to the heart and life. F. T.

The sorrow of the world worketh death.

There is a sorrow for past transgressions which proves no more in our favor than a fever in the brain or a whirlwind in the air. No holy effects follow it; it may break our hearts, but it will never subdue them. No gracious dispositions produce it: a troubled conscience, a dread of shame, a fear of punishment—these are its sources. Death is its end. C. B.—It is the principal distress of extreme bodily hunger, that the organs of digestion begin themselves to be gnawed and digested, in place of the food on which the digestive power is accustomed to spend its energy. Remorse, in the same way, is a moral hunger of the soul. It is the bitter wail of a famished immortality. It is your conscience lashing your perverse will; your defrauded, hungry love weeping its dry, pitchy tears on the desert your evil life has made for it. It is your whole spiritual nature famished by sin, muttering wrathfully, and growling like a caged lion at the bars which shut him up to himself. And as bodily hunger sometimes causes the starving man to see devils in his ravings, so this hunger of remorse fills the soul with angry demons and ministers of vengeance, waiting to execute judgment. Sleep vanishes not seldom, or comes only in dreams that scare the sleeper. The day lags heavily, and the man carries a load of selfish regret and worldly sorrow that worketh death. H. B.

11, 12. The criminal had undergone public shame and public humiliation; his had been private grief, and many searchings of heart; and all this had not only taught him a lesson which never could be forgotten, and strengthened him by terrible discipline against future weakness, but also had set up for the Corinthians a higher standard, and vindicated the purity of Christian life and the dignity of the Christian Church. This was the pain, and these were its results. Seeing these results, Paul steadily contemplated the necessary suffering. Let us now infer from this a great truth—the misfortune of non-detection. They who have done wrong congratulate themselves upon not being found out. A sin undetected is the soil out of which fresh sins will grow. The worst misfortune that can happen is to sin and to escape detection: shame and sorrow do God's work, as nothing else can do it. F. W. R.

11. What indignation, desire! A heart that becomes soft beneath the cross of Christ, how earnest, burning, pure, are the tears it weeps! For the sufferings which the Holy One of God endured on account of our sins, teach us in what light they are regarded by God, and open up the deepest fountains of our sorrow. Sorrow without Christ is death. But to repent at the cross of Christ, that is resurrection, that is life. There is pleasure in every pang into which the thought of love enters, and therefore in every such pang there is strength. One love de-

serves another! cries the soul, when she has dried her weeping eyes, and goes forth and works. And the work which she then has done, it was for her Lord, and from love to him that she did it. A. T.

What zeal. True zeal will hate sin, yet love the sinner. True zeal will hate heresy, and yet love the heretic. True zeal will long to break the idol, but deeply pity the idolater. True zeal will abhor every kind of wickedness, but labor to do good, even to the vilest transgressor. True zeal will speak truth boldly, like Athanasius, against the world; but true zeal will speak the truth in love. *Ryle.*

12. No other system except the Christian system of grace could thus afford to honor penitence, because no other gives such testimony against sin. It is because Christianity is so holy, that it can take hold of the fallen to lift them out of the mire in which they have sunk, and can make use of those even who have dishonored Christ, as promoters of his cause before a censorious and Pharisaical world. The man who had disgraced Christianity at Corinth, when he evinced thorough repentance, was taken back into a holy body, to be a blessing again, and to be blest in that sacred circle. But if the gospel had been another kind of religion, if external purity of morals had been its highest aim, then doubtless every marked lapse would have been visited with hopeless exclusion, lest the white, or rather the white-washed, robes of the pure should be soiled by the contact of the unclean. But Christ came to call sinners to repentance, and so his Church is a blessed sort of hospital, where the faulty and guilty can be cured; where bitter, ineffaceable memories, instead of overwhelming the soul in sorrow, can be the

starting-point of a new life, can be a motive to new fidelity, a warning against return to sin; where the sympathies aroused by a common experience can greet the penitent on his return; and where those whose sin-malady has been of a more hidden sort, knowing that they too belong to the class of the recovered, can welcome him as a fellow in suffering, a fellow in salvation. T. D. W.

13-16. This chapter is one of the most impassioned utterances in all literature. Now he glories in the Corinthians. They fill him with comfort to overflowing, with joy to painful excess. And, again, he grieves that he should ever have grieved them, and can only console himself with the happy effects of their grief—that it was a sorrow to repentance and life. Yet, beneath all this intense sympathy with the Corinthians, there runs and heaves an under-current of feeling for Titus hardly less intense. The mere coming of Titus had been a great comfort to him; and not only his coming, but the assurance that the Corinthians had been kind to Titus, and had comforted *him*. “I was comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more I rejoiced for the joy of Titus, because *his* spirit was refreshed by you all.” In the frankness of confidential talk, Paul had often boasted to Titus of the Corinthians; and now it is an inexpressible happiness to him that his boasts have been verified: “If I have boasted to him of you, I am not ashamed”; and that Titus has learned to love them “with a deep, inward affection.” And thus throughout the chapter he makes much of the Corinthians and much of Titus, till we can not say whether we more admire the apostle or love the friend. *Cox.*

Section 285.

2 CORINTHIANS viii. 1-24.

1 MOREOVER, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of
2 Macedonia; how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep
3 poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to *their* power, I bear record,
4 yea, and beyond *their* power *they were* willing of themselves; praying us with much in-
5 treaty that we would receive the gift, and *take upon us* the fellowship of the ministering
6 to the saints. And *this they did*, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the
7 Lord, and unto us by the will of God. Insomuch that we desired Titus, that as he had
8 begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.
9 Therefore, as ye abound in every *thing*, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in
10 all diligence, and in your love to us, *see* that ye abound in this grace also. I speak not by
11 commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of
12 your love. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet
13 for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. And herein I
14 give *my* advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but
15 also to be forward a year ago. Now therefore perform the doing *of it*; that as *there was*
16 a readiness to will, so *there may be* a performance also out of that which ye have. For if

there be first a willing mind, *it is* accepted according to that a man hath, *and* not according to that he hath not. For *I mean* not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: but by an equality, *that* now at this time your abundance *may be a supply* for their want, that their abundance also may be a *supply* for your want: that there may be equality: as it is written, He that *had gathered* much had nothing over; and he that *had gathered* little had no lack.

But thanks *be* to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you. For indeed he accepted the exhortation; but being more forward, of his own accord he went unto you. And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise *is* in the gospel throughout all the churches; and not *that* only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and *declaration of* your ready mind: avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us: providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. And we have sent with them our brother, whom we have oftentimes proved diligent in many things, but now much more diligent, upon the great confidence which *I have* in you. Whether *any do enquire* of Titus, *he is* my partner and fellowhelper concerning you: or our brethren *be enquired of*, *they are* the messengers of the churches, *and* the glory of Christ. Wherefore shew ye to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love, and of our boasting on your behalf.

If we would be as Christ is in this world, if we would follow his steps as our loving Master, there is but one way, one straight, narrow way; the way of self-denying charity. Shall we go on speaking of His atoning sacrifice, but ourselves sacrifice nothing; of His poverty for us, but have ourselves no thought except for this world's riches; of His humiliation for us, but ourselves seek only how to exalt ourselves and our families in this world; of His having "emptied himself" of his inherent majesty, and ourselves remain "full"? Not in words but in deeds did He love us, when he came down amid our sin and shame and sufferings, to be hated, scorned, crucified, to bear our sins. Not in words then but in deeds must be the love which we meanwhile show to Him in his poor; learning, slowly it may be, but day by day, to forego things which tempt the eyes, the taste, the senses; looking not at what we can afford to spend upon self, but what we may lawfully deny self; not what additional comforts we may keep around us, but what indulgences we may part with, that we may give the more unto Him; seeking how our habits may become more simple; parting with luxuries which perish in the using, and which soon must part with us, in order to win the love of God; parting with things temporal for things eternal, with fading enjoyments for everlasting glory; with things without us, that Christ (as He has promised to those who love) may make his abode *in* us. F. D. H.

THE second division of the Epistle occupies the eighth and ninth chapters, and forms the only specimen extant of apostolic teaching on the duty and privilege of giving money to God and the poor. It is well to mark how much attention the foremost of all the apostles gave to such a matter as the collection of money. It is not right to let the money of the Lord's house be collected and managed on mere earthly principles. The treasury of his temple is holy. Those who put money into it should be reminded that Christ sits over against the treasury. Those who give contributions ought to regard them in the light here thrown around them by Paul, exercising liberality under the grace of God, making an offering with the same reverence as belongs to prayer and praise, and with such an overwhelming sense of the Lord's goodness as will lead them, not to speak of their own gifts, but to repeat with humble joy the words which close this second part of the Epistle: "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." D. F.

1. "Make known to you" would now be better understood than the obsolete "do you to wit of." A.

2. It was not the splendid donations of the rich which drew forth the praises of the Son of God, but the more than royal munificence of that indigent widow who gave "all that she had, even all her living." So the apostle tells us here of "the churches of Macedonia." . . . In every section of the Christian Church, a spirit of self-denying benevolence is the exception, and a spirit of worldly self-indulgence, which leaves little for God, is the rule. Nor can a thoughtful Christian reflect on the growing necessities of the kingdom of Christ, and the imploring attitude of the heathen world, and then remember how insignificant a proportion of the vast pecuniary resources of the Christian Church is at present appropriated to the demands of that kingdom and the salvation of that world, without feeling that, among the revolutions which must precede the universal reign of Christ, one must be a *revolution in the economy of Christian benevolence.*

5. First gave their own selves to the Lord. The gospel heightens benevolence into one of the most spiritual and improving duties the Christian can perform. For, by imbuing his heart with the love of God, it enables him to taste the godlike enjoyment of doing good; and, by teaching him to refer all his acts of benevolence to Christ, to perform them as expressions of gratitude to him, to hope for their acceptance through him, and to pray that they may tend to his glory, it keeps him near to the cross, in an atmosphere of spiritual and elevated piety. J. H.

9. Christ is the reference for everything. To Christ's life and Christ's spirit Paul refers all questions, both practical and speculative, for a solution. It is in spirit and not in letter that Christ is our example. The Corinthians were asked to give money for a special object, and Christ is brought forward as their example. But Christ did not give money: he gave himself. His riches were perfect happiness; his poverty was humiliation; and he humbled himself that we, through his poverty, might be made rich. He gave himself to bless the world. This, then, is the example; and it is the spirit of that example which the Corinthians are urged to imitate. It was *giving*, it was love, that was the essence of the sacrifice. The form was a secondary thing. It was life in His case, it was money in theirs; the one thing needful was a love like His, which was the desire to give and to bless. F. W. R.

The mere circumstance of His assuming our nature was to him an unutterable humiliation. We can not measure the depth of it, for we can not measure the height of his original greatness. All we can say is, he was God, the self-existent, boundless Jehovah; no lofty angel, no inferior deity, but "very God of very God," possessing in himself all the fullness of the divine perfections, sharing with his eternal Father in all he was and enjoyed. Nay, he was the eternal Father, one with him in essence as well as in glory. C. B.—He took on himself our manners and our poverty that he might bestow on us his own riches. For his passion is our relief from suffering, and his death is our immortality, and his tears are our joy, and his burial is our resurrection, and his baptism is our sanctification, and his stripes are our healing, and his chastisement is our peace, and his ignominy is our glory. *Athanasius*.

You know the height from which he stooped. You know the depth of humiliation to which he descended; that he found no resting-place between his throne and the cross. You know for whom he did this—for his enemies, his destroyers. You know that he did this voluntarily; that his own love was the only obligation; that he welcomed each indignity, invited each pang; made them a part of his plan of condescension. You know how earnestly he prose-

cuted the work of our salvation; that in every step he took he was only gratifying the compassionate yearnings of his own heart; that he assumed life for the express purpose of laying it down. You know the object for which he did it all—for your salvation; that he might pour his fullness into your emptiness, his riches into your poverty; that he might raise you to heaven, and share with you the glories of his own throne. And will you withhold from him any thing in your possession? Will you not freely contribute of your worldly substance to diffuse the knowledge of his grace? J. H.

11. Now therefore perform the doing of it. True though it is that willingness is accepted where the means are not, yet where the means *are*, willingness is only tested by performance. Test yourself by action; test your feelings and your liberal words by self-denial. Do not let life evaporate in slothful sympathies. You wish you were rich, and fancy that then you would make the poor happy, and spend your life in blessing? Now—now is the time—now or never. Habituate your heart to acts of giving. Habituate your spirit to the thought that in all lives something is owed to God. Neglect this now, and you will not practice it more when rich. 'Charity is a habit of the soul, therefore now is the time. F. W. R.

Out of that which ye have. It is plain that the little and the much are to be estimated by the quantity of the means. Such was our Lord's judgment in the case of the widow's mite. This virtual or moral estimate claims the special consideration of that portion of the religious community which Providence has more largely favored. It is not for *them* to be well satisfied with themselves for rendering only a *little* larger share of aid than what is expected from those in much inferior condition. J. F.—Let us proportion our alms to our ability, lest we provoke God to proportion His blessings to our alms. *Beveridge*.

12. I give no alms *only* to satisfy the hunger of my brother, but to fulfill and accomplish the will and command of God. I draw not my purse for his sake that demands it, but His that enjoined it. I relieve no man upon the rhetoric of his miseries, nor to content mine own commiserating disposition; for this is still but moral charity, and an act that oweth more to passion than to reason. He that relieves another upon the bare suggestion of pity, doth not this so much for his sake as for his own; for by compassion we make other's misery our own; and so, by relieving them, we relieve ourselves also. *Browne*.—You go into the Church to obtain mercy: first, show mercy. Make God your debtor, and then you may ask of Him, and receive with usury. We are not heard barely for the lifting up of our hands. Stretch forth your hands not only

to heaven but to the poor. If you stretch out your hands to the poor, you touch the very height of heaven; for He that sits there receives your alms. But if you lift up barren hands, it profits nothing. *Chrys.*—Alms should come out of a little purse as well as out of a great sack; but surely where there is plenty charity is a duty, not a courtesy; it is a tribute imposed by Heaven upon us, and he is not a good subject who refuses to pay it. *Feltham.*—Defer not charities till death. He that doth so is rather liberal of another man's than of his own. *Bacon.*—A life of benevolence ending in a munificent bequest is like a glorious sunset to a summer's day; but he who withholds his hand from deeds of benevolence till his last hour, surrenders his property to death rather than devotes it to God. J. H.

13. "For I mean not that other men be eased and ye burdened"; as if the benefit of the poor were the main end; as if God cared for the poor, and not for the rich; as if to get from those who have, and bestow on those who have not, were the object of inciting to liberality. Paul distinctly denies this. He takes the higher ground: it is a grace of God. He contemplates the benefit to the soul of the giver.

15. The principle laid down is, that the abundance of the rich is intended for the supply of the poor, and the illustration of the principle is drawn from a miracle in the wilderness. There, by a miraculous arrangement, if any one through greediness gathered more manna than enough, it bred worms, and became offensive; and if, through weakness, or deep sorrow, or pain, any were prevented

from collecting enough, still what they had collected was found to be sufficient. In this miracle Paul perceives a great universal principle of human life. God has given to every man a certain capacity and a certain power of enjoyment. Whatsoever he heaps or hoards beyond that is not enjoyment but disquiet. If a man piles up wealth, all beyond a certain point becomes disquiet. Thus thought James: "Your gold and silver is cankered." You can not escape the stringency of that law of the daily manna. F. W. R.

16. Titus does not, like Timothy, appear at intervals through all the passages of the apostle's life. He is not mentioned in the Acts at all, and this is the only place where he comes conspicuously forward in the Epistles, and all that is said of him is connected with the business of the collection. If we put together the notices, scanty as they are, of the conduct of Titus, they set before us a character which seems to claim our admiration for a remarkable union of enthusiasm, integrity, and discretion. C.

20, 21. It was in order to preserve his own reputation that Paul shielded himself from censure by consulting appearances, for if so large a sum had been intrusted to him alone, an opening would have been left for the suspicion of appropriating a portion to himself. In this is to be observed Paul's wisdom, not only as a man of the world, but as a man of God. He knew that he lived in a censorious age, that he was as a city set on a hill, that the world would scan his every act and his every word, and attribute all conceivable and even inconceivable evil to what he did in all honor. F. W. R.

Section 286.

2 CORINTHIANS ix 1-15.

1 FOR as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you:
2 for I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia,
3 that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many. Yet have I
4 sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said,
5 ye may be ready: lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared,
6 we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting. Therefore I
7 thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make
8 up beforehand your bounty, whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready,
9 as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.
10 But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which sow-
11 eth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his
12 heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.
13 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all suffi-
14 ciency in all things, may abound to every good work: (as it is written, He hath dispersed
15 abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. Now he that
16 ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for *your* food, and multiply your seed
17 sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;) being enriched in every thing to all

12 bountifulness, which canseth through us thanksgiving to God. For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God; whiles by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ, and for *your* liberal distribution unto them, 14 and unto all *men*; and by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding 15 grace of God in you. Thanks *be* unto God for his unspeakable gift.

CHRISTIAN liberality puts itself in sympathy with that great tide of universal mercy, which, flowing forth from the throne of God and the Lamb, encompasses every island, washes every shore, and proffers its life-giving waters to every individual of the race. It is prompted by sympathy with Christ in his love for universal man. It recognizes Christ as the Saviour of universal man. It recognizes the kingdom of Christ as spiritual and universal. Prompted by the spirit of love to God, enveloping and sanctifying the loves and the liberalities of earth, Christian liberality forces the stream of its bounty upward, far, far above them all, and pours it forth into the treasury of that universal empire of which it is written: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." Here only does Christian liberality become pure, because here only does Christian love become pure. Unmixed with the loves and the liberalities of earth, it exhibits itself, like the water of the river of life, clear as crystal, and flowing, like that blessed river, in unstinted bounty all over the world. *H. Smith.*

What we wait for, and are looking hopefully to see, is a consecration of the vast money power of the world to the work and cause and kingdom of Jesus Christ. For that day, when it comes, is the morning, so to speak, of the new creation. That tide-wave in the money power can as little be resisted when God brings it on as the tides of the sea; and like these also it will flow across the world in a day. And such a result we are to look for largely to the merchant class of disciples. Trade expanding into commerce, and commerce rising into communion, are to be the outline of the story. When the merchants seeking goodly pearls—all the merchant race—find the precious one they seek, and sell their all to buy it, they will make it theirs. *H. B.*

LET this dignify wealth in your eyes; value it henceforth on this account, that the Lord will accept it at your hands as an offering of love. Be thankful, though you may have but little with which to present him. Seek out the right objects for it, the objects which you deem to be the dearest in his sight. Give to them all you can. Give under a grateful sense of your obligations, and you will feel that giving itself is a benefit, that it is an act in which you *receive* more than you render. *J. H.*—A liberal heart will have a liberal hand, be it full or empty. The most beautiful examples of charitable living are found alike among the rich and the poor. None are so low or so destitute but that they may equal the princes of the earth in charity. Their mites may even outstrip, in their beauty and reward, the largest bestowing of the wealthy. If riches make us proud and forgetful of our ill-deservings, they will harden the heart; but if they be received as the largesses of heaven, and our unworthiness be deeply tasted in them, we shall delight to use them for the good of others. *H. H.*

4. Observe the delicacy of the mode in which the hint is given: "We (that we say not, ye) may not be ashamed." Paul makes it a matter of personal anxiety, as if the shame and fault of non-payment would be his. Thereby he appealed not to their selfish, but to their most unselfish feelings;

he appealed to their gratitude, their generosity, to everything which was noble or high within them. This is a great principle—one of the deepest you can have for life and action. Appeal to the highest motives; appeal whether they be there or no, for you make them where you do not find them. Arnold trusted his boys, avowing that he believed what they affirmed, and all attempt at deceiving him ceased forthwith. Let men say what they will of human nature's evil, a generous, real, *unaffected* confidence never fails to elicit the Divine spark. *F. W. R.*

6. "No man is thoroughly converted till his piety reaches his pocket." So said a Christian layman who had earned the right to say it. Let the words ring in men's ears. For few, how very few, have learned the blessedness of noble, bountiful, cheerful giving. Paul, who everywhere urged and organized the charity of the churches, has told us how "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver" and blesseth "him that soweth bountifully." He warns us against the "covetousness which is idolatry"—which makes money our God. And he urgently enjoins upon the rich the duty of a bountiful liberality. The New Testament doctrine of human ownership, and the foundation of giving, is summed up in one word—*STEWARDSHIP*. *An.*

7. The duty of the preacher to preach, of the scholar to teach, is no more imperative than the

obligation which lies upon the wealthy to give—to consecrate a similar proportion of the particular forms of power which they wield to benevolent ends. If we would ascertain, then, the right use of wealth and the extent of the obligation which binds men who control it, we should recur to the New Testament, and there study the precepts and example of Christ and his immediate followers. Whatever of self-denial, whatever of self-sacrifice, whatever of consecration of power to the salvation of men and the glory of God marked the career of these exemplars of our faith, is binding to-day upon the Christian teacher, the Christian preacher, and the Christian merchant. M. B. A.—The Gospel of Christ, in harmony with its great design of establishing a reign of love, leaves its followers to assess themselves. It puts into their hands, indeed, a claim upon their property, but leaves the question, *how much?* to be determined by themselves. In assisting them to fill up the blank with the proper assessment, the only step which it takes is to point them to the cross of Christ; and, while their eye is fixed there in admiring love, to say, "How much owest thou unto thy Lord?" "Freely ye have received, freely give." J. H.—Christian charity is a calm, wise thing; nay, sometimes it will appear to a superficial observer a very hard thing—for it has courage to *refuse*. A Christian man will not give to everything; he will not give because it is the fashion; he will not give because an appeal is very impassioned, or because it touches his sensibilities. He gives as he "*purposeth* in his heart." F. W. R.

8. No soul was ever yet, or ever will be, generous in its dealings with God, which has not first formed a large estimate of God's generosity. Oh for a juster conception of the intensity of His love and tenderness for us, of His unspeakable willingness to give us day by day, and hour by hour, all things which are requisite for the spiritual life! E. M. G.—*Spiritual prosperity* is inseparable from Christian liberality. For "God loveth a cheerful giver: and God is able to make all grace abound toward you." As often as you practice this duty in an evangelical spirit, you must be conscious that the best part of your sanctified nature is called into exercise; your heart is partially discharged of its remaining selfishness; your mind is braced more for Christian activity; your sympathy causes you to feel afresh your alliance with man; your beneficence enables you to rejoice in your union of spirit with Christ, and adds a new bond to that power of affection which binds you to his cause. And while other duties bring you nearer to Christ, this may be said at once to place you by his side, and to exalt you into a real though humble imitator of his divine benevolence. J. H.

9. A *habit* of benevolence must be contracted and kept alive, as all other habits are, by constant exercise. There is not a day passes over our heads but we might contribute something to lessen the uneasiness or promote the happiness of those with whom we have to do, and, by studying to promote their happiness, we mold ourselves into those habits which are productive of our own, both here and hereafter. *Seed.*

11. Paul urges all these motives for giving: emulation; self-esteem; gratitude, or sense of infinite benefaction; prudence, common sense, and a reasonable regard to what is fair and equitable; a sense of honor before men and God; ambition—a noble desire to obtain for ourselves, and to turn to account the largest and most liberal supplies of the divine bounty; and lastly, zeal for the glory of God—a feeling of what redounds to His honor in this whole matter, He being first, middle, and end in it all. *Ross.*

12. By the practice of Christian liberality, *the glory of God and the credit of religion are promoted*; and what object should be of more precious and abiding concern to the believer than this? The new-born liberality of the first Christians for the support of their needy brethren was bringing the benevolent power of Christianity to the test; and the result of "the experiment of this ministration" was such as to call forth songs of exultation to the glory of God. It displayed the gospel in a new aspect, brought to light its benevolent energies, showed them that much as they knew of its virtues, it contained hidden excellences which it would require time and circumstances to evolve and display; it filled the Church with a chorus of praise to the glory of God. J. H.

13. What are the rewards of liberality which Paul promises to the Corinthians? They are, first, the love of God (v. 7); secondly, a spirit abounding to every good work (v. 8); thirdly, thanksgiving on their behalf (vs. 11-13). A noble harvest! but *all* spiritual. Comprehend the meaning of it well. When you give to God *sacrifice*, and know that what you give *is* sacrificed, and is not to be got again, even in this world; for if you give, expecting it back again, there is no sacrifice; charity is no speculation in the spiritual funds, no wise investment, to be repaid with interest either in time or eternity! No! the rewards are these: Do right, and God's recompense to you will be the power of doing more right. Give, and God's reward to you will be the spirit of giving more; a blessed spirit, for it is the Spirit of God Himself, whose life is the blessedness of giving. Love, and God will pay you with the capacity of more love; for love is heaven—love is God within you. F. W. R.

15. "Herein is love!" "Thanks be unto God

for his unspeakable gift!" And while you are standing in the presence of this matchless display of love, "what doth the Lord require of thee?" For yourself, he invites you to accept that love and be happy. And in relation to your fellow-men, he only requires that the stream of gratitude which his great love has drawn from your heart should be poured into that channel in which a tide of mercy is rolling through the world, and bearing blessings to the nations. He who for your sake gave his Son asks you for his sake to give of your worldly substance to the cause of human happiness. He asks you to cast into that treasury into which he hath given his Son, and poured all the blessings of his grace. The office to which God designates every man from the moment of his conversion is meant to be a new donation to the world. The relation in which he places him to the world is meant to be a fresh expression of the same infinite love which prompted him to give Christ; it is to be viewed as nothing less than a symbolical representation to the world of that *unspeakable gift*. He is not *that* gift, but is sent to bear witness of that gift; not merely to announce it with his lips, but to describe and commemorate its fullness and freeness in his own character. Like his blessed Lord he is to look upon himself as dedicated to the cause of human happiness.

Muse on the prophetic paintings of the latter-day glory, that day without a cloud: the enemies of man subdued, the disorders of the world hushed, all its great miseries passed away; Christ on his throne in the midst of a redeemed, sanctified, happy creation; all things sacred to his name; all tongues rehearsing for the last great chorus of the universe; all hearts united in holy love, and in that love offering themselves up as one everlasting sacrifice ascending before him in its own flames; new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. All things are waiting for it. All things are ready but the Church of Christ; and until its prayers, its wealth, all its energies and resources are laid at the feet of Christ, all things must continue to wait. Then, by the mercies of God; by the richness of his goodness toward you in nature, providence, and grace; by the sacredness of the commands which he has laid upon you; by a legitimate regard for your own well-being; and by the credit of that religion whose honor should be dearer to you than life; above all, by Christ's painful self-denial and deep humiliation; by his obedience unto the death of the cross; by that mystery of love which led him to become poor that he might make you eternally rich—O Christian soul, dedicate your property as you dedicate your soul to God! J. H.

Section 287.

2 CORINTHIANS X. 1-18.

- 1 Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence
- 2 *am* base among you, but being absent *am* bold toward you: but I beseech *you*, that I may
- 3 not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against
- 4 some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. For though we walk in
- 5 the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal,
- 6 but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations,
- 7 and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into
- 8 captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; and having in a readiness to revenge
- 9 all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.
- 10 Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he
- 11 is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he *is* Christ's, even so *are* we
- 12 Christ's. For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath
- 13 given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed: that I may not
- 14 seem as if I would terrify you by letters. For *his* letters, say they, *are* weighty and power-
- 15 ful; but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible. Let such an one think
- 16 this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such *will we be* also in
- 17 deed when we are present.
- 18 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that
- 19 commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing them-
- 20 selves among themselves, are not wise. But we will not boast of things without *our* mea-
- 21 sure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure
- 22 to reach even unto you. For we stretch not ourselves beyond *our measure*, as though we

reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in *preaching* the gospel of Christ: not boasting of things without *our* measure, *that is*, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, to preach the gospel in the *regions* beyond you, *and* not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand. But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

It may only be by a long-protracted process of holy discipline, by many a weary hour of inward conflict, fainting, striving, falling, reviving, yet ever, on the whole, growing in conformity to the will of God, that the soul attains at last to the complete mastery over self, the perfect inward harmony of a spirit in which every thought and feeling and desire are "brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." But when that glorious end is gained, when self is quelled, and duty reigns supreme within the breast, when "the immortal soul becomes consistent in self-rule," then the "weary strife of frail humanity" is at an end, and a repose, oh, how deep, how tranquil, how sublime! diffuses itself throughout the spirit—a repose in which there is at once calmness and power, the sweet serenity of an infant's slumbers, yet the strength of an angel of God. *Caira.*

WITH this chapter begins the direct personal defense of Paul against his rivals and adversaries; and with it the delicate and intricate alternations of gravity and irony, earnest pleading and rallying, which make this portion of the Epistle so exceedingly difficult. It is hardly needful to say that the whole of these last four chapters is very precious, both as letting us into the personal character and ways of the apostle and as abounding with rich gems of faith, hope, and Christian charity. A.

1. Here, again, according to his custom, the apostle refers to the example of Christ. He besought the Corinthians "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ." He vindicated his authority, because he had been meek, as Christ was meek; for not by menace nor by force did He conquer, but by the might of gentleness and the power of love. Remember, fine *words* about gentleness, self-sacrifice, meekness, are worth very little. Talking of the nobleness of humility and self-surrender is not believing in them. Would you believe in the cross and its victory? then live in its spirit—act upon it. F. W. R.

4. It is the living piety of the Church—back of all sermons however studied, all creeds however orthodox, all rites however simple—that gives them force. Not the great names of her eminent ministers, not the increase of her numbers, not the outward respect which she receives from statesmen, and poets, and politicians, but the living, active piety of her members, their exemplary and devoted spirit, their prayerfulness, humility, and Christlikeness: these are the weapons of her warfare, not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. These bring down to her aid the omnipotence of God. E. H. G.

Here is an apostle of the Lord Jesus who speaks the language of a soldier. He is planning a campaign; nay, rather, he is making war; he glows with

the fire of a genuine military enthusiasm. But the weapons of his warfare are not carnal; the standard under which he fights is a more sacred sign than that of the Cesar; the operations which he projects are to be carried out in a territory more difficult of conquest than any which kept the conquerors of the world at bay. He is invading the region of human thought; and, as he fights for God, he is sternly resolved upon conquest. He sees rising before him the lofty fortresses of hostile errors; they must be reduced and razed. Every mountain fastness to which the enemy of Light and Love can retreat must be scaled and destroyed; and all the thought of the human soul which is hostile to the authority of the Divine truth must be "led away as a prisoner of war" into the camp of Christ. Truly a vast and unaccountable ambition; a dream—if it were not, as it was, a necessity; a tyranny—if anything less vigorous and trenchant had been consistent with the claims of the truth of God, or equal to the needs of the soul of man. Only that truth has an indefeasible right to reign in the intellect of man. The apostle asserts that right, when he speaks of bringing the whole intelligence of man into the obedience of Christ. H. P. L.

5. **Casting down everything that exalteth itself against God.** This is that bitter root of all enmity in man against God, and against one another—*self*; man's heart turned from God toward himself. And the very work of renewing grace is to annul and destroy self, to replace God in his right, that the heart and all its affections and motions may be at his disposal. So that, instead of self-will and self-love that ruled before, now the will of God and the love of God command all. **Captivity to Christ.** His matchless love hath freed me from the miserable captivity of sin, and hath for ever fastened me to the sweet yoke of his obe-

dience. Let him alone to dwell and rule within me; and let him never go forth from my heart who for my sake refused to come down from the cross. L.

12. Men observe each other's actions and principles; and taking the general character of each which they find prevailing around them, erect it into a standard of morals to which they conform, and by which they try their own lives. Hence, the opinion of the world, the law of honor, the conventional usages of society, become tests by which men learn to judge of right and wrong—crooked rules, which, false in themselves, can but mislead those who apply them to the decision of their conduct. J. J.—A simpler and heartier reception of Christ within would expel this eternal self-reference, self-measurement, self-inspection. There was a grand thought in that saying of a believer of the primitive stamp: "I do not want to possess a faith; I want a faith that shall possess me." The safest strength of the heart is the feeling of complete dependence. There is something in a self-renouncing and trusting temper that makes piety fragrant with the air of Gethsemane. You find it only where you find the life hid with Christ in God. F. D. H.

15, 16. These words suggest these three important principles: the great general duty of extending and maintaining the ministry of the gospel beyond the more central, and prominent, and favored districts of its domain; the blessedness of that charity which voluntarily supports a distant ministry, even while maintaining its own; and the propriety of prosecuting the work in strict adherence to a

settled distribution of ministerial labor, and especially—for on this the apostle eminently insists—with a careful recognition of the rights of the ministry previously located in each district of the Church. W. A. B.—Paul was now fettered in his plans of benevolence, and it was from the Corinthian disciples that he expected his release. The fulfillment of his hope depended upon their progress to higher attainments in faith. There is involved, then, in these words of an inspired and most successful missionary, a principle, that *the missionaries of the Church require at her hands, for the extension and success of their efforts, an increase of faith*. If we look to the period when the limits of the Church were most rapidly and widely extended, it will be found not the era when the worldly power, the learning, and the wealth of the Church were at their highest elevation, but in the age when, though lacking all these, by the energy of an overmastering faith, she rose superior to every impediment, and, destitute of all earthly aid and encouragement, dared to hope in God. Wise in his wisdom, and strong in his might, she devised her plans of conquest upon the broad and magnificent basis of the Saviour's promises, and then, in humility, diligence, and simple devotion, called upon the Saviour's faithfulness to accomplish the plans his own word had warranted and his own Spirit incited. And in most of the great revivals of faith and godliness in the modern Church, it will be discovered that the rising flood of religious feeling has opened anew, or found and followed the already open channel of missionary enterprise. W. R. W.

Section 288.

2 CORINTHIANS xi. 1-33.

1 WOULD to God ye could bear with me a little in *my* folly: and indeed bear with me.
 2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband,
 3 that I may present *you* as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if* ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him*. For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles. But though *I* be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge;
 7 but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things. Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages of *them*, to do you service.
 9 And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all
 10 things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and *so* will I keep *myself*. As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.
 11 Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth. But what I do, that I will do, that
 12 I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they
 13 may be found even as we. For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming
 14 themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed
 15 into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed
 16 as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. I say

again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little. That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting. Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also. For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye *yourselves* are wise. For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour *you*, if a man take of *you*, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

21 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit, whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so *am* I. Are they Israelites? so *am* I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so *am* I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I *am* more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, 24 in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, 26 a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the 27 city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in 28 cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me 29 daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, 30 and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine 31 infirmities. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, 32 knoweth that I lie not. In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of 33 the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: and through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

HAVING given himself to God, Paul desired to bring with himself the whole world as an offering. To this end he traversed sea and land, Greece and the barbarous countries, everywhere plucking up the thorns of sin, that he might sow the seed of the gospel, and everywhere transforming men into angels. *Chrys.*—We see him, in the prosecution of his purpose, traveling from country to country, enduring every species of hardship, encountering every extremity of danger, assaulted by the populace, punished by the magistrates, scourged, beaten, stoned, left for dead; expecting, wherever he came, a renewal of the same treatment and the same dangers; yet, when driven from one city, preaching in the next, spending his whole time in the employment, sacrificing to it his pleasures, his ease, his safety; persisting in this course to old age (through more than thirty years); unaltered by the experience of perverseness, ingratitude, prejudice, desertion; unsubdued by anxiety, want, labor, persecutions; unwearied by long confinement, undismayed by the prospect of death. *Paley.*—Full of impassioned efficiency and yet full of cool discretion, he is restlessly at work for a spiritual object; he couples vigorous earnestness and manly strength with the tenderest mildness; his deep spirit overflows with love, yet without becoming soft and weak; he is able to accommodate himself to all conditions, bear all things, hope for all things, joyfully deny himself all things, even such as are lawful; he lets his own personal interest fade entirely from his view, so that he may labor for the invisible kingdom of God, and live for a crucified man, who was rejected by the world, and yet in the knowledge of whom he had found the highest good, and would willingly impart this good to all men. *Ullmann.*—The world may be challenged to find his superior in simple power of soul. Judged by the thought in his writings, he stands unsurpassed. There is nothing like them in iron logic, in profound insight, in comprehensive breadth, in all-embracing grandeur of view. There is nothing like them in their expression of a great human heart, in its compassion for man, in its love for God, in its devotion to Jesus Christ—bearing the burden of the apostate and perishing Jew, reaching out after the dying Gentile, and in visions of the ineffable glory anticipating the ecstasy of heaven. Where in all the centuries has there ever appeared another such indomitable will? D. S. G.

No longer is Timothy associated. The writer is, "I, Paul, myself." And the tone becomes very firm, sometimes even stern and sarcastic. A strong anti-Pauline party had arisen at Corinth, headed by certain teachers, here designated "false apostles." In reply to their objection that he had brought no commendatory letters, Paul maintains that he needed none, and that the converts under his ministry formed for him a sufficient testimonial. In knowledge, in labors, and in sufferings, he was not a whit behind the very chief of the apostles. It was painful to him to be obliged to make such statements. "I am

become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me." The brethren at Corinth were being misled by men who envied and calumniated the very founder of their Church. In such circumstances Paul was bound to vindicate himself, and to show how fully his apostolic position was evidenced by his apostolic life, his fruitful labors, patient sufferings, and abundant revelations. D. F.

3, 4. Paul told them that better far than grace of language or eloquence was the fact that the truth he had preached was the essential truth of the gospel; and this truth he gives in a very few words, as Christ the risen and the crucified; Christ held in the heart and life, the spirit of the Cross and of the Resurrection: the spirit of the Cross sundering the heart, no matter how painfully, year by year, from the evil within us; the spirit of the Resurrection raising us to all things high and pure and noble, leaving in the grave behind us all despondency, sadness, and sin, and raising us up, as on angels' wings, to contemplate, and gradually to have formed within us, the purity of Him who sitteth on the right hand of God. F. W. R.

3. Simplicity: "the simplicity that is in Christ." It is a beautiful word. To speak what we think! to live what we believe! to seem what we are! to be far more anxious to stand well with our own conscience than in the opinions of others about us, and to be supremely anxious to please God, and to live in his love, and according to his laws. Such is the life of Christian "simplicity," which, however, is at the same time a life as beautiful as the morning, and as grand as the mountains, and "as it were the body of heaven in its clearness." A. R.

5. For "the very chiefest apostles" should stand "those over-much apostles"; i. e., those men who pretend to be more than the Apostles themselves. He means the false and rival teachers, not the apostles (see 12:11). A.

9. I wanted. We have been accustomed to think of his life as full of pains, toils, dangers, calamities; but we have also been accustomed to attribute his perils and sufferings to the persecutions which befell him as an apostle of Christ. It is pathetic, it touches us close home, to learn that some of these sufferings came upon him as a working-man; that he knew what it was to have an empty purse and a bare cupboard. Weary with his rough work, knowing that he must come back to labors that would extend far into the night, he dragged himself evening by evening to the synagogue, or to the house of Justus, that he might teach and argue of the things of Christ. Never was he more constant or more ardent in the ministry of his apostleship than during the eighteen months he spent at Corinth; yet it was in these very months that he "wanted." Paul's utter devotion to his

Master is a rebuke to us all; but it is the very gravest of rebukes to those who, professing and calling themselves Christians, can encounter any toils of business or pleasure, but are always too weary or too occupied to serve the Church; who usually find the means for schemes of recreation and gain, but are as generally too poor to contribute to the wants of their neighbors. For here was a man, often in want, yet forward to help and to give. Here was a man worn with handicraft toils, yet always fresh and vigorous for the ministration of truth and charity, always delighted to lavish his energies in any endeavor to teach men wisdom or to do them good. Cox.

13. We must consider that it is quite possible for some to deceive and others to remain true, and that the discovery of occasional hypocrites does not make all religion a pretense. If there were no reality, there could be no counterfeit. When hypocrites do startle us where we little expected them, our hearts must learn to fall back on the sincere who have fully approved themselves, the guileless and the good on whose foreheads the God of Truth has written his name in life and death—the beloved on earth and the blessed in heaven. Ker.

14. The Bible account of the fall in paradise gives us a key to the whole secret of the way and the power of temptation. Sin besieged the human heart, and carried it, and made its fatal entrance into the world, not *as sin*, but as the means to the knowledge of good and evil: Satan transformed into an angel of light.

Satan does not march his victim up to face perdition point-blank. He leads him to it by easy stages, and through a labyrinth that shows no danger. Round and round go those circling currents of the northern sea that swallow the ship; and by the same winding coil goes the spiritual decline that ends in spiritual death. It is gayety, not the grave, that youth is seeking when it steps inside the circle of forbidden pleasure. It is for social cheer, for good companionship, because he would not be morose, because he would scatter his despondency, that the drunkard drinks damnation, not for damnation's sake. A worldly life is begun for the more decent uses that wealth may be put to; but it is followed afterward in servitude to that unscrupulous taskmaster, avarice. Tempting men imitate their great leader and prototype. They never go directly and openly to their object. If they would weaken the holy restraints that gird in, with their blessed zone, the innocence of childhood, they will urge some sly argument to an honorable pride, or else to a friendly sympathy, or else to a praiseworthy love of independence; and the first battery that has been plied against many a boy's virtue has been the cunning caution that bade him not be afraid of his elders.

F. D. H.—In harmony with the viewless operations of the Holy Spirit are the subtle and impalpable agencies which Satan now wields. If Christ is concealed by the cloud, so is Satan. He no more appears in visible shape on earth; he no longer permits his spirits to torment the bodies of men. He has withdrawn his oracles, his sorceries, his magic, his outward signs, and tempts those who have laid aside the worship of graven images with the idolatries of the heart and mind—with covetousness and worldliness. *Macmillan*.—The business of our moral vigilance, and the test of our moral strength, is to penetrate the delusion, to tear off the mask, to recognize Satan even through his transformations. We should know our tempters, as the sure instincts of innocent hearts know hypocrites, “through the disguise they wear.” F. D. H.

23-27. All elements of danger, all details of adventure, all anxieties and toils, seemed summed up in his one person. Europe and Asia are full of him. “From Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum” is but his note of journey made half way. The deserts have seen him struggling with their sandstorms; the rivers have been breasted by his arm; the deep has held him, hour after hour, drifting solitary on its surface. Again and again ocean has cast him shipwrecked to land, and land has yielded him, full of fresh, holy enterprise, to ocean. Disputing in the synagogue, working at the hair-cloth loom, singing at midnight in the prison, kneeling, and mingling his tears with his farewell prayers on the Syrian or Milesian shore, preaching amid the marble temples on Mars’ Hill at Athens, thanking God and taking courage on the broad stones of the Appian Way, clanking his chain as he writes in his hired house at Rome—where, and in what employ, do we not find this strange, fervent man, this ves-

sel of God’s election for the second founding of his Church? Such, then, was he whom the Lord grasped with His own hand, and rescued from the ranks of foes and persecutors for His own service. A.

The five Jewish scourgings, two of the three Roman beatings with rods (one being at Philippi), and the three shipwrecks, are all unrecorded in the Acts. The stoning was at Lystra. What a life of incessant adventure and peril is here disclosed to us! And when we remember that he who endured and dared all this was a man constantly suffering from infirm health, such heroic self-devotion seems almost superhuman. C.

29. Who is offended, and I burn not? If you add innumerable miracles to this, you will say nothing so grand. If he even glories, it is in weaknesses, in outrages, in his intense sympathy with the injured; just as here he also says, “Who is weak, and I am not weak?” These words are greater than dangers; and hence, when increasing the emphasis of his discourse, he places them last of all. Both soul and body did he give up that the men who stoned and beat him might attain a kingdom. “For thus,” says he, “has Christ taught me to love, who left that new commandment of His about love, and himself fulfilled it by his own actions.” *Chrys.*—Paul does not glory in what he had done, but in what he had borne; he does not speak of his successes, of his converts, of the heresies he had subdued, but he speaks of the manifold trials which he had undergone for Christ. He had “filled up that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body’s sake, which is the Church.” This marks all his conduct and sufferings as being in the spirit of the cross, that it was for the sake of others. F. W. R.

Section 289.

2 CORINTHIANS xii. 1-21.

- 1 It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the
- 2 Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to
- 3 the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I
- 4 cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeak-
- 5 able words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such an one will I glory: yet of
- 6 myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. For though I would desire to glory, I
- shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think
- 7 of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should
- be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me
- a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above
- 8 measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And
- 9 he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weak-

ness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ
 10 may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.
 11 I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing.
 12 Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches,
 13 except *it be* that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong. Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not your's, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents
 14 for the children. And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more
 15 abundantly I love you, the less I be loved. But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile. Did I make a gain of you by any of them
 16 whom I sent unto you? I desired Titus, and with *him* I sent a brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? walked we not in the same spirit? *walked we* not in the same steps?
 17 Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? *we speak* before God in Christ: but
 18 *we do* all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying. For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and *that* I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest
 19 *there be* debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:
 20 *and* lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and *that* I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

TILL the death of Christ, the strong man was the man strong with his sinews and his hands, or, at best, with the cunning and calculation of his brain. Bodily "weakness" was either to be simply deplored as a calamity or despised as a shame. No spiritual illumination, shining through, transfigured the sick face; no submission of faith dignified the poor frame prostrate with pain. The men, and even the women, looked on disease with a kind of dry disgust. Virtue consisted in keeping up the animal vigor as long as possible, and when it failed, all that the most faithful friendship could do was to draw back in helpless embarrassment, just where Christian sympathy is most eager to press forward and reach out its merciful hands. It was imbecility gazing at infirmity in despair. We see the apostle of Christ standing in the presence of such a proud civilization as that, and quietly saying to it, "When I am weak, then am I strong." The meaning is that, in order to get very near to God, or to let the glorious attractions of almighty love and light lay hold of us and lift us up, we must somehow be impoverished first, belittled, disappointed, baffled, weakened. Obstacles, sicknesses, losses, defeats of our plans, the breakings up of our securities, are God's opportunities; and he knows how to use them. We watch the course of our lives, and we see that what is best has generally come by self-subjection. And at last our experience answers to this mystical account given of the heroes of the Bible: "Out of weakness they were made strong." F. D. H.

2. "I *knew* a man" should be "I *know* a man." The apostle is not speaking of one whom he once knew, but of one whom he now knows. Fourteen years ago is the date, not of the *knowledge*, as our version makes it, but of the *vision*. The same is the case in verse 3 also. A.

4. **Caught up.** The Spirit loveth to do what he does in private: that man to whom God intendeth to reveal great things, he taketh him aside from the lumber and cumber of this world, and carrieth him away in the solace and contemplation of the things of another world. *Bun.*

5. He speaks of a divided experience, of two selves, two Pauls: one Paul in the third heaven, enjoying the beatific vision; another yet on earth, struggling, tempted, tried, and buffeted by Satan. The former he chose rather to regard as the Paul that was to be. He dwelt on the latter as the actual

Paul coming down to the prose of life to find his real self, lest he should be tempted to forget or mistake himself in the midst of the heavenly revelations. F. W. R.

7. **A thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan.** That this was some permanent infirmity which troubled and hindered the apostle through his subsequent career, seems plain from his expression of resignation to it, after his thrice-repeated prayer for its removal had been answered only by an encouragement to submission. It is best to believe that in this, as in other cases, the silence of Scripture is intentional; to the end that men of natures more ardent than their strength, whose spirit is willing but whose flesh is weak, may learn from Paul's example to acknowledge and bow beneath the hand of God in those impediments but for which they would become boasters; nay, to re-

joyce, that the glory of what they can yet do is not their own but God's. S.—The Bible calls trials evils, recognizes them as messengers from Satan, though often blessed by God—to be got rid of if possible. The Christians rejoiced in tribulation—in God; but that in spite of, not because of, tribulation. And here God does not command Paul to think the throb of his thorn enjoyable. He only bids him bear it, because he says, "My grace is sufficient for thee." F. W. R.

Paul tells us "there was given him a thorn in the flesh" for this very reason, lest "he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations." There was then in his case a danger to be guarded against in the consciousness of what God had wrought in him and for him. The most privileged "experience" is not now more secure in the same direction. O. E. D.—Notwithstanding so many promises made to faith, we are always more or less enfeebled by a remainder of our own strength, as we are always more or less troubled by remains of our own righteousness, which even the most humble bear with them everywhere. This wretched strength of our own, this talent of our own, this eloquence of our own, this knowledge of our own, this inducement of our own, forms in us a little cherished sanctuary, which our jealous pride keeps closed against the strength of God, in order to reserve for itself a last retreat. But if we could finally become weak in good earnest, and despair absolutely of ourselves, the strength of God, diffusing itself throughout our entire inward man, would fill us "with all the fullness of God"; and thus the strength of man being exchanged for the strength of God, "nothing would be impossible for us," because "with God nothing is impossible." Such is the incalculable service which his weakness confers on Paul, and which no strength could ever have rendered him. *Monod.*

God takes the most eminent and choicest of his servants for the choicest and most eminent afflictions. They who have received most grace from God are able to bear most afflictions from God. Affliction doth not hit the saints by chance, but by direction. God doth not draw his bow at a venture. Every one of his arrows goes upon a special errand, and touches no breast but that against whom it was sent. It is not only the grace but the glory of a believer when he can stand as a butt-mark and take affliction quietly. *Caryl.*

8. Paul besought God thrice that the thorn might be removed, when the answer came, not in the removal of the trial, but "my grace is sufficient for thee." Was this to deny the petition? No! it was to grant it in greater fullness. Here lies the difference between God's way and man's: man keeps the word of promise to the ear, but breaks it to the

hope; God keeps the promise to the hope, though he may seem to break it to the ear. F. W. R.—Paul's case teaches us that the precept of our Lord, "Ask, and it shall be given you," must not be understood as promising a direct answer to every prayer, but as expressing the certainty that He who knows our infirmities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking, will, in the end, supply our needs with all that we require, though not with all that we desire or think that we require. The apostle prayed simply that a great impediment to his usefulness might be removed; and even this was not granted. And, in like manner, a greater than the apostle had "offered up prayer and supplications, with strong crying and tears," and yet the prayer was not granted. If the prayer of Paul and the prayer of Christ were refused, none need complain or be perplexed. A. P. S.—When you ask of God what God praises, what God commands, what God promises in the life to come, then ask fearlessly, and put your whole force, as far as you can, into your prayers, that you may obtain. For such things are granted by God in his gracious mercy; such things are bestowed by him, not in anger, but in compassion. But when you are asking for things temporal, ask with qualifications, ask with fear; commit them to him that he may give them if they are profitable, and may not give them if he knows them to be harmful. What is harmful, and what is profitable, the physician knows and not the patient. *Aug.*

My grace is sufficient for thee. That is, my free love will communicate to thee all that is needful; rest satisfied with it. It is to his own *free love* that the Lord points the eye of his struggling saint—to *this alone*, as being all he needs to meet his case. He pledges nothing beyond this; nor administers any comfort, save in connection with his own character as "the God of all grace." There is but one treasure-house of blessing, one well-spring of strength and gladness: the grace of the infinite Jehovah. God says to us, Here is righteousness, divine and perfect righteousness; use it as if it were your own; come to me with it as if it were your own. Here is strength; use it as if it were your own; use it to its full extent; count upon its availability for you to the full stretch of its almighty compass. Thus is the grace of Christ so placed within our reach that we may use it just as if all its good things were within us, not without us—as if they were really *ours*, not *his*. All this fullness is so at our disposal that we are actually responsible for the use of it all.

My strength is made perfect in weakness. That is, my strength finds its full scope, its proper development, in the weakness of its object. It is just those very things that constitute us helpless, worthless, lost, that make us suitable objects

of this grace. It is those very things that would lead us to despond and turn away and remain aloof from Him that should lead us to be of good courage to arise and betake ourselves at once to God. It is the ignorance of the child that fits it for the teacher's skill and wisdom; so is it our ignorance that fits us for Him who can have compassion on the ignorant, and who has said, "Learn of me." It is the infant's helplessness that fits it for the father's strong or the mother's tender arm; so it is our feebleness that fits us for the strength of the mighty Saviour. *Bonar.*—We hang from hour to hour on God. When we know ourselves aright, we shall feel that we have nothing of our own that is good—that we are strengthless, powerless, and must depend entirely on His all-sufficient grace. F. W. R.

10. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities. Strength will be poured into our breasts from God, provided only the bars that keep it out are taken down. Only one thing is wanting, that the two bolts—self-will and self-indulgence—be weakened till they give way. Weaken them, then, in every way—by self-reproach, by discipline, by taking up a cross, by doing duties that you dislike to do, by disinterested work for other men—and the blessed energy of the Spirit will flow in. In your weakness God's strength will be made perfect, and then you will know, with Paul, what it is to glory in tribulations; then you will learn to entertain sickness and sorrow in your houses as the royal ambassadors of the King of Peace. At first Paul called his thorn a messenger of Satan buffeting him. After he found out why it came, he called it a gift, a love token, a sign of heavenly favor from his master. If Satan's angels are sometimes clothed as angels of light, why not God's angels in shadows? If it keeps you humble, the thorn is finally woven into the crown of rejoicing. Oh, blessed infirmities,

blemishes, ugliness, pain, poor success, mortified ambition, ye are prophets and heralds of salvation, ye are our securities from deeper and more lasting shame! To accept bodily pain, or an insignificant reputation, or a ruined plan, even after having prayed against it, as the veiled minister of mercy, and heartily to give thanks for the scourge—this is to have Christ formed by faith within. F. D. H.

For Christ's sake. That is the main point. The apostle took pleasure in pain, not as pain, but for Christ's sake. Sorrow is not naturally sanctifying. It is only in afflictions borne for Christ's sake—that is, in Christ's name and with Christ's spirit—that we can rejoice. He only can rejoice in infirmities, in reproaches, in suffering, who, taking the cup gently, lovingly, humbly into his hand, can drain it to the dregs, and say, as did his Master, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" F. W. R.

11. For "*am I behind,*" read "came I behind." For "*the very chiefest apostles,*" read as above (11 : 5), "those over-much apostles." This is absolutely required here. Paul challenges them to compare him with his rivals among them, and states that in no particular did he come behind them. This could not apply to the Twelve, whom the Corinthians had never seen. A.

12. The grounds of apostleship alleged here are all spiritual; *none* are external. "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds." Thus Paul does not graft his right of appeal on any proud, priestly assumption, but on an inward likeness to Christ. Therefore, the true apostolical succession is and must be a spiritual one. He is a true minister who is one from sharing in the spirit of an apostle, not from the ordination and descent from an apostle. F. W. R.

Section 290.

2 CORINTHIANS xiii. 1-14.

1 *This is the third time* I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall
2 every word be established. I told you before, and foretel you, as if I were present, the
3 second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to
4 all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare: since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking
5 in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you. For though he was crucified
6 through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but
7 we shall live with him by the power of God toward you. Examine yourselves, whether ye
8 be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus
9 Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? But I trust that ye shall know that we are not
10 reprobates. Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved,
11 but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates. For we can do

9 nothing against the truth, but for the truth. For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye
10 are strong: and this also we wish, *even* your perfection. Therefore I write these things
being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the
11 Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction. Finally, brethren, farewell. Be
perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace
12 shall be with you. Greet one another with an holy kiss. All the saints salute you. The
14 grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost,
be with you all. Amen.

THE *grace of the Lord Jesus Christ* is not merely the center, but the beginning and foundation, of all that Christians are already here below, and shall become in eternity. Only through the grace of the Son men come to the full experience of the Father's compassion. Therefore the *love of God* is not mentioned by Paul in the first place, but in the second, and without the addition of the name of Father. This is silently understood, and in the most absolute sense the name of God given inclusively to the Father, because in the Divinity of the Father that of the Son and of the Spirit has its immovable basis. Not before, but only after men have personally understood and experienced the grace of the Lord Jesus, can they be certain of the love of God, in a measure belonging to no one who is not a Christian. How do we continue, nevertheless, in the midst of so much temptation in and around us, in the permanent possession of both? Only in the *fellowship of the Holy Ghost*, which binds the Christian most closely to the Son and the Father, does this become possible, and just this, therefore, forms the crown and cope-stone of the apostolic blessing. Only through the Son do we become children of the Father, and temples of the Holy Ghost. Only through the Holy Ghost do we become partakers of the grace of the Son and the love of the Father. There are, as it were, three distinct circles which issue from the same center, and constantly return to it; a threefold cord of blessing which can not be broken. *Van O.*

THE last chapter contains a grave declaration of his resolution to come among them, and exhortations and denunciations, grounded on the certainty of that his approaching visit. The final salutation is cut off very short, in accordance with the serious and almost minatory tone of this conclusion; and the letter ends with that benediction in the express name of the Holy Trinity, which has become the accustomed formula of dismissal throughout the ages of the Christian Church.

1. The third time. This would of course imply that he had visited them twice before. But only one previous visit has been related, viz., that first one, during which he wrote the Epistles to the Thessalonians. Before his next recorded visit, viz., that mentioned in Acts 20 : 1, 2, both the Epistles to the Corinthians had been written. He wrote the *first* from Ephesus, at a time when he intended to stay there till Pentecost (1 Cor. 16 : 8); he wrote the second from Macedonia, at a time when he had recently left Asia (2 Cor. 9 : 1-4; 1 : 8; 2 : 12), after being there in danger of his life. All this agrees with the history of his sojourn in Ephesus related in Acts 19, and with his journey through Macedonia, related Acts 20 : 1, 2. We infer then that he must have gone over from Ephesus to Corinth at some time early in those three years of his Ephesian visit. Nor need we be in the least degree surprised that this journey is not recorded in the Acts. Long and important journeys are dismissed in a few words, or even altogether omitted, as that to Arabia, mentioned Gal. 1 : 17, and that in Syria and Cilicia, Gal. 1 : 21. Ephesus and Corinth were the usual points of transit to and from Asia and Europe, and a journey across and back might present very little for the sacred historian to dwell upon. A.

4. He was crucified through weakness; such was the extremity of his weakness that he died un-

der it; he made no use of his divine strength, but gave himself to his enemies, to be by them crucified and slain; his crucifixion was the exhibition of weakness, not of strength; yet he was raised again from the dead by power, the power of God; in the extremity of his weakness, power came in from another quarter. God raised him up, and highly exalted him. And as in his cross we see this combination of weakness and strength—personal weakness and divine strength—so we see the same in ourselves. We are men utterly without power in ourselves, yet we have the power of God working in us and for us. *Bonar.*

5. The earnest force of this examination should fix on the points named by the apostle: "whether ye be in the faith," whether "Jesus Christ be in you." Let, then, the self-examiner's earnest inquiry be directed to this great point—"whether" he "be in the faith"; whether he is decidedly more than a cold, assenting believer in the Christian doctrines. *That* a man may be, and yet at the same time be in—vitality and actively in—a spirit opposite to all these heavenly truths. But—in the faith? so in it as to be powerfully withdrawn and withheld from the spirit and dominion of the world? encircled, separated, guarded? So in it as to have a habitual prevailing order of views, feelings, motives, preferences, purposes, created and animated by it? So in it as to be in a cordial and zealous league with its faithful adherents? The other form of expression for the same thing is, "that Jesus Christ is in

you." He may be in the thoughts as a commanding object of contemplation. He may be in the affections—the object of love and of reverence. He may be in the conscience as an authority. He may, in short, be established in the soul—in vital interest, in exclusive reliance, and in hope—as its sole and all-sufficient and almighty Redeemer. Thus he shall be in the soul as an indwelling presence, without which it were lifeless and hopeless; by which it is alive to God, and looks forward to eternal felicity. Now, whether this *be* in some good measure the case is matter preëminently for self-examination. J. F.

The scriptural philosophy of Christian experience is very beautiful. If you would either excite or test the presence of any emotion in the heart, you must bring before the understanding the truth which tends to excite and call forth that emotion. You can never by mere act of your own will call these emotions into play. While the gospel religion is a religion of the heart, and lays all stress on the affections, it never assumes that sinners, by a mere volition, can make themselves love Christ and the Spirit and the Father. But it tells you the wonderful story of Christ's generous acts, and of the Spirit's kind movings, and of the Father's yearning compassion, that, as you listen, the affections of love shall be awakened in the heart. S. R.—The contemplation of ourselves, if it be not unceasingly purified by the contemplation of Jesus Christ, readily becomes egotistical. If not subordinated to the contemplation of Jesus Christ, it leads us step by step to our own righteousness, to salvation by works, and thence to pride if we forget ourselves, or to listlessness and despondency if we see ourselves as we are; so that, at last, the noble principle which salvation by grace should have placed in our hearts, that principle whose place can not be supplied, and out of which there is nought but falsehood, deceit, and rebellion—that principle, slowly undermined by self and curiosity, fades from our creed, which is then like an old tree standing with its bark after the wood and pith have wasted away. A. V.

In what is frequently understood by self-examination, there is something mistaken or deceitful, which needs to be carefully resisted. In the first place, it is a kind of artificial state, in which the soul is drawn off from its objects and works, and its calls of love and sacrifice, to engage itself in acts of self-inspection. The will is called off to be questioned, when of course it is out of that engagement where it otherwise would be found. So one falls to examining his affections, when of course his mind is introverted, and called off from God and Christ, where only right affections have their object and rest. And the result not seldom is accordingly, that persons who become thoroughly bent down upon this matter of examining their affections, are doomed

to see them wither in the process. The wonder then is, that the more faithful they are—and surely they mean to be faithful—the darker they become. H. B.—In nine cases of ten the first question will be, What is your feeling? not, What are you standing on? not whether a holy Christ has your loyal and unflinching obedience; not how far you are practically pledged to a righteous Master—which are certainly the chief matters now, as they were in the days and the preaching of the apostles—but rather whether the sensibilities are lively and the devout emotions enthusiastic. Religious feeling is one of the fruits of the Spirit—one of them; it has much to do in kindling and sustaining religious exertion. But feeling is the most irregular element in our composition, and it so far depends on outward conditions that it makes one of the least trustworthy tests of the actual frame of a Christian soul before God. Feeling belongs to the passive part of our nature; principle to the active part. Feeling depends on a sensitive surface; principle on depths of moral purity. Feeling changes with temperament, with states of health and nerves, with a thousand fickle external influences; principle is independent of all physical or alterable circumstances, moves straight on through all moods and climates, sails by fixed stars, and is the same secure and glorious thing through all the shifting seasons, though the mountains of prosperity were torn up and cast into the sea. F. D. H.

It is by a displacement of truth that Christians painfully engage themselves in weighing, measuring every feeling within them, analyzing and noting it in order to growth in grace, applying to themselves the machinery which the word provides for detecting and exposing hypocrisy, when they would be better employed in believing the simple promises and doing the revealed duties—going out of themselves and concentrating their thoughts on the Saviour, whose righteousness covers and whose Spirit instructs in the way of peace. J. Hall.—True religion is all comprised in two precepts, Look into yourself to see your own vileness, Look out of yourself to CHRIST. Little enough health, comfort, peace, and satisfaction shall we derive from the first of these precepts unless we constantly couple with it the second. Live not *too much* with thyself in the close chamber of spiritual anatomy. Doubt and disquietude, and subtle metaphysical difficulties, and over-canvassing of motives, will be the least mischief resulting from such a system. The knowledge and deep consciousness of thy dark guilt is only valuable as a background on which to paint more vividly to thy mind's eye the rainbow colors of the love of Jesus. Walk abroad ever and anon, and expatiate freely in the sunlight of God's grace and love in Christ. E. M. G.

You will never "brighten your evidences" by polishing at them. To polish the mirror ever so

assiduously does not secure the image of the sun on its surface. The only way to do that is to carry the poor bit of glass out into the sunshine. It will shine then, never fear. It is weary work to labor at self-improvement with the hope of drawing from our own characters evidences that we are the sons of God. To have the heart filled with the light of Christ's love to us is the only way to have the whole being full of light. A. M.—There are states of the soul when, instead of dwelling on his experience, the disciple's first need is to forget it altogether, to let the thoughts, jaded with this chafing in the prison-house of consciousness, spring away into healthful liberty, from deploring what self has left undone, to center a grateful praise on what Christ has done. Faith bids these groaning hearts not to toil for ever in the dungeon; but to swing the door wide open, and let the light of the Father's face shine down into the breast. For, as a searching writer has said, "After we are in peace and power, self-analysis is instructive, humbling, and bracing; but while we are cold and dead, it is a poisonous thing, like a draught of quinine while the ague fit is on." F. D. H.

We may be false to the moving of the Holy Spirit by a diseased inspection of our own minds in the act of communion with God. Self-examination is a suitable preliminary or after-thought to prayer, but is no *part* of it. Devotion is most thoroughly objective, in respect of the motives which induce its presence. It is won into exercise by attractions from without, not forced into being by internal commotions. It is an outgoing, not a seething of sensibility. The suppliant looks upward and around beyond himself; and devout affections grow in intensity with the distance which he penetrates, as the eye grows keen with far seeing. The Spirit invites to no other than such expansive devotion. We are never more like Christ than in prayers of intercession. In the most lofty devotion we become unconscious of self. Have you never observed how entirely devoid is the Lord's Prayer of any material which can tempt to this subtle self-inspection in the act of devotion? It is full of an *outflowing* of thought and of emotion toward great objects of desire, great necessities, and great perils. "After this manner, therefore, pray ye." A. P.

Christ is in you. Who shall dare pollute the body that Christ has honored by his adoption? Who shall dare stain the soul that Christ glorifies with his presence? We Christians dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; this is *our* world, we ask none else; this is the substance of our hope here, as it is to be the substance of our heaven hereafter. Heed then, earnestly heed, your high calling in Christ Jesus. Glory in it, for angels can not match it! Guard it, live in it, for it is the source and principle of your

immortality! Remember, with trembling joy remember, that Christ, in all the power and majesty of the Godhead, "is in you, if ye be not reprobrates"; "for ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people!" W. A. B.

11-14. Nothing remains but a concluding counsel, salutations, and benediction. These form a sweet and graceful close, all the more welcome after the keen and indignant tone of some of the previous sentences. D. F.

14. A spiritual and cordial trinitarian faith we affirm to be the basis of the only virtue which deserves the name—a serious, reverential, happy, and affectionate devotion of the whole nature to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Christian virtue is the habit, the motive, and the act of the soul meditating upon "the love of God," and "the grace of the Lord Jesus," and enjoying "the communion of the Holy Spirit." I. T.—This grace of Christ leads into the love of God, and this love is central in benediction. In this home and rest of the human spirit believers are kept by the communion of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, this closes and perfects the blessing, "The communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." D. F.

The doctrine of the Trinity is that doctrine that sheweth us the love of God the Father in giving his Son, the love of God the Son in giving himself, and the love of the Lord the Spirit in his work of regenerating us, that we may be made able to lay hold of the love of the Father by his Son, and so enjoy eternal life by grace. The Father's grace saveth no man without the grace of the Son, neither do the Father and the Son save any without the grace of the Spirit; for as the Father loves, the Son must die, and the Spirit must sanctify, or no soul must be saved. But yet, as these three do put forth grace jointly and truly in the salvation of a sinner, so they put it forth after a diverse manner. The Father designs us for heaven, the Son redeems from sin and death, and the Spirit makes us meet for heaven, by his revealing Christ and applying Christ to our souls, by shedding the love of God abroad in our hearts, by sanctifying our souls and taking possession of us as an earnest of our possession in heaven. *Bun.*—The Apostolic Benediction, used so generally for all centuries since Christ's ascension, is a prayer to each person of the Divine Trinity for the maintenance and expansion of that sway of Christ over the nations, by means of Christ's churches. Here the work of the Atoner stands first; the parental love of the Divine Father follows in the second place; and to the third place is assigned the energy of the Divine Spirit, as maintaining the unity and brotherhood of the Church, cementing and assimilating the body of Christ, and rendering it aggressive and victorious in its influence over the world by a power of transmutation and assimilation shed forth upon them. And the Apostolical Benediction, sounded in so many tongues of the earth and through so many centuries, over such myriads of assembled Christians, reminds the

whole sacramental host in whose name it is that they set up their banners; and bids them ever, in their plans and supplications, to remember that, as they are bought in one blood, and are the called of one Father, they need to receive, and cherish, and implore one Spirit. By Him shall ultimately all earth's discords be hushed. To "grieve" that Spirit of holiness and love is to rend Christ's mystic body. To "quench" that Spirit of light, truth, and life, is to install falsehood in the chair of verity, to bequeath despair to the world, and to work suicide as against the Church.

The Trinity is not, then, in the Bible a mere speculative mystery, too recondite to be practical. As a doctrine, each disciple avouches it on the

church threshold. As an experience, it underlies the conversion of the individual. As a life, it pervades the collective churches through all lands and all ages. It is at once badge, history, and banner: a badge in baptism; a history as to the ransom, regeneration, and filial adoption of each separate disciple; and a banner as to the array and prospects of Christ's collected disciples, moving forward as churches to subdue the world to the obedience of the faith. The Zion of God welcomes each neophyte into her fellowship under this Triune Name, and speeds forth each dispersing assembly that quits her courts with the same significant invocation. She greets the coming, she bids farewell to the parting guest in the name of the Trinity. W. R. W.

Section 291.

GALATIANS i. 1-24.

1 PAUL, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father,
2 who raised him from the dead;) and all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches
3 of Galatia: grace *be* to you and peace from God the Father, and *from* our Lord Jesus
4 Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world,
5 according to the will of God and our Father: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.
6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto
7 another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would per-
8 vert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gos-
9 pel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said
before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have
10 received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please
11 men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you,
12 brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither re-
ceived it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.
13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that be-
14 yond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: and profited in the Jews'
religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the
15 traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's
16 womb, and called *me* by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among
17 the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jeru-
salem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again
18 unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode
19 with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.
20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. Afterwards I came
21 into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; and was unknown by face unto the churches
22 of Judæa which were in Christ: but they had heard only, That he which persecuted
23 us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified
24 God in me.

EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.

THE Galatians, or Gauls, or Kelts, for the name is probably but one and the same under these different forms, are found at the earliest historic period inhabiting the greater part of Western Europe. When we first encounter them, they are a restless, migratory people, making incursions on their neighbors, and occupying new territories by conquest. In the fourth century before Christ, we see Rome itself sacked and plundered by them; shortly after, the famous temple at Delphi suffers their attack and witnesses their repulse. A detachment of this

same invading body wandered away into the far east, and overran the lesser Asia. There eventually, after a series of vicissitudes, they became settled. The central portion of Asia Minor, known as Galatia, was their country; and at the time of the apostolic history gave its name to, and was itself part of, a Roman province slightly exceeding its own extent. Mingled with this invading people were a considerable number of the original Phrygian inhabitants; and, what is more important for our present purpose, a large and influential Jewish element (see map, page 94). Still, the character of the population in the main was that of the Gauls

or Kelts. Its description by independent writers is full of interest for the readers of this Epistle. Cesar, the great conqueror of Gaul, describes himself as taking certain precautions, "fearing the weakness of the Gauls, because they are fickle in taking up plans, and ever fond of innovating, and therefore he thought that no trust should be put in them." But the main feature of their character with which we are in this Epistle concerned is their restless love of change. They had received the gospel at the hands of Paul with their usual fervor and impetuosity. But, at the time of his writing this letter, they were rapidly changing to another gospel, which was not another (ch. 1:6); and the nature of that change is not without its interest. It was being brought about by Jewish influence, and was in the direction of the Mosaic rites and ceremonies. Now Cesar's description of the Gauls is, that they are above all other people given to superstitious observances; so that here again we have a point of national character brought out.

In Acts 16:6 we read that the Apostle, who had, in company with Silas, revisited the churches previously founded by him in Lycaonia, "went through the Phrygian and Galatian country"; for so the words should be read. No more is here said. It would appear from Gal. 4:3 that his intention had been merely to pass through, but that he was detained by a sickness. He appears to have taken occasion by this detention to preach to them the gospel, and to found the Galatian churches, of which churches we have no particular account. But this was not his only visit. We find him in Acts 18:23 carrying out a more formal visitation, going through the whole country in order, confirming all the disciples. This was after an interval of at least three years; and it is to this second visit that some allusions of an instructive character, occurring in the Epistle, must be referred. In chapter 4:16 he asks them reproachingly whether *he had become their enemy by telling them the truth?* These words can not of course apply to that first visit; as little can they be interpreted of anything in the Epistle which the Galatians had not yet received; but their reference must be found in something that happened on the second presence of the Apostle among them. Then he must have found the evil beginning to be apparent, and have spoken to them his mind about it. A.—He wrote this letter, as we suppose, after his Second to the Corinthians, and just before the Epistle to the Romans (see page 143). There is internal evidence of this. The strain of self-vindication which marks 2 Corinthians is continued in Galatians. There is, on the part of the writer, the same sensitiveness as to the confidence which the Churches placed in him, the same affirmation of his apostolate, the same vehemence against the false teachers who depreciated his authority and perverted his gospel. Then there is a preparation for the Epistle to the Romans in the consecutive setting forth of doctrine and practice. This may be called a first draft of that more finished and rounded production; this the bold but somewhat fragmentary assertion of truths which are there more comprehensively and systematically taught. D. F.

This letter sprung out of two circumstances, both belonging to the same growing apostasy on the part of the Galatians. They were falling from the gospel of the grace of Christ, and they were repudiating his apostolic authority. On this their two-

fold fault the whole Epistle is the comment. First of all, after denouncing in the plainest terms their fickleness, he proceeds to defend the apostolic character of his ministry, and its independence on human testimony. This he does by giving a history of his intercourse with the other apostles at and after his own conversion; ending with a remarkable account of an occasion at Antioch when he found himself compelled to withstand and openly rebuke Peter. The value to the Church of this narration can not be over-estimated. It has set before us the reality of the conflicts of the Apostolic Church, and the fallibility of the great leaders of it, in a way for which we can not be too thankful. A.

The Epistles to the Romans and Galatians point out the significance of Christ's death as a propitiatory Sacrifice. They explain the reason and necessity of his death, as that which alone could enable God, consistently with his attributes of justice, holiness, and truth, to save the sinner. They illustrate the nature of the faith which justifies, by referring to examples recorded in the Old Testament Scripture (examples which show clearly that it is a practical principle, lying at the root of all right dispositions toward God), and thus assign the reason why so much stress should be laid upon faith in the matter of man's salvation. They explain the theory of imputed sin and imputed righteousness, teaching us that men are regarded by God, not merely as individuals, but in their corporate capacity also—that all belong to one of the two great families, of which Adam and Christ respectively are covenant Heads and Representatives. They explain also the relation of the law to the Gospel, and teach us that the elder dispensation was a rudimentary discipline, by means of which those who were under it were trained for the understanding and appreciation of gospel blessings. E. M. G.

1. In the Epistle to the Galatians, when he has to maintain *his* gospel as being the gospel, we find the precision which marks the language of one who knows what insinuations he has to negative: "Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead." He declares himself to have been placed, not originally from men, nor mediately by any man's ministry, but by the very hand of Christ, in the chair from which his instructions are delivered, and thus he attaches the authority of the commission to the instructions which are given under it. But in verses 11, 12 he goes further, and affirms that those instructions themselves were no less immediately received from the Lord Jesus than was the commission under which they were delivered. T. D. B.

3. **Grace to you.** Grace can pardon our ungodliness and justify us with Christ's righteousness; it can put the Spirit of Jesus Christ within us; it can help us when we are down; it can heal us when we are wounded; it can multiply pardons, as we through frailty multiply transgressions. Bun.

—**Peace.** It is good and pleasant, beyond the power of tongue to tell, to be deeply and fully in the enjoyment of the divine legacy of "peace." To be filled with peace! To have all known relations

touched and calmed by it! To hear the soft, glad murmur of the cleansed and liberated conscience affirming the truth of the written word, that "there is now no condemnation," and that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin"! And the gentle stirrings of the Spirit within, prompting us to cry "Abba, Father"! And to see those meetings and minglings of earth and heaven, which disclose themselves only to peaceful souls! There can be no better state of its kind than this. It is an antepast of the rest of heaven. A. R.

10. Persuade men or God. If once we regard the preacher, whatever his faults, as a man sent with a message to us, which it is a matter of life or death whether we hear or refuse; if we look upon him as set in charge over many souls in danger of ruin, and having allowed to him but an hour or two in the seven days to speak to them; we shall wish that the words of the messenger may be simple, even when they are sweetest, and the place from which he speaks like a marble rock in the desert, about which the people have gathered in their thirst. *Ruskin.*—If clergymen in our day would return to the simplicity of the gospel, and preach more to individuals and less to the crowd, there would not be so much complaint of the decline of true religion. Many of the ministers of the present day take their texts from Paul and preach from the newspapers. When they do so, I prefer to enjoy my own thoughts rather than to listen. I want my pastor to come to me in the spirit of the gospel, saying: "You are mortal; your probation is brief; your work must be done speedily. You are immortal, too. You are hastening to the bar of God; the Judge even now standeth at the door!" When I am thus admonished, I have no disposition either to muse or to sleep. *Daniel Webster.*

Ministers should preach *feelingly*, experimentally as well as exemplarily; they must speak from the heart to the heart; they must feel the worth, the weight, the sweet of those things upon their own souls that they give out to others. The highest mystery in divine rhetoric is to feel what a man speaks, and then speak what a man feels. *Brooks.*—It is not mere words which turn men; it is the heart mounting, uncalled, into the expression of the features; it is the eye illuminated by reason, the look beaming with goodness; it is the tone of the voice, that instrument of the soul, which changes quality with such amazing facility, and gives out in the soft, the tender, the tremulous, the firm, every shade of emotion and character. And so much is there in this, that the moral stature and character of the man that speaks are likely to be well represented in his manner. H. B.

If any work ever demanded the whole of one's mind, it is that of a stated preacher of God's word.

All the great things of earth, compared with what depends on this work, are deserving of no mention or thought. Kingdoms rise and fall, worlds pass away, but human minds hold on their eternal course; and whether they shall be endlessly continued in woe or bliss may be depending, more than all things else, upon the character of the preaching which they hear from Sabbath to Sabbath. What manner of men, then, should preachers of the gospel be? and how exclusive and magnificent their vocation! T. H. S.

11, 12. The whole argument to the Galatians turns upon the doctrinal element of the Gospel. It is of this, therefore, that he so solemnly affirms that he was not taught it by the agency of man, but received it as direct revelation from the Lord; and this affirmation is made, not merely in respect of the general doctrine, but specifically of those parts of it which it was given to *him* to develop and defend: "the gospel which was preached by me"—"*my gospel*," as he elsewhere calls it, the gospel under that particular aspect which he admits to be the subject of extensive doubt and complaint. The part in the progress of doctrine committed to Paul was to define, to settle, and to carry out to its practical consequences the principle of free justification in Christ, which (*as a principle*) was acknowledged and held before his voice was heard; and we learn from his own statements that, for this special work, not only a special commission, but a special revelation was given him by the Lord Jesus, so as to clear and settle his own mind on those points on which he was sent to clear and settle the minds of others. In this way he was a minister and a witness, not of those things which he had heard from others, nor of those things which he had only thought out for himself, but of those things which his Lord had showed him in personal visits and distinct communications, according to the announcement made at the first commencement of this peculiar intercourse: "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of those things which thou hast *seen*, and of those things in the which *I will appear* unto thee." T. D. B.

15. The phrases, "*separated, sanctified, filled with the Holy Ghost, from the womb*," mean no more than that God thus early signified a *special* Divine purpose in the *birth* of the individuals thus distinguished, without tying Himself to time in the actual bestowment of their miraculous endowments. It was "*from the womb*" that their special designation to one great purpose was *made known*. The actual impulses of inspiration, or of other gifts, *may* have been, and doubtless *were*, bestowed only *as occasion demanded their exercise*. Facts in this and other cases bear out this view. J. S. S.

16. To reveal his Son in me. And what a revelation was it to him!—as great proportionally to all who receive it. It is as if they had gotten a new soul, with a heaven-full of society gathered round the Son of man there revealed. It is as if some wondrous, unknown light had broken in; the whole sky is luminous. The soul is in day, for the day has dawned and the day-star is risen. God, eternity, immortality, universal love, and society—into these broad ranges it has come, and in these it

is free, having them all for its element and its conversation in them, as in heaven. The unknowing state, the old, blank ignorance that was, because of the blindness of the heart, is gone, and a wondrous knowledge opens because the heart can see. Oh, what strength and majesty and general height of being are felt in the new life begun! And this is salvation! great because it saves, not some small part of the soul, but because it saves and glorifies the sublime whole, restoring its integrity and proportion, and setting it complete in God's own order, as in everlasting life. H. B.

18. To see Peter. As he himself tells us, his purpose was to form Peter's acquaintance. He probably thought that the time was come for that concert with the former apostles which he had purposely abstained from seeking as a preliminary qualification for his own ministry. And even now he takes pains to have it understood that he accepted no formal confirmation of his call from the "apostolic college." He mentions the journey as an illustration of his argument that he did not receive the gospel which he preached (that is, the commission to preach it) from man; and adds the solemn asseveration, "Before God, I lie not," to the statement, "Other of the apostles saw I none save James the Lord's brother." S.

Section 292.

GALATIANS ii. 1-21.

1 THEN fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus
2 with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel
3 which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest
4 by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. But neither Titus, who was with me, be-
5 ing a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: and that because of false brethren unawares
6 brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that
7 they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an
8 hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. But of these who seemed to
9 be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's
10 person :) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me: but con-
11 trariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as
12 the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (for he that wrought effectually in Peter to
13 the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles :) and
14 when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was
15 given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should
16 go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. Only they would that we should re-
17 member the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

18 But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be
19 blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but
20 when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the
21 circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas
22 also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not up-
23 rightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, be-
24 ing a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest
25 thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of
26 the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the
27 faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by
28 the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no
29 flesh be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are
30 found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build again the
31 things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead
32 to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live;
33 yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the
34 faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the
35 grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

In the Scriptures, written by the inspiration of the God of love and wisdom, there are encourage-
ments and invitations, so simple, affectionate, and comprehensive, that none can remain in doubt as to
their meaning; that none can fail to see the willingness of God to receive and bless the returning sinner.

They are clear and frequent; human language can afford no terms more lucid, urgent, and tender. Besides these texts, written so legibly and attractively on the door of revelation, there are other declarations of Scripture which are understood and enjoyed only by those who, obedient to the heavenly voice, have entered in by the open gate. There are, so to say, outside texts and inside texts. What can be more encouraging and comprehensive than the message, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son." Here is indeed a wide, open, golden gate! But if we enter, we read, "The life of faith in the Son of God, who loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*." If we did not possess the outside and comprehensive texts, Scripture would be like a house without a door. The wanderer outside in darkness, loneliness, and danger, seeking shelter and peace, could not enter. But if Scripture did not contain the inside, special, and mysterious texts, it would be like doors that lead to nothing, promises which have no fulfillment, invitations to a feast without the reality of a feast awaiting those who accept them. It would be merely "Come"; but not "All things are ready." We need not expect to read the inside texts until we are inside. The love of Jesus, what it is, none but his loved ones know. That which describes the experience of the believer and the dealings of God with him can not be known, and can not form the ground of encouragement to an outsider. God speaks to him as one of the world. God loved the world. Believe, and you will be able to say, Christ loved the Church. He loved *me*. Yet in God's wisdom the outside texts never become superfluous to the saints who are by grace within the fold. The first and simplest truths of the gospel become of growing value to our souls as we advance along the narrow road which leadeth unto life. A. S.

THE incidents referred to in this chapter will be better understood by a careful reading of page 109. B.

4. These Judaistic errorists, or "*false brethren unawares brought in*," should by no means be confounded with the "*weak brethren*," i. e., the Jewish Christians, who for their own part moved indeed with scrupulous conscientiousness in the traditional forms of the Mosaic religion, yet at the same time referred all salvation to Christ, and recognized the free Gentile Christians as brethren in the Lord. Toward these Paul was exceedingly indulgent, and claimed for them brotherly love and forbearance. But in opposition to the other errorists he was inflexible; for they annulled the proper essence of the gospel; wished to replace the old yoke of legal bondage; spread division everywhere in his churches, especially in Galatia and Corinth, and even in Philippi; and in all this sought their own glory. To this great controversy of the Gentile apostle with the Pharisaic Judaizers we owe the masterly and profound exhibitions of the evangelical doctrines of the law and the gospel, sin and grace, bondage and freedom, faith and justification, which lie before us in his Epistles. P. S.

5. The point round which the strife was waged was, whether Gentiles could come into the Church as Gentiles without first being incorporated into the Jewish nation by circumcision, and whether they could remain in as Gentiles without conforming to Jewish ceremonial and law. The fight was stubborn and bitter. It is harder to abolish forms than to change opinions. All through Paul's life he was dogged and tormented by this controversy. There was a deep gulf between the churches he planted and this reactionary section of the Christian community. Its emissaries were continually following in his footsteps. As he bitterly reproaches them, they entered upon another man's line of things made ready to their hand, not caring to plant churches of circumcised Gentiles themselves, but starting up behind him as soon as his back was turned, and spoiling his work. This Epistle is the memorial of that foot-to-foot feud. It is of perennial use, as the tendencies against which it is directed are constant in human nature. Men are

ever apt to confound form and substance, to crave material embodiments of spiritual realities, to elevate the outward means into the place of the inward and real, to which all the outward is but subsidiary. In every period of strife between the two great opponents this letter has been the stronghold of those who fight for the spiritual conception of religion. With it Luther waged his warfare, and in this day, too, its words are precious. A. M.

9. This is the only meeting of Paul and John recorded in the Scripture. John had been silent during the public discussion (Acts 15); but at the close of it he expressed his cordial union with Paul in "the truth of the gospel." They stand together among the pillars of the holy temple; and the Church of God is thankful to learn how contemplation may be united with action, and faith with love, in the spiritual life. H.

9, 10. The reputed "pillars" of the Church "added nothing to Paul"—no new truth for him and his converts to learn, no new law for them to observe. They cordially recognized what God himself had made clear, that "the gospel of the uncircumcision" had been committed to Paul, like "the gospel of the circumcision" to Peter, and that the one could show miracles as convincing as the other; and they gave Paul and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, as the pledge of the solemn compact, that these two should go to the Gentiles and they themselves to the Jews. Paul adds one point which proves that, amid these questions of doctrine and ritual, all the Apostles were agreed on the supreme importance of the fruit of practical beneficence in Christianity: "Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do."

11-14. Peter proved his full adoption of the new law of liberty by eating with the Gentiles, till certain Jewish Christians "came from James," when, for fear of them, he withdrew from all such intercourse. The other Jews, to use the strong phrase of Paul, "played the hypocrite with him," and even Barnabas was carried away with the rest. Paul, regarding their conduct as an open departure from "walking uprightly according to the truth of the gospel," "withstood Peter to the face." This was

no opposition of Pauline to Petrine views ; it was a faithful rebuke of blamable moral weakness. S.—The point of Paul's rebuke is plainly this—that, in sanctioning the Jewish feeling which regarded eating with the Gentiles as an unclean thing, Peter was *untrue to his principles*, was acting hypocritically and from fear. J. B. L.

In verse 13, "*dissembled likewise with him*," substitute "also joined in his hypocrisy"; and at the end of the verse, for "*dissimulation*," render "hypocrisy." A.

And who is this who thus exhibited narrowness and moral cowardice on a critical occasion, and drew others away after him into compliance with his mischievous example? This is a saint specially dear to Christ, and specially honored of him; a saint who was enabled to perform many mighty and wonderful works. Verily, "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are." Every man and woman who lives by Christian principle (that is, by faith), who sustains the life of his immortal spirit by prayer and the word of God, and resists evil watchfully and steadfastly, is a saint. He may have his infirmities, his backslidings, his periods of lukewarmness, his failings of temper, his moral cowardice; so had the Scriptural saints. E. M. G.—The one who suffered himself to be corrected, appears here still more worthy of admiration and harder to imitate, than the one who corrected him. For it is easier to see what may be improved in others, than for each to see what needs improvement in himself; and cheerfully to receive correction from himself for wrong-doing is hard; still harder, from another. This serves as a grand example of humility; and the doctrine of humility is the most important in the Christian system of morals; for by humility love is preserved. Aug.—The generosity and forgiving disposition of Peter is especially manifest from his Epistles, where he endorses the doctrines preached by Paul, and after having spoken of the "long-suffering of our Lord," and of the prospect of sinless happiness in the world to come, alludes to those very Epistles in one of which his own censure is recorded, and calls their author his "beloved brother"! P. S.

19. To "live unto God" is but to return him his own rights in the human heart; to concentrate on him those affections which originally were formed for him alone. It is to know and feel that, even while this shadowy world encompasses us, there is around and above it a scene real, substantial, and eternal; a scene in which every holier affection, widowed and blighted here, is to be met and satisfied. To live in this belief—this hope; to read in the death of Christ death itself lost in immortality; to make the God of the New Testament the Friend, the Companion, the Consoler, of all earthly sorrow; to feel the brightest colors of ordinary life fade in "the glory that shall be revealed"—this is to live the "life" that heralds the immortality "unto God"! God grant to us a strong desire to live the "life unto God," by patience and faith "to walk as seeing the invisible," to yearn after that devotion of heart and soul unto Him, which, begun in this world, shall be perfected and consummated in the world of eternal peace! W. A. B.

20, 21. For "*am crucified*," substitute "have been crucified." The following clause should stand: "And it is no longer I that live, but Christ that liveth in me." In verse 20, for "*by the faith*," substitute "in the faith." In verse 21, for "*is dead in vain*," render "died without cause." A.

"*I am crucified with Christ*," says Paul. Faith so looks on the death of Christ that it takes the impression of it, sets it on the heart, kills it unto sin: Christ and the believer do not only become one in law so as his death stands for theirs, but are one in nature so as his death for sin causes theirs to it. *Baptized into his death.* L.—Every believer is dead already for his sins in his Saviour; he need not fear that he shall die again. Comfort thyself, thou penitent and fearful soul, in the confidence of thy safety. Thou shalt not die but live, since thou art already crucified with thy Saviour. He died for thee, thou diedst in Him. Bp. H.

Self-love may impel to his feet, but Christ-love should be the moving spring of life thereafter. Ere we have received anything from him, our whole soul may be a longing to have our emptiness filled; but, when we have received his own great gift, our whole soul should be a thank-offering. The great reformation which Christ produces is that he shifts the center for us from ourselves to himself. Faith may begin with desiring the blessing rather than the Christ. It must end with desiring him more than all besides, and with losing self utterly in his great love. Its starting-point may rightly be, "Save, Lord, or I perish." Its goal must be, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." A. M.—Christ is so related now to the soul of them that receive him, that he is present with them in all places, at all times, bearing witness with their spirit in guidance and holy society; a friend, a consoler, a glorious illuminator, all that he would or could be, if we had him each to himself in outward company. Oh, what a footing is this for a mortal creature to occupy, an open relationship with Christ and God, in which it shall receive just all which it wants, being consciously girded with strength for whatever it has to do, patience for suffering, wisdom for guidance! Everything flows down upon us from him, and so we begin to speak of being washed, sanctified, justified in him. He is our peace, our light, our bread; the way, the truth, and the life. H. B.

By the faith of the Son of God. *The object of faith is Christ.* If the object be a living Person, then there follows inseparably this: that faith is not merely the assent of the understanding, that faith is not merely the persuasion of the reality of unseen things, that faith is not merely the confident expectation of future good, but that faith is the personal relation of him that believes to the living Person its object—the relation which is ex-

pressed, not more clearly, but perhaps a little more forcibly to us by substituting another word, and saying, faith is *trust*. By laying hold of that simple principle, Because Christ is the object of faith, therefore faith must be trust, we get bright and beautiful light upon the grandest truths of the gospel of God. A. M.

Who loved me and gave himself. Is it true that the Eternal Word was "made flesh, and dwelt among us," and "died for our sins," having been constituted "a curse for us"? Sin then is ruin—immortal ruin; and our condition, if not benefited by that sacrifice, is desperate. But the Saviour, as we learn from his own lips, although given by the Father to suffer for the sins of the "whole world," yet *gave himself* for his people. On this ground the apostle speaks of his Lord as "having loved *him*, and given himself for *him*." A distinct apprehension of truths such as these brings home to the heart every kind of powerful influence, every imaginable element of awe, compunction, dread, gratitude, and tender affection, to which the human mind may be opened. I. T.—What gives to the gospel of reconciliation the true

living power is that great "for me" which was the sinew and soul of the whole spiritual life of Paul. Even for me, as truly as I am a man and a sinner, but through the grace of God a believer and a redeemed one. This is the highest vaunt of faith on the recollection of the death of the Saviour, and to this vaunt the eternal gospel gives us a right, if indeed the heart is upright before God. For the greatest of sinners who ever found mercy, but not more for these than for me. Were I a hundred times poorer, more unworthy, or more wretched than I have ever known myself to be, yet so true the love which made thee die upon the cross that I can say, Thou hast died there *for me!* Van O.

21. If righteousness by law then. The stupendous facts of the incarnation and the life of the Son of God, the agony and the sacrifice, the garden and the cross, have been to no purpose! There has been no "fullness of time," no "crisis" of the world. For anything that has been done Christ need not have appeared. If the law saves now, it could have saved before. The Only-Begotten has been "given," "set forth," "manifested," and especially has "died" "in vain"! T. B.

Section 293.

GALATIANS iii. 1-29.

- 1 O FOOLISH Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before
- 2 whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only
- 3 would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of
- 4 faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the
- 5 flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if *it be* yet in vain. He therefore that
- 6 ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of
- 7 the law, or by the hearing of faith? Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted
- 8 to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are
- 9 the children of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the
- 10 heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all
- 11 nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.
- 12 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed
- 13 *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to
- 14 do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for,
- 15 The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them
- 16 shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse
- 17 for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of
- 18 Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the
- 19 promise of the Spirit through faith.
- 20 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though *it be* but a man's covenant, yet *if it*
- 21 *be* confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were
- 22 the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy
- 23 seed, which is Christ. And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of
- 24 God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul,
- 25 that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is*
- 26 no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then *serveth*
- 27 the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the
- 28 promise was made; and *it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a me-

21 diator is not *a mediator* of one, but God is one. *Is the law then against the promises of God?* God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

22 But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ
23 might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law,
24 shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our
25 schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that
26 faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God
27 by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put
28 on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither
29 male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye
Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

—
If there is anything which can make a man fear to sin, it is the atonement in its mysterious awfulness. There is a power in the scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary which could not be surpassed or equaled if we had present before us all the torments of all the lost. The overwhelming thing about the atonement is that "God spared not his own Son." A substituted angel would have made sin appear "exceeding sinful"; but when we go beyond the angel, and have before us the substitute, incomprehensible indeed, yet confessedly "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person"; when we find that his dignity is no shield against suffering, but that he is reckoned with rigidly and unflinchingly, so that the poison of death for a time overcomes him, then there is set in array before us such an exhibition of God's thoughts of sin and determination to punish it, as leaves far behind the highest picture which the imagination can sketch of the whole earth visited with the extreme of divine indignation. If thus there is no injury done to the securities of righteousness, which indeed are strengthened; if there is no injury done to Christ, who voluntarily became our surety; if no injury is done to us, who receive redemption through his blood, where is the injustice of that atonement which was wrought out by Christ's redeeming us from the curse of the law, as he became a curse for us? E. M.

1-9. He begins with a vigorous interrogation—"O foolish (inconsiderate) Galatians! who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ crucified was placarded (proclaimed)?" What bewitched them, or cast an evil spell over them, was the "different gospel" of false teachers who drew them back under the law, insisted on circumcision in the flesh, required the observance of Jewish festivals, and inculcated justification by works. In the view of Paul this was a declension from liberty to bondage, and from the Spirit to the flesh; not a mere alteration or even distortion, but a downright reversal of the gospel of Christ. He fights against it with the sword of his mouth. The Galatians have been misled by their new teachers through a misuse of the Old Testament; and therefore Paul refers them to the ancient Scriptures, and shows them that the promise of grace to Abraham preceded by hundreds of years the law of works through Moses, and that the law was added really to prepare for the time of richer grace in Christ, shutting men up "unto the faith which should afterward be revealed." All who are of faith are blessed with Abraham. D. F.

1. When Jesus shall have been set forth, or rather shall have *portrayed* himself, as the apostle calls it, before your eyes; when, as the result of this profound contemplation, he shall have been crucified before you; when you shall have beheld all the glory of his martyrdom, all the authority of his dying words, all the inconceivable love which min-

gles with this incomparable authority; when, penetrating within the veil of his sufferings, you shall have seen God himself humbled in the person of Jesus Christ to the level of our miseries, and the infinitude of love revealing itself for the first time in the infinitude of power; then, as naturally as light enters the eye and air enters the lungs, this great and unfathomable mystery of a love, without which we could not form any proper idea of God, will enter your mind. A. V.

2. The Spirit is "received," His gifts conferred, in connection with belief in the verities of redemption. "He glorifies *Christ*." Place dependence on external ritualisms, and He departs! You may make "a fair show in the flesh"; it is "a show," and nothing else—a mere parade of empty formalities! Pardon and holiness; reconciliation and renewal; the beginning, the middle, and the end of an inward, spiritual, divine life—these, with other important correlative things, all being associated by Paul with *that* which the Galatian error would displace, it is not surprising that it was encountered by him with such a vehemence of resistance, and such an emphasis of rebuke. T. B.

10. Under the curse. Present obedience can neither annihilate nor lessen the guilt of what is past; though absolutely perfect, it can do no

more than answer for itself. Acceptance, therefore, on the ground of that law which requires us to "love the Lord our God with all our heart," which demands the universal and unceasing operation of this principle in every thought, word, and action, must be entirely and for ever out of the question. The blot of a single sin on a character as pure as that of an angel would seal his condemnation. N. W. T.—**Cursed!** It is terrible to be cursed by a man, a wicked man, without cause; but to be cursed by a Father, by a being who never errs in judgment, a being who never condemns unjustly, a being who suffered to save us, a being who has long expostulated in view of this very judgment, a being who commands the elements of the universe to execute his purposes—what must this curse be? No tongue can tell, no imagination conceive it. Christ has warned us with a solemnity that may well intimidate and arouse. It is nothing less than eternal banishment from light and life and hope to regions prepared for the devil and his angels, where the soul shall be enveloped and penetrated with a misery immense, infinite. *Kirk.*

11. The words "*the just shall live by faith*" ought to stand, "the just by faith (i. e., they that are justified by faith) shall live." The stress of the argument here is on the contrast between those that are just by faith and those whose righteousness arises from having done the works of the law: the attainment of *life* being common to both. A.—In Scripture, where justification is ascribed to faith alone, there the word faith does not signify abstractedly a mere persuasion, but the obedience of a holy life performed in the strength and virtue of such a persuasion. Not that this justifies meritoriously by any inherent worth or value in itself, but instrumentally as a condition appointed by God, upon the performance of which he freely imputes to us Christ's righteousness, which is the sole, proper, and formal cause of our justification. R. S.

The doctrine of the Bible is that justification is a forensic term, expressing an act of God by which he accepts a sinner as righteous in the sight of the law; that the best obedience of the sinner, even in his renewed state, is insufficient for this end; that we are justified without works, and that the works thus excluded are not merely ceremonial works, nor works wrought in unbelief, but all works whatever; that the righteousness which justifies us is that of our Divine Mediator, consisting of what he did and what he suffered; that this righteousness becomes ours upon our believing; that the efficacy of faith does not arise from the act of believing being imputed in lieu of obedience, nor from faith viewed as the source of all obedience, but from its uniting us with the Lord Jesus Christ; that in consequence of this union, the acts of the Redeemer are considered as the acts of his people, which is otherwise called the imputation of his righteousness; and that hence the believing sinner receives the absolute remission of

all his sins, with a right to eternal salvation. J. W. A.—Though the word "satisfaction" is not in Scripture, the thing is everywhere there; the idea of it is inherent in Scriptural words, phrases, and images out of number. T.

13. *Cross and curse* go together; but so also do *cross and blessing*. Christ became a curse for us, in our stead, and out of love to us. If he shrank back with horror from our curse, yet through his great love he overcame this horror. He carried away all curse from the accursed earth when he carried up to the cross the world's sin in his own body, to become a sacrifice for it, that we, instead of the curse, might inherit the blessing; for "there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." *Besser.*—If thou wouldst be faithful to do that work that God has allotted thee to do for his name, labor to live in the sense of thy freedom and liberty by Jesus Christ; keep this ever before thee, that thou art a redeemed one, taken out of this world and from under the curse of the law, out of the power of the devil, and placed in a kingdom of grace and forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake. This is of absolute use in this matter; yea, so absolute that it is impossible for any Christian to do his work Christianly without some enjoyment of it. *Bun.*

14. *Through faith.* Faith is simply instrumental and receptive. It is the hand stretched forth to receive an infinite bounty, namely, the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Being a persuasion of God's mercy, an acquiescence in God's plan, involving a despair of our own strength and an acknowledgment of free grace, faith is above all other exercises fitted to exclude the pretense of merit, and to exalt the riches of Christ. The moment a sinner believes, he is justified. It is of all things the furthest from his thoughts that this act constitutes any claim; he scarcely makes it an object of attention; his soul is absorbed in the infinite object which it apprehends. Yet at this point of time the righteousness of Christ becomes his own; and it becomes so because faith unites him to the Surety. This is the secret of its power. It establishes the communication with the source of merit. He is thenceforth in Christ, and the righteousness of God in him. Being one with Christ, he possesses in the eye of the law the acts and merits of his Head. J. W. A.

16. Abraham, "the father of the faithful," not of the Jews only, but of Christians also, his "spiritual seed," was a typical or representative man in whom was set forth for the study of humanity the principle on which God intended to deal with it. Afterward, the posterity of the patriarch became this model or type, and was put through its peculiar discipline, not merely for its own sake, but for ours, "on whom the ends of the world are come." T. B.

Verse 20 would be clearer expressed, "Now a mediator can not be of one (i. e., necessarily requires two parties), but God is one" (one in Himself, and essentially one in his purposes and actions). A. —God is one and, therefore, mediatorless. God himself, without any intervention, speaks the promise to Abraham; the promise is conveyed through no third party, as was the law. Whatever contingency might be in the law and its conveyance by a mediator who went between God and the people, there can be none with regard to the promise, the direct and unconditioned word of Jehovah himself alone. *Eadie.*

21, 22. God who appointed Moses mediator is one and the same, unchanged, unchangeable. Can, then, the law be against the promises of God? Moses was not the author of the law; he was but the mediator. The law was God's law, and Moses was God's mediator; the one was enjoined, the other appointed by him. The promise was *his* promise. He can not by his law contradict his promise. He is one and the same, always like himself. The two divine institutions, the law and the promise, can not be inconsistent, coming as they do from the immutable God. J. B.

23, 24. The school was the Mosaic dispensation, the schoolmaster was the law. But the Jewish people were the representatives of the race. *In them* "we all had our conversation in time past." We lived with them at the same school, and learned with them the same lessons. The teacher did for us what he did for them. "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith," "to the end that the promise might be sure to *all* the seed; *not to that only which is of the law*, but to that also *which is of the faith of Abraham who is the father of us all.*" The idea of the necessity for something to be *done*, an actual Divine interposition in order to meet the condition of humanity—*this is just the one great lesson which the schoolmaster embodied in all the forms of his emblematical teaching.* It pervades everything—everything in map, prophecy, and picture-book. To impress it on the heart was the object of the previous preparatory discipline through which the Church went in its Hebrew stage—the accomplishment of that object being the production of a state of mind ready to apprehend, to recognize, and confide in the *Divine miracle itself*, when, "in the fullness of time," it should be wrought and revealed. T. B. —*Do this and live*, the majority of moralists say to us; so also do the Scriptures of the Old Testament. That is to say, if we regard the spirituality, the perfection of the law, do what is impossible, and live; do what is impossible, or perish. It was necessary that such a morality should be taught in the world; it was necessary, also, that God should pro-

claim it in the old dispensation; it is still necessary that it should be preached in our days among those who resist the gospel; because the blessing must be estimated by the want, the remedy by the evil. Those who reject Jesus Christ must learn how far they are from fulfilling the conditions of their existence, and how much they need that the exigency thus created should be met by Him whom can meet all exigencies, supply all deficiencies; in a word, by Him who only can create; for the thing to be accomplished is nothing less than a creation. In this way law or morality "is a schoolmaster that leads to Christ." A. V.

26. All children by faith. To believe in Christ that, though he was God and *with* God, he became a man *with* men; that, though he was rich, he became poor; though he was sinless, he became a sin-offering; and that, having died and risen and ascended, he is now "exalted to be a prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins"—to believe this, to have this revelation stand forth before the mind's eye, as the wonder of angels, the song of the redeemed, the hope of men; it makes the man a new man, opening within him a fountain of new and tender and holy affections, producing childship, and bringing nigh to God the Father, as a brother to Christ the Son of God, the heir of all things! W. I. B.

27. The meaning is plainly this: The law having been, of course through the preaching of the gospel and the accompanying influences of the Spirit, the means of bringing the Galatians to Christ for justification by faith, they had, *in this faith*, been baptized into Christ, or into his name. More fully expressed, they had been baptized into the one great name, *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; and the result of their *previous* blessed change had been, that they had become, as the apostle styles them, "the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ." As the result of that change, a change professed and sealed at their baptism, they had "*put on Christ*"; or, as the same apostle expresses the idea in another Epistle, they had become "*conformed to the image*" of Christ. "*Putting on Christ*" means, being made *like* Christ; having the same "*mind which was also in him*"; being "*conformed to his image*"; made "*children of God by faith in him*"; and this was effected by the Holy Ghost, *using the law and its accompanying influences* in bringing the Galatians to Christ for justification by faith, and in thus making them God's believing children. "*As many of you,*" says the apostle, "*as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.*" This, evidently, is the full meaning of the passage; it comes up fully to the dignity of the connected discourse, and it is warm with all the vital meaning of the gospel. J. S. S.

28. Neither Jew nor Greek. The Jew wished to continue the separation between himself and all the rest of God's great family; or, if there was to be any approximation, it must be by the Gentiles becoming Jews! Jew as he was—of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, "a Hebrew of the Hebrews"—this notion roused, as it were, the apostle's *humanity*; it stirred and agitated the strong affections of his great soul; it was met by the resistance of his reason and his faith, by the

light which the healthy instincts of the one had received from the grand idea of the other. T. B.—

All one. That is to say, in this high fellowship of religion, distinctions of race, of sex, and of condition—as between masters and slaves—vanish. A common sympathy sweeps away the walls of separation between man and man. The heavenly good of the gospel is of such a nature that it can be offered indiscriminately to all. The sense of a common relationship to Christ and to God melts away all differences. The brotherhood of the race is no more a philosopher's dream; it has become a realized fact. G. P. F.

29. The Scriptures furnish us with sufficient evidence to prove that the Abrahamic covenant was never abrogated, and consequently that it was made with that Church which is to continue to the end of time. It was not annulled at the introduction of the Levitical dispensation, as the apostle strongly affirms,

when arguing for the continuance of its promises: "And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, *the law*, which was four hundred and thirty years after, *can not disannul*, that it should make the promise of none effect." For the same reason, it could not be annulled at the introduction of the Christian economy, when the ceremonial ritual was abrogated. The apostle expressly argues the calling of the Gentiles, after this period, from the existence and terms of the covenant with Abraham (vs. 14-16). "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ," he maintains that "to Abraham and his seed were the promises made: not to seeds, as of many, but as of one (and to thy seed), which is Christ"; whence he draws the legitimate and consoling inference, "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus, and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." W. S.

Section 294.

GALATIANS iv. 1-31; v. 1.

1 Now I say, *That* the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant,
2 though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the
3 father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the
4 world: but when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a
5 woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might re-
6 ceive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his
7 Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a
son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

8 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no
9 gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye
10 again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye
11 observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed
12 upon you labour in vain. Brethren, I beseech you, be as I *am*; for I *am* as ye *are*: ye
13 have not injured me at all. Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the
14 gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not,
15 nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, *even* as Christ Jesus. Where is then the
blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if *it had been possible*, ye would have
16 plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. Am I therefore become your ene-
17 my, because I tell you the truth? They zealously affect you, *but* not well; yea, they would
18 exclude you, that ye might affect them. But *it is good* to be zealously affected always in a
19 good *thing*, and not only when I am present with you. My little children, of whom I
20 travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you, I desire to be present with you now,
and to change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you.

21 Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written,
22 that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he
23 *who was* of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman *was* by
24 promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from
25 the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount
Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her
26 children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is
27 written, Rejoice, *thou* barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest
28 not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we,
29 brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the
30 flesh persecuted him *that was born* after the Spirit, even so *it is* now. Nevertheless what
saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman
31 shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children
of the bondwoman, but of the free.

1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not en-
tangled again with the yoke of bondage.

EVEN sincere Christians may oftentimes feel in duty more of the friction of self-denial than the freedom of delight. As love to Christ deepens in the soul that is truly given to him, the work which it prompts us to do for him loses the feeling of effort, and passes into pleasure. Less and less of set purpose do we need to constrain the mind to think of him, or to approach him in the formal attitude of devotion. The idea of Christ in the holy mind becomes gradually blended with all the actions of its daily life; thought goes out to him as by a divine instinct; an ever-acting attraction draws the heart upward to its great and first object, and life becomes an unconscious yet continuous prayer. *Caird.*

2. "Tutors and governors" would be more correctly expressed "guardians and stewards"; and in verse 3, "rudiments" would be nearer the sense than "elements"; as also in verse 9. A.—Here Paul calls the law rudiments, because it is not able to perform that righteousness which it requires. For, whereas it earnestly requires a heart and mind given to godliness, nature is not able to satisfy it. Herein it makes a man feel his poverty, and acknowledge his infirmity; it requires that of him by right which he has not, neither is able to have. Paul calls them the rudiments of the world, which, not being renewed by the Spirit, only perform worldly things. *Luther.*

4. **The fullness of time.** There were three chosen nations in ancient history, the *Jews*, the *Greeks*, and the *Romans*; and three cities of special importance, *Jerusalem*, *Athens*, and *Rome*. The Jews were chosen with reference to eternal things; the Greeks and Romans, with reference to temporal; but time must serve eternity, and earth carry out the designs of heaven. "Greek cultivation," says Arnold, "and Roman polity prepared men for Christianity." The great historian of Switzerland, John von Müller, confessed toward the close of his life, after repeated and most careful study of ancient literature: "When I read the classics, I observed everywhere a wonderful preparation for Christianity; everything was exactly fitted to the design of God, as made known by the apostles." P. S.—All experiments had been tried. All the forces which could be relied on to give men a fuller knowledge of God, to preserve and make effective that which was originally intended for man's salvation, had been tried, and tried on a large and varied scale. They were all failures. The world was sinking into utter chaos, night, corruption; nothing was left for it but to go on degenerating lower and lower. Truth was gone, faith was dying; and the passions of men, without these, overleaped the boundaries set by a refined selfishness, and the end was death. It was time for a new creation, for a new revelation of God, for the divine Redeemer to appear. The fullness of time had come. S. W. T.—Among the unnumbered and careful preordinations of God in relation to the *personal* office and achievements of *Christ* in the great event of human history, the precise time, place, and other similar circumstances, even to the minutest particular, were every one of them matters of divine forethought and prescription. When we find not only the *country* of his birth foretold, but the very *city* of it; when we find not only his descent from *Abraham* proclaimed, but his descent from a special *tribe* of Abraham's family; and not only from this special tribe, but from a *particular royal line*; when we find the *state* of the *general world* at his coming not obscurely shadowed forth; and, still more, the *very year* of his great sacrifice predicted, and the accompanying *condition* of the *former but forsaken nation* of God declared; can we doubt

that the world was duly prepared for him no less than he for the world; that the precise condition of the people among whom he came, and no other condition of that people, and no other people of any condition, suited the exact designs of Heaven? W. A. B.

5. **Adoption** is one of the most comprehensive terms of the evangelical system. It includes the pardon of sin and the acceptance of our persons before God, which are the constituents of *justification*. It includes the new birth, through the quickening power of the Holy Ghost, which is the doctrine of *regeneration*. It includes the believer's growth in holiness, until he attains "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," which is *sanctification*. And finally, it involves the saint's translation to heaven, to take possession of the child's inheritance, which is *glorification*. All therefore that the word salvation implies—in deliverance from the *guilt*, the *stain*, the *dominion*, and the *being* of sin—is potentially included in the idea of **ADOPTION**; and is in every particular wrought out when that idea comes to be realized in its final results. Whoever undertakes the full exposition of the word, finds himself carried around the entire circle of revealed religion; and touches as he swings the doctrines of sovereign election by the Father, of redemption by the Son, of the indwelling of the Spirit, of union with Christ by faith, and of joint heirship with him in eternal glory. If the gospel has any term that is *generic*, in which is logically contained all that constitutes the experience of the Christian, it is **ADOPTION**. B. M. P.

6. Here we see plainly that the Holy Ghost cometh to the saints, not by works, but by faith alone. Sons believe, while servants only work; sons are free from the law, servants are held under the law, as appears by those things that have been before spoken. Now, if the Father give unto us his Spirit, he will make us his true sons and heirs, that we may with confidence cry with Christ, Abba, Father, being his brethren and fellow-heirs. *Luther.*—Believers are in Christ, and so are sons of God, but, having become so, they find that Christ also is in them, giving them the *mind* of sons and the *sense* of their sonship. "The Spirit itself witnesseth with our spirit that we are the children of God." T. D. B.—*Fatherhood* speaks of the *communication of a life* and the reciprocity of love. It rests upon a divine

act, and it involves a human emotion. It involves that the father and the child shall have kindred life—the father bestowing and the child possessing a life which is derived; and because derived, kindred; and because kindred, unfolding itself in likeness to the father that gave it. And it requires that between the father's heart and the child's heart there shall pass, in blessed interchange and quick correspondence, answering love. A. M.

7. When a man is under a covenant of works, the testimony of his conscience is suitable to that covenant, and his spirit is servile, and all that he does he does as a bondman; but, when by grace he is brought under a different dispensation, he is also brought into a different disposition, and his spirit becomes more filial, more trusting, more childlike; he acts as a son, with liberty and confidence. The new covenant gives another spirit, and provides another inheritance. T. M.—In the quality of sons we are heirs of God's kingdom. And that honorable relation we have upon a double account, by adoption and regeneration. Bates.—There is no inheritance without sonship, there is no sonship without a spiritual birth, there is no spiritual birth without Christ, and there is no Christ for us without faith. No inheritance without sonship. For who can possess God but they who love him? Who can love but they who know his love? Where can he make his temple except in the upright heart and pure? How can there be fellowship betwixt him and any one except the man who is a son because he hath received of the divine nature, and in whom that divine nature is growing up into a divine likeness? A. M.

Avoid all which can make you mean, low, selfish, cruel. Cling to all which can fill your mind with lofty, kindly, generous, loyal thoughts; and so in God's good time you will enter into the meaning of those great words, Abba, Father. The more you give up your hearts to such good feelings, the more you will understand of God; the more nobleness there is in you, the more you will see of God's nobleness, God's justice, God's love, God's true glory. The more you become like God's Son, the more you will understand how God can stoop to call himself your Father, and the more you will understand what a Father, what a perfect Father, God is. C. K.

9. Indignant that Christian believers should retreat back to the Mosaic observances, Paul styles them "weak and beggarly elements," or rudiments, which the gospel has left behind. G. P. F.—After "knowing God," were they "to turn again to the weak and beggarly elements" of a superseded dispensation! To shut the inward eye against the divine forms of the good and the true, presented by the facts of the evangelical economy to reason and

faith, was to cease to be "men in understanding"; to be absorbed in the ceremonies and formalities of external religion as if they were all-important, was to go back to the playthings and primers of the child. T. B.

14. There can be no doubt but that "the temptation which was in the flesh," and "the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him," mentioned in the Epistle to the Corinthians, were intended to denote the same things. In both Epistles, the notice of his infirmity is suited to the place in which it is found. In the Epistle to the Corinthians, the train of thought draws up to the circumstance by a regular approximation. In this Epistle, it is suggested by the subject and occasion of the Epistle itself. Paley.

16. Error is touchy; carnal affections are loth to have the judgment informed; they take away the *light of reason*, and leave us only the *pride of reason*; therefore none so angry as those that are seduced into an erroneous opinion by interest; their sore must not be touched. Usually, conviction and reproof beget hatred: "Am I become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" This should not be so. David counted the smiting of the righteous as a "chief oil." Faithful reproof and counsel is like a sword anointed with balsam that wounds and heals at the same time. T. M.—It can not be but that plain truth (by whatever voice) must say many things that are displeasing. All censure hurts that most quick and delicate and constant of all feelings, *self-love*. And who dares to say in how many points the full unmitigated application of truth to him would *not* be censure? Who dares to say how many of these points might not be struck upon by a clear-sighted friend that should unreservedly express "the truth"? Hence the disposition to regard him as an "enemy." Is it a *wise* self-love that would draw a protective and inviolable line round everything that is *ours*; round all the defects and faults we may have, which are our closest and most mischievous enemies? As if a garrison should make a point of most sacredly protecting the very traitors it knows or suspects it has within, because they belong to their town! The right disposition of mind is that which desires earnestly "*the truth!*"—"THE TRUTH!" in *whatever* manner it may come to us. Not that the manner of its being conveyed is quite indifferent; far from it: but "*the truth,*" howsoever it come, has its own intrinsic, eternal value. Even from an avowed enemy, as it has often been said, we ought to be willing to learn; but surely, then, when it is from a friend, a Christian friend! J. F.

In verse 17, "*affect*" does not convey much meaning to the modern reader; "court" would express the sense better. The same applies to the next verse.

21-31. And now follows a remarkable passage, in which Paul carries on his argument against the Judaizers by maintaining against them the allegorical sense of that law of which they professed themselves the upholders; by maintaining, that is, that the events, and even the names, which come before us in the Old Testament history, have beneath them spiritual meanings, and are parables of Christian truths. He adopted the same strain in 1 Cor. 10, when he spoke of the mystical meaning of the history of the Jews in the wilderness; the same again in 1 Cor. 15, when he insisted on the mutual relations of Adam and of Christ. Mr. Conybeare has well remarked, "The lesson to be drawn from this whole passage, as regards the Christian use of the Old Testament, is of an importance which can scarcely be overrated." A.

21-23. The apostle stood up for the simplicity and spirituality of the gospel against the importance to men as men of the external and done-with ritualism of the Jew. In addition to this, he threw his reasoning into the form of an allegory, that would shock and exasperate the minds of his opponents. To make Hagar and Ishmael—the bondwoman and her slave-child—a type of the Jew, and Sarah and Isaac of the Christian Gentiles, would seem to those pointed at by the parable as if a sacrilegious hand had torn down the veil of the temple, and exposed the holiest of all to the common gaze; or, rather, as if the unclean and the uncircumcised had been introduced within the sacred precincts as their proper place, and the very priests of God thrust out—"as if they had not been anointed with oil!" Consistently with this daring defiance of the national opinion, this contemptuous mockery of Jewish pretensions, put in the form of that allegorical logic in which Paul was so thorough a proficient, and the force of which on the Hebrew mind he so well knew—in consistency with this, he even presents the believing Gentiles as the seed of Abraham; tells them that the blessing of Abraham comes on *them*; that theirs is the promise and the inheritance through faith; that circumcision is nothing, and may be worse than nothing; that "the Israel of God" is not now "the concision," as he calls them in another Epistle, but those who walk according to the rule that "neither circumcision

availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." "We are the circumcision, who worship God in the spirit, who rejoice in Jesus Christ, and have no confidence in the flesh." T. B.

24, 25. In verse 24, for "*are an allegory*," read "have another meaning." In verse 25, for "*this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia*," read "the word Hagar is in Arabia (i. e., in the Arabic language) Mount Sinai," which appears to have been the case. The Chaldee paraphrast of the Old Testament uses it with this meaning. A.—26. The very giving of the law is represented as a type of bondage in the stern and rugged peaks of Sinai, whereas the gospel is likened to that wondrous city of crystal, gold, and gems, which John describes in the Revelation, and which Paul elsewhere speaks of as the heavenly Jerusalem. Already, through grace, our citizenship is there, and we should make this manifest in the joyous freedom of the spiritual life. J. P. T.

31. "*The bondwoman*" should be "a bondwoman"; "we are not children of any bondmaid, but of *the* (the chosen, the well-known) freewoman."

1. The result of the argument from the allegorical interpretation is that we are not children of a system of bondage, but of liberty, wherewith Christ made us free. In this liberty we must stand fast. A.—While the end of one dispensation and the beginning of another remained in contact, mingling together their respective influences, so that two elements were in some degree active at the same time, Paul admitted that some might conscientiously observe their accustomed formalities, provided they kept them in their proper place, using them only as helps to what was higher, and as helps *to themselves*, not putting them in the place of essential truth, and especially not attempting to force their observance on those who neither saw them to be obligatory nor felt them to be beneficial. With this most catholic feeling toward the conscientious on all sides, it was perfectly consistent for the apostle to resist the *imposition* of ceremonies simply as intolerance. Hence his call and counsel to the Galatians, "*Stand fast in the liberty* with which Christ has made us free, and *be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage*." T. B.

Section 295.

GALATIANS V. 2-26.

2 BEHOLD, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.
3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.
4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are
5 fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.
6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith
7 which worketh by love. Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the
8 truth? This persuasion *cometh* not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the
9 whole lump. I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise
10 minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be. And I,
11 brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence
12 of the cross ceased. I would they were even cut off which trouble you.
13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to
14 the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even in*
15 this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another,

16 take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit,
 17 and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the
 Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do
 18 the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now
 19 the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, las-
 20 civiousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions,
 21 heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you
 before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit
 22 the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentle-
 23 ness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that
 24 are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit,
 25 let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one an-
 26 other, envying one another.

A SELF-WILLED, self-indulgent Christian is not to be found on the earth. Self-gratification is no gospel blessing. We must not expect it or even wish for it on earth; we must wait for it till we wake up in heaven. There our desires may roam as they will, settle where they please, and go forth as intensely as they can, for all within us there will be pure and holy, all moving in a blessed conformity to the divine will; but here liberty for our hearts is misery for our hearts; yea, it is ruin and death for us. We must bridle our desires, and we must fetter them. And even then they will destroy us, unless a mighty Spirit also bridles and fetters them. Self-denial is our duty, but it is not our safety and must not be our hope. We may set about crucifying "the flesh with its affections and lusts," but if we expect to bind and slay this vile thing by our own power, we might almost as well leave it to itself. None can destroy sin in us but Christ the great Saviour from sin. The work is his, and when we feel that it is his, and implore him to do it, the work is done. We give him the glory, and he gives us the victory. C. B.—Wherefore, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh; but do even the things which ye would. And ye can walk in the Spirit if ye seek for the Spirit; if ye seek him by prayer, and by reading of Christ, and the things of Christ. If we will do neither, then most assuredly we are not seeking him; if we seek him not, we shall never find him. If we find him not, we shall never be able to do the things that we would; we shall never be redeemed, never made free, but our souls shall be overcome by their evil nature, as surely as our bodies by their diseased nature; till one death shall possess us wholly, a death of body and of soul, the death of eternal misery. T. A.

1-6. The object of the gospel is both to pacify the sinner's conscience and to purify his heart. The best way of casting out an impure affection is to admit a pure one, and by the love of what is good to expel the love of what is evil. Thus the freer the gospel, the more sanctifying is the gospel; and the more it is received as a doctrine of grace, the more will it be felt as a doctrine according to godliness. This is one of the secrets of the Christian life, that the more a man holds of God as a pensioner, the greater is the payment of service that he renders back again. T. C.

4. Before Christ came, the figures of the law had a relative value and a preparatory use; but if, after He is come, they are still depended on, they are then looked to as realities, as things which are substantial, final, and efficient, and *He* is rejected to whom they were to lead! T. B.—The *two ways* of grace and works are incompatible. It was the error of those against whom Paul deals in his Epistles to rest half upon Christ and half upon works, and therefore is he so zealous everywhere in

this dispute: for they went about to mix both the covenants, and so wholly destroyed their own interest in that of grace. T. M.—Practically many Christians are in the same position. They are as much *in* Moses as "in Christ." Instead of looking at Christ till they imbibe from him strength and joy, holy aspiration and confidence Godward—instead of looking at Christ till he draws them upward, out of their selfishness, out of their sin, out of their unbelief, on toward himself, they look at faith, or they look at conversion, and wonder how they are to get it; and, as it is a very dim comfort that they derive from the Saviour, so it is a very faint reflection of his spirit and character which comes through their murky atmosphere. *Hamilton*.

6. There is much significance in the double negation, "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision." If the Judaizers were tempted to insist on the former as indispensable, their antagonists were as much tempted to insist on the latter. There may be as much formalism in protesting against forms as in using them. If religion be the loving devo-

tion of the soul to God, resting upon reasonable faith, then all besides is at the most a means which may further it. If loving trust which apprehends the truth, and cleaves to the Person revealed to us in the gospel, be the link which binds men to God, then the only way by which these externals can be "means of grace" is by their aiding us to understand better the truth as it is in Jesus, and to cleave closer to him who is the truth. A. M.

Faith worketh. Of all the graces that be in the soul of man, faith is the most useful; and therefore, above all, labor to be rich in faith. It is a Christian's right eye, without which he can not *look* for Christ; it is his right hand, without which he can not *do* for Christ; it is his tongue, without which he can not *speak* for Christ; it is his vital force, without which he can not *act* for Christ. *Brooks*.—Saving faith is that living and active principle in our minds by which, under the softening impressions of the love of God, we accept the Lord Jesus Christ as our only Saviour; spiritually feed on Him as on the bread of life; place a humble yet sure reliance upon his mercy and power; and, with full purpose and devotion of heart, submit our whole selves to his spiritual government. This is the faith which "worketh by love," and which enables us to bring forth the pure and lovely fruits of holiness, charity, gentleness, patience, joy, and peace. *Gurney*.

By love. It is quite childish to talk of faith being imperfect without charity or love; as wisely might you say that a fire, however bright and strong, was imperfect without heat; or that the sun, however cloudless, is imperfect without beams. The true answer would be, it is not faith, but utter reprobate faithlessness. S. T. C.—Love makes long service short, and hard service easy. Nothing is pain that love does. And this is gospel obedience. It is faith working by love which refines duty into a grace—the commandments are exalted into privileges—ordinances become happy means of fellowship with God. *Romaine*.—Were a sentiment only of justice in the heart of a Christian, he would trace for himself precise limits, he would know where to stop; but, obeying because he loves, loving Him whom he can not love too much, he abandons himself to the impulse of his heart. He never says, and he never can say, it is enough. Love knows no reserve; it ever desires more; it is inflamed by its own movement; it grows by sacrifices themselves, expects to receive in the measure that it gives, and is itself its own reward; for the true reward of love is to love still more. Where, then, in its applications, shall a faith stop which resolves itself into love? A. V.

7. Many err, believing that when the soul is once converted the work is done. Vain dream! the

Christian life is a warfare, from the beginning to the end. It is quite possible to "run well for a season," and then to drop by the wayside. Your faith will not go untried, even after God has accepted you in Christ. He will uphold you in every trial, if you keep your fidelity; but you will find it necessary at every step to watch and pray, to fear and to struggle. You will be tried by all the old seductions that formerly prevailed with you, and by all the new allurements that the ingenuity of the adversary can invent. There is no hint in Scripture of the possibility of final failure in the case of any who "fight the good fight of faith" to the end; but the Bible is full of warnings against security, against forgetfulness, against ceasing to strive earnestly. *McClintock*.

13. By love serve one another. A continual confinement of attention to ourselves, or to those who by belonging to us become only a slight extension of self, belittles us. The soul takes petty proportions, sees with a narrow vision, and is warped to one-sided judgments. Finding nothing beyond self to fasten upon, affection settles back and stagnates or sours in the breast, till mere self-preservation becomes the end of living. Religion, though her hand is on the invisible world, will have hard work to save such a life from contempt. It is a spirit directly opposite to the charity and cross of Christ. F. D. H.

16. Just as the strengthening of the whole constitution of the body makes any particular and local affection disappear, so by degrees, by the raising of the character, do the lower affections become, not extinguished or destroyed by excision, but ennobled by a new and loftier spirit breathed through them. This is the account given by the apostle. He speaks of the conflict between the flesh and the spirit. And his remedy is to give vigor to the higher, rather than to struggle with the lower. "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye *shall not* fulfill the lust of the flesh." F. W. R.—So everywhere positives, not negatives. The way to get out of self-love is to love God. Do we not see what Paul was teaching the Galatians when he said, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh"? And to help us to this positive life we have this positive salvation, these positive things fairly revealed to us, God's will, Christ's love, and the eternal life. It is no hard master that stands over us. It is the King in his beauty. Before him repentance and faith become but one perfect act. When we really get the scales off our eyes and see him, the struggle of life will be over. We shall not have to leave our sins to go to him, as if they were two acts. The going of the soul to him will be itself the easy casting away of sin, the easy mastery of this world which masters us so now. P. B.

17. While he has a distinctive nature of his own, man is a partaker and representative of every thing in the inferior creation. In him are united the material and the spiritual, the animal and the rational. He has instincts, propensities, desires, passions, by which he is allied to the animals; he has also reason, conscience, free will, by which he is allied to higher intelligences and to God. Hence the ends he is capable of choosing, and the principles by which he may be actuated, are very various. Body and soul, reason and passion, conscience and desire, often seem to be, and are, opposing forces. "The intestine war of reason against the passions," says Pascal, "has given rise, among those who wish for peace, to the formation of two different sects. The one wished to renounce the passions and be as gods; the other to renounce reason and become beasts." M. H.

That painful experience, of which every true believer has a keen and continual perception, is represented here by the lusting of the flesh against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and elsewhere as the warfare of a law in the members against the law of the mind, and gives occasion to the distinction of the old man and the new, the natural (or carnal) mind and the spiritual mind. By these terms are to be understood the same man, as he is subject to the actings and strivings of two distinct and opposite principles within him—the older one of corruption, the new of holiness, both operating upon the same mind. Thus it is the same soul that formerly was unregenerate which is now regenerate. The leaven of divine grace acts upon the same mass which *was* unleavened. The believer puts off the old man and puts on the new, by daily warfare against "the lusts of the flesh and of the mind," and by the practice of all holiness in the fear of God. *Goods*.

"Ye can not do the things that ye would." The words as we use them and as the apostle used them have the most opposite meaning in the world. We use them as a reason why we should be satisfied, the apostle as a reason why we should be alarmed; we intend them to be an excuse, the apostle meant them to be a certain sign of condemnation. The words mean no other than this: "Ye can not be redeemed from the power of death and of Satan; the power is wanting in you, however much you may wish it; death has got you, and it will keep you for ever." T. A.—Lust is a tyrant that wars in the soul and wars against the soul. It wars *in the soul*, for it abuses your affections to carry on the rebellion against heaven. It wars *against your soul*, for it defaces the beauty, disturbs the order, and enthralls the liberty of the soul. Instead of God's image, there is Satan's likeness; instead of subjection to reason, there is the rebellion of ap-

petite and vile affections; and instead of freedom for righteousness, there is a hopeless bondage to evil. T. M.

18. What the Holy Spirit does is to *lead*—and to move, in order that he may lead. Do not imagine that he drives or compels. To do so would be to destroy the moral nature of the creature instead of renewing it. The Holy Spirit extends his hand to us, allures, invites, remonstrates, but never forces. Let us place our hand in his, and make ourselves over to his guidance. E. M. G.

19-21. The flesh is born of the flesh—human nature under inherited and accustomed sinfulness. It acts from self-will, and builds up a religion of self-righteousness. Its *works* are manifest; not its fruit, not even its work, because it has no inward harmony to produce unity of result; but its works in great profusion appear. The apostle gives not a catalogue of them, but a few specimens, describing them as the sins of sensuality, idolatry, malice, and excess.

22, 23. The spirit is born of the Spirit. It is the sacred vitality and sensibility, animated and guided by the indwelling Spirit of Christ Jesus. It is known by its fruit. Men often speak of the fruits of the Spirit, but the apostle is careful to say fruit—one holy fruit or result comprising many virtues. Love is the juice of the fruit, sweet to God and man; joy, its beautiful bloom; peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, form its mellow softness; faith is its consistence, and also forms its characteristic and incomparable flavor; temperance, the rind of the fruit, binding it together, keeping it fresh, and preserving its good qualities from waste. D. F.

The spiritual life consists neither in ordinances nor in actions, nor yet, as some seem to imagine, in activities. It is *closely connected with* ordinances, actions, and activities, but it no more stands in these things than the life of a tree is the fruit of the tree, or the means for cultivating the tree. It does not stand in many prayers, nor in hearing many sermons, nor in studying many chapters of the Bible, nor in many acts of public worship, nor even in many communions. These are means in God's hand of kindling the spiritual life in the soul of man, or means of feeding the flames when kindled; but they are not the flame itself, they are not the life. Paul's compendious and noble description of the kingdom of God in the human soul runs thus: "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink"—it stands not in outward institutions but in interior affections—"but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Nor does the spiritual life consist in *actions*. The actions are the result, the fruit, but they are not the life of the tree. Minds which recoil from the idea of a life de-

voted exclusively to ordinances are often apt to fall into this opposite error. The sum and substance of true religion in their view is merely the going about doing good. Whereas the Apostle Paul, in his enumeration, *does not mention a single action*, but merely a series of tempers—"love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." E. M. G.

Those graces which are denominated the fruit of the Spirit are in their very nature modes of happiness. Some of them are directly consolatory, because they strike at the very root of our inward disquietudes. For instance, Faith, by realizing to the soul divine truths, carries it away above its sufferings, and so consoles. Gentleness diffuses a blessed calm over the nature. Love is the atmosphere of heaven. Long-suffering and meekness counteract all those distresses—and they are innumerable—which arise from pride, anger, and revenge. Joy drives out the soul's pains by the expulsive power of a new dominant affection. And peace is but the scriptural name for the entire result of combined holy satisfactions in the heart. J. W. A.

24. Have crucified the flesh. By the term "flesh," he does not mean this mortal body, but that corrupt nature which our first parents transmitted to all their children. Its character may be seen in its works; and what these are, when fully developed, may be read in its awful catalogue. It is to crucifixion, whose intensely painful and protracted agonies the apostle himself may have witnessed, that Paul turns for a figure strong and bold enough to describe the death of sin. T. G.—When God puts his law into any soul, sin's usurped dominion is overthrown; its power broken; its final destruction sure. The man now strives against it in all its shapes—against corrupt reason and passion both. They must be driven out, inch by inch; and at times, as in the case of David, Peter, and others, they make sudden and desperate efforts, and seem, for a season, to have regained their wonted empire; and this conflict continues to the end. The old man is *crucified* with the affections and lusts, but he *dies not*, till the believer is delivered from the burden of the flesh, and enters that world where there is sin no more. *Goode.*

25. The sanctifying Spirit renews the directing and commanding faculties, the fountains of moral

action, enlightens the understanding with saving knowledge, rectifies the obliquity of the will, purifies the affection, and reforms the life. So that *the same mind* is in Christians as *was* in Christ; and as *his conversation was*, such is *theirs* in the world. They are said to be in the Spirit, illuminated, inclined, and enabled by the Spirit to do God's will; and the Spirit of God to dwell in them, by his peculiar and eminent operations: *They live in the Spirit!* *Bates.*

Let us also walk in the Spirit. Let the doctrine find its unanswerable testimonies in the greater purity, nobleness, and devotedness of the Christian's life before men. We greatly want a fresher and deeper doctrine of the Holy Spirit. We want it individually, to give vitality to our professions, and energy to our effort, and sanctity to our faith, and unconquerable constancy to our will. Christendom wants it, to heal the waste places of its foreign and its domestic heathenism, to repair the desolations of bigotry and formality, to advance the flagging march of its principles, to animate the languid piety of its churches, to invigorate pure and undefiled religion, to gather unrepenting but homesick prodigals in, to enlarge and build up and strengthen the inclosures of the Saviour's everlasting fold. Come, then, thou Holy Spirit, the Renewer, to replenish our wasting lamps, and revive thy work, in the midst of the years! Come, Guide and Teacher, to take our hands in thine, and pour light on our way and on our mind! Come as the Comforter, to heal bleeding hearts, and bind up the bruises of uncharitableness, and every sorrow! Come, Restrainer, to keep our feet, and all our hidden desires and imaginations, from evil! Come, thou Sanctifier, to purify and perfect us—unto the worship of the Father and obedience to the Son—till we are a true and accepted branch of the immortal vine—a people patient and believing, and zealous of good works! F. D. H.

26. There should be a love of true excellence out of one's self—of all true excellence, wherever recognized; a hearty sympathy with all struggles, especially all successful struggles for eminent worth, by whomsoever made. Into every spirit which Christianity enters, it carries and settles a large infusion of this noble, disinterested zeal to see the true, the good, the magnanimous, reigning in all brother hearts. *White.*

Section 296.

GALATIANS vi. 1-18.

1 BRETHREN, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in
 2 the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one an-
 3 other's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be some-
 4 thing, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work,
 5 and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall
 6 bear his own burden. Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that
 7 teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man
 8 soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap cor-
 9 ruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let
 10 us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we
 have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the
 household of faith.

11 Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand. As many as
 12 desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they
 13 should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are cir-
 cumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your
 14 flesh. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by
 15 whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither
 16 circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as
 walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.
 17 From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.
 18 Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with your spirit. Amen.

THE crucifixion of the old manhood is to be the life's work of every Christian, through the power of faith in that cross by which "the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." That thought comes over and over again in all forms of earnest presentation in the apostle's teaching. It carries in its type a most solemn reality. The truth is, that, if a Christian, you have a double life. There is Christ, with his power, with his Spirit, giving you a nature which is pure and sinless, incapable of transgression, like his own. The new man, that which is born of God, sinneth not, can not sin. But side by side with it, working through it, working in it, indistinguishable from it to your consciousness by anything but this, that the one works righteousness and the other works transgression—there is the "old man," "the flesh," "the old Adam," your own godless, independent, selfish, proud being. And the one is to slay the other! Ah, these words—crucifying, casting out the old man, plucking out the right eye, maiming self of the right hand, mortifying the deeds of the body—they are something very much deeper and more awful than poetical symbols and metaphors. They teach us this—there is no growth without sore sorrow. Conflict, not progress, is the word that defines man's path from darkness into light. No holiness is won by any other means than this, that wickedness should be *slain* day by day and hour by hour. In long, lingering agony often, with the blood of the heart pouring out at every quivering vein, you are to cut right through the life and being of that sinful self; to do what the word does, pierce to the dividing asunder of the thoughts and intents of the heart, and get rid by crucifying and slaying—a long process, a painful process—of your own sinful self. A. M.

1. **Be overtaken in a fault.** Sins of surprise are particularly the sins which Paul commends to the care of Christian friends. It is by these sins of surprise that a man is rightly said to be overtaken. It is the weak soul that has fallen into sin, partly from surprise, partly from weakness, that really needs the help of fellow-Christians. And that help must be given by intimate friends, and by older or stronger Christians. And it must be given by showing a sympathy with the pain which such sins bring in their consequence, by showing a readiness to welcome every effort toward repentance, by eagerness to judge as favorably as it is possible to judge, by a generous forgetfulness of whatever is plainly forsaken; in short, by giving that sort of help which each man's conscience will tell him

would be best for himself in the same circumstances; not a help to think lightly of what is wrong, but a help to be braver and firmer in doing right; that help which restores self-respect, and revives hope, and unites the fallen to the company of his fellows. F. T.

Restore in meekness. In thy love, O Christian, let earnestness never fail in gentleness, and let gentleness never fail in earnestness. Do not take the earnest words of Jesus into thy mouth, unless thou hast the spirit of Jesus in thy heart. He that uses the rebuking word of Jesus when he has not the loving heart of Jesus is full of carnal zeal, even though he could add Bible texts to every harsh word of censure that he utters. We must rebuke ourselves before we rebuke others, that meekness in our heart and words may give divine help to earnestness. A. C.

2. The Christian faith contemplates each heart as having interdependencies and communications with its fellows. It calls every exclusive, oppressive, abusive, corrupting community or person to account for the lost, the neglected, the betrayed, the weaker members of the household. One half of its twofold commandment is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." If it declares in one breath that "every man shall bear his own burden," in the next it says, "Bear ye one another's burdens." It predicts an infinite misery for them that tempt, betray, misguide, deprave one another—for them that form companies, clubs, societies, to make each other frivolous, profligate, dissolute. It requires all to give, not only food, clothes, and money, but the ministry of encouraging words, patient endurance, honest living, aspiring thoughts. In fact, all the pages of our Book of Faith are marked with these earnest counsels and exhortations about caring for other souls. It is always adjuring us to work for, to think for, to suffer for—and to that end to love—other people. Such is the compass of its charity. Whether it commands or forbids, its intent is the same. F. D. H.—There is many a load which only grows less by giving a lift to another. Life itself is apt to grow burdensome to the self-centered pleasure-seeker, and there are some who in resultless speculations become absorbed and exhausted. For such the best prescription is practical philanthropy. Confront the material evil, the palpable miseries around you, and try to make them less. If you succeed, and you will succeed, the happiness of others will be a balm for the healing of your own wounds, and, as you advance in the experiment, you will land on results which pure reason did not anticipate. You will find that for lessening your own sorrows it is a good plan to share the sorrows of others, and that for lessening both theirs and yours there is no method

so effectual as recourse to a Saviour's sympathy. *Hamilton.*

3. Too many take the ready course to deceive themselves, for they look with both eyes on the failings and defects of others, and scarcely give their good qualities half an eye, while, on the contrary, in themselves, they study to the full their own advantages, and pass over their weaknesses and defects; and, making this uneven parallel, what wonder if the result be a gross mistake of themselves! L.—4. **Prove his own work.** There is a particular emphasis in these words which must not be overlooked. It is his *own* work that a man must prove. We are sufficiently ready to examine and to pass sentence upon the works of others. We are often abroad, but are seldom at home, where our chief business lies. Like some travelers, who are well acquainted with foreign countries but shamefully ignorant of their own, we know more of others than we are willing to know of ourselves. R. W.

5. If every man is to bear his own burden, it might be asked, How can each bear the other's? And again, if ye bear one another's burdens, How can each have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another? The truth is, here is the very perfection of society, set down in these brief items; the perfection at once of dependence and independence, of personal and mutual responsibility and accountability. In this kingdom of heaven upon earth, formed by each one having as much at heart the welfare of others as his own, each individual is to regard all others as so many reduplicates of self, to be blessed and benefited, and every individual is to avoid throwing his own burdens upon others. Each is to prove his own work, and not leave it to be accomplished by others, and at the same time each is to help all others as often as he can find opportunity. And the opportunity to bless others is to be regarded as itself one of the greatest of blessings. G. B. C.

7. **God is not mocked.** Think of the great God watching every kind of hypocrite as he tries to deceive his fellows by empty shows; as he glories in his success; as he thinks the secret is known only to himself. Can He, the infinitely pure and true, fall below man in his abhorrence of such a character? And if the blind man could once open his eye on God, seeing him in all the glory of his truth, and seeing that there is one immortal witness against him, who knows all and remembers all, could he help being withered and loathing himself? T. D. W.

That shall he reap. We are all placed in this preparatory state under a solemn course of education for immortality; we are intrusted with the formation of our own character; such as we make ourselves, such we must be for ever; and in

our conduct, in our words, in our very inactivity, we are (by the law of our present nature) ceaselessly engaged in constructing *that* nature which is to be ours for eternity. What unutterable importance does this tremendous charge confer upon the slightest act of daily life! Insignificant in itself, it swells to mighty magnitude, when it becomes an element in that accumulation of habits which constitutes the character, and thence an item in an immortal account, and in its consequences absolutely imperishable. Of a truth, life is "the seed-time of eternity," and every hour, every minute, the seed is sown, which is to reappear in immortal fruits. W. A. B.

8. Reap corruption. The most dangerous because most attractive form of modern infidelity, pretending to exalt the beneficence of the Deity, degrades it into a reckless infinitude of mercy, and blind obliteration of the work of sin; and does this chiefly by dwelling on the manifold appearances of God's kindness on the face of creation. Such kindness is indeed everywhere and always visible; but not alone. Wrath and threatening are invariably mingled with the love; and in the utmost solitudes of nature the existence of hell seems to me as legibly declared by a thousand spiritual utterances as that of heaven. It is well for us to dwell with thankfulness on the unfolding of the flower, and the falling of the dew, and the sleep of the green fields in the sunshine; but the blasted trunk, the barren rock, the moaning of the bleak winds, the roar of the black, perilous whirlpools of the mountain streams, the solemn solitudes of moors and seas, the continual fading of all beauty into darkness and of all strength into dust—have these no language for us? We may seek to escape their teaching by reasonings touching the good which is wrought out of all evil; but it is vain sophistry. The good succeeds to the evil as day succeeds the night, but so also the evil to the good. Gerizim and Ebal, birth and death, light and darkness, heaven and hell, divide the existence of man and his futurity. *Ruskin.*

Nature has no forgiveness, Providence has no forgiveness, Revelation has forgiveness only on conditions. It is of no use, it can be of no use to us either here or hereafter, to attempt to practice a deception on ourselves. We must take God as we find him, as he presents himself to us in Nature, in Providence, in the Word, and not as we would make him over to suit our own desires. Christ was full of mercy, his mission was a mission of love; but you can find nowhere in the Bible more terrific representations of the hopeless, eternal miseries of the wicked in the future life than those which are ascribed to Christ in the first three gospels. *An.*—If there be a life to come, then the evil deed you did is not ended by its commission, but it will

still go on and on. The evil you have done to others will remain throughout eternity; the evil you have done to your own soul will spread. There is no *perhaps*. These are things which will be hereafter. You can not alter the eternal laws. You can not put your hand in the flame and not be burnt. You can not sin in the body and escape the sin, for it goes inward, becomes part of you, and is itself the penalty which cleaves for ever and ever to your spirit. Sow in the flesh, and you will reap corruption; yield to passion, and it becomes your tyrant and your torment; be sensual, self-indulgent, indolent, worldly, hard—oh! they all have their corresponding penalties. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." F. W. R.

9. Be not weary in well-doing. There is in this short life to every man, especially to every Christian, a holy summons to do good, and as much good as possible. For this the narrowest sphere affords abundant opportunity; as little does there lack incitement to use well the opportunity. And yet the best of us constantly run the risk of slackening their zeal in those good works, which they acknowledge as duties. The good is not always the pleasant, the convenient, the immediately practical. It seems so much more prudent, at least much quieter, to work by passive means than active. *Van O.*—If by "*well-doing*" we mean something beyond the ordinary proprieties of conduct—things of decided Christian exertion, requiring energy and patience—there is great need of the exhortation, "*Be not weary.*" Even the most faithful and devoted workmen, in the worthiest services, are not quite exempt from the operation of causes tending to this failure; they feel them while they resist them.

We shall reap. The laborers in the good cause must firmly stay by this assurance, standing as it does combined with a vast number of promises to the same effect—a magnificent assemblage! The main substance of the reaping will be in the field of eternity. J. F.

10. Consider well where God has placed us, our position in life, our opportunities for particular action or influence, the paths in which we move in society, the leisure that lies in our hand. To examine these carefully, and see how we can with all wisdom turn them to Christian profit, is a great matter for every one of us. If there be an earnest desire to do good, even with a sense of much unfitness, it is marvelous how fitness will grow. He who sends the opportunity and the desire will send the qualification. In general, it will be found that the best Christian work is not far from our own door, and that those are mistaken who think they can do nothing till they find some great sphere. The work of Christ's servants is often most effectually performed when it is done noiselessly and informally,

in hidden nooks of quiet homes, or walking by the wayside and yet scattering seed in the field. A master among his servants, a workman among his associates, a mother among her children, a sister among brothers, may be dropping words and radiating influences of which there shall be no report till the last great disclosure shall bring out the "Well done, good and faithful servant." *Ker.*

Oh, if we but saw how the gates of opportunity open and close! how the possibilities of to-day, neglected, become to-morrow the things which God himself could not do; how unused strength wastes away and brings up behind it no other strengths; how the grace that lies about all our occasions, ready to flow upon them at the touches of our diligence, elighted, lifts itself up into the heavens, and leaves us in hardness and dearth; how, on the other hand, when used, it drops upon us like the rain, and distills like the dew; how work done makes work easier; how the voluntary use, even to exhaustion and waste, of "all that is within us," and without us too—of soul and flesh, of love and brain, of time and strength, and hours of work and hours of prayer—will bring upon us, and through the needs thus made by our faithfulness, the gentle pressures of the infinite fullness, God's newest, freshest grace. If we but saw such things as these, what "girding" there would be among us! what gatherings together for coöperative work! what goings up upon the land to be possessed! Come; let us live as we may. *A. R.*

11. At this point the apostle takes the pen from the amanuensis, and the concluding paragraph is written with his own hand. He sums up the main lessons of the Epistle in terse, eager, disjointed sentences. He writes it too in large, bold characters, that his handwriting may reflect the energy and determination of his soul. To this feature he calls attention in his words that follow: "Look you, in what large letters I write with mine own hand!" *J. B. L.*—It was in those large characters that he traced the words, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ"; "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." *F. W. R.*

14. **The cross.** In Scripture the cross is used literally and metaphorically. Literally, it means the instrument for capital punishment used by the Romans. Metaphorically, it means the doctrine of atonement for sin, made by the death upon it of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Literally, it signifies the most ignominious of gibbets. Metaphorically, it signifies the most glorious of truths. It is no wonder that some confusion should have arisen from the use of the same word in such very different meanings. On the one side, unbelieving Jews, identifying the metaphorical with the literal, the doctrine with the gibbet, have enlarged on the disgrace and degradation of the CRUCIFIED, and thrown

it contemptuously in the teeth of his disciples. On the other side, superstitious Christians (so called), identifying the literal with the metaphorical, the gibbet with the doctrine, have elevated the material figure into the place of the spiritual truth, and enlarged on the glorious cross, the holy cross. Christianity distinguishes between the gibbet and the doctrine; degrading the gibbet as low as any Jew can desire, for it was indeed vile, even the accursed tree; and elevating the doctrine as high as any Christian can desire, for it is the saving truth of God. The doctrine is seen to be more and more glorious, as the gibbet is seen to be more and more ignominious. *McNeile.*

Oh, the wondrous power of the Cross! Oh, the ineffable glory of the Passion! wherein is the tribunal of the Lord, and the judgment of the world, and the power of the Crucified. For thou, O Lord, "drewest all to thee," when the veil of the temple was rent; that figure might be changed into reality, prophecy into manifestation, and law into gospel. Thy cross is the fountain of all blessings, it is the cause of all graces, through which is given to believers strength instead of weakness, glory instead of obloquy, life instead of death. *Leo.*

Glory in the cross. The natural selfishness in us will glory in anything else rather than in the cross—in having its own way, in reputation, in business success, in riches, in taking the lead in fashionable distinctions; it does not wish the world to be crucified to it, for the world is the theatre of its display; it does not wish itself to be crucified to the world, for there it finds all its excitements and enjoyments. Here, then, is the perpetual and deadly conflict between man's self-will and the spirit of the cross. *F. D. H.*—But the love of Christ in the soul takes the very nails that fastened him to the cross, and crucifies the soul to the world and to sin. Generally, as Plato hath it, love takes away one's living in themselves, and transfers it into the party loved; but the divine love of Christ doth it in the truest and highest manner. *L.*

14. "The world" in the New Testament sense designates *present sensible things*, viewed as exercising a malignant influence over the minds of men—directly opposed to the influence which future and spiritual things should exert over them. It is plain that one man's "world" may be very different from another man's world. In each case it means the various earthly objects, whether persons or things, objects or events, by which the individual is surrounded. These things are here personified. This personage is crucified "to him," i. e., in his estimation. It is as a crucified person to him—as an expiring felon on a cross, an object of aversion. *And I unto the world:* and I am as a crucified person in the world's estimation, i. e., in the estimation of worldly men. I am an object of contempt and of hatred to my unbelieving countrymen and to un-

believing Gentiles. It was the mode of thinking, feeling, acting, to which the faith of the doctrine of the cross naturally led, that made him the object of the contempt and dislike of worldly men. It was this that led him to the bold avowal of doctrines disliked by the worldly, and to his active endeavors to overthrow the power of the world over the heart and mind of men. Paul's sentiment is : In the cross I have infinitely more than the world ever gave me ; and I have also what far more than compensates for its contempt and hatred. J. B.

In one sentence we see three crucifixions ; and yet, under all the three, there is one and the same grand truth, one sublime principle of self-sacrificing love. There is "the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." It is by virtue of that one only complete and sufficient sacrifice that every other self-denial gets its Christian virtue. Hence Paul says, with his overpowering and exclusive energy of thankful devotion, "God forbid that I should glory in anything but that!" Next is the crucifixion of that mixed and ever-present power of attraction and temptation called "the world." "The world is crucified unto me." This fascinating, terrible tempter, which tries the purity and honor of every soul, whether saved or lost, has to be so broken down, denied and killed, to all such as will be saved, that it is said to be slain on a cross. But to that end there must be yet a third crucifixion : "And I unto the world." And all this *giving up*, this sacrifice of passion, of admiration, of earthly pleasure, of wrong pursuits and property, of idols in business, idols in society, idols in the house, idols in the secret ambitions and lusts of the mind—all of it is for Christ's dear and glorious sake ; *by whom*—by whose faith and promise and life and death, by whose inestimable gift, by whose agony and bloody sweat, by whose cross and passion—the blessed power is given, and the triumph of renunciation is gained. F. D. H.

15. A new creature. It is a figure, and *but* a figure ; heavy though it be, like all other Scriptural figures, with deep and important meaning. It is a moral, not a physical, an alterative, not an originating act. It consists, not in originating a soul into separate nature and life, but in actuating the nature of a living soul, already originated and become sinful ; in so actuating it as to effect a moral *change* of its nature and character, of its tempers and tastes, its inclinations and purposes, its inward and its outward habits and actions. This is a process which we can comprehend. How it begins with God and is sustained by Him, we know not ; but we

know how it begins and is sustained in us ; even with memory, reflection, thought, feeling, purpose, action, in the great work of repentance, faith, love, and obedience. J. S. S.—Paul began the Epistle (1 : 4) with allusion to Christ's death as intended to deliver us from this present evil world ; and now he ends it by declaring that the cross of Christ obliterates mere worldly rudiments and fleshly distinctions in religion. There is a new creation, with a new atmosphere of motive and sympathy, a new life in the Spirit, a new hope to cheer, and a new principle to actuate, viz., faith which works by love.

16-18. To walk according to the rule of a religion in the flesh and of the world can only end in confusion. But the apostle has a benediction for as many as walk according to this rule of new creatureship. "Peace be on them and mercy, and upon the Israel of God," as distinguished from the mere Israel after the flesh which boasted in the law. So Paul makes an end. Let who will impugn his relation to Christ, he bears "the stigmata of Jesus" in the marks of his good fight of faith, and his many afflictions. Then, breathing always the disposition befitting an apostle of the Lamb, he concludes, not with menaces or curses of the law, but with a kindly prayer for the Galatians : "Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen." It is the only church Epistle in which this form is used ; and an emphasis lies on spirit as against the flesh. No grace can possibly come upon the flesh. It is crucified with its affections and lusts. The grace of the Lord Jesus is with our spirit, or not with us at all ; and his Spirit is to bear witness with our spirits that we are the children of God.

This Epistle may in one sense be called obsolete. The Jewish form of a false gospel we never think of. But in other forms false gospels abound. To combat these, the Epistle to the Galatians is fresh and powerful as ever. It was a true instinct which led Martin Luther to give much of his time to the exposition of it, in order to establish the doctrine of faith ; and *we* want it still to smite self-righteousness and religious externalism root and branch, and to teach that a man, in order to be justified, must believe in Christ, and, in order to be sanctified, must be crucified with Christ. The Epistle is full of animation, argument, and reproof ; but, above all and best of all, it is full of grace. So it teaches a lesson for all time—that sinners are saved by grace, and saints are preserved by grace. D. F.

Section 297.

EPHESIANS i. 1-23.

1 PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus,
 2 and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and
 3 from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who
 4 hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: according as he hath
 5 chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without
 6 blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus
 7 Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of
 8 his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption
 9 through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he
 10 hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the
 11 mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:
 12 that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things
 13 in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him: in whom also
 14 we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who
 15 worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of
 16 his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word
 17 of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed
 18 with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemp-
 19 tion of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

20 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the
 21 saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the
 22 God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom
 23 and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened;
 that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his
 inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who
 believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when
 he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*,
 21 far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is
 22 named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all *things*
 23 under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, which is his body,
 the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

THE recovery of man was announced on the day of his apostasy; though, by the very terms of that announcement, this recovery would involve a long conflict between the seed of the woman and the serpent. But the method of that recovery was a mystery, obscurely hinted at by prophets who knew not what the Spirit that was in them did testify, more and more pronounced through symbols and the later prophecies; at length, in the fullness of times, unveiled in the incarnation of Christ; but still a mystery of the divine love for the ever-unfolding glories of eternity. And all this wondrous plan is referred back to the purpose of God before the foundation of the world; ever the same plan in the religion which the Bible reveals; ever the same purpose in Divine Providence, unfolding and fulfilling this plan; ever the same development in history, as this great purpose of redemption moves onward through the ages toward its consummation in the final accord of the physical and the moral universe, through the triumph of God over evil, of salvation over sin. Surely we who have part in such a redemption, and whose inheritance in this glory is sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, should be holy and without blame before him who hath blessed us with these infinite riches of his grace. J. P. T.

THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

THIS Epistle was written during Paul's first imprisonment at Rome in the spring of A. D. 62, at the same time with those to Philemon and to the Colossians. B.

We infer that the Epistle was veritably written as now addressed to the Ephesian Church and to no other. Ephesus was a place of great commerce and note at the mouth of the river Cayster in Lydia. It was famed for its great temple of Diana, one of the wonders of the ancient world. Paul's first and short visit to it is recorded Acts 18: 19-21. The work begun by him was afterward carried on by Apollos and by Aquila and Priscilla. During his second visit, lasting "three years," he founded the Ephesian Church (see Acts 19: 20). The number of converts seems to have been considerable, and the Church had been an especial object of the apostle's personal care. On his last recorded journey to Jerusalem he did not touch at Ephesus, but summoned the elders of the Ephesian Church to meet him at Miletus, where he took an affecting farewell of them, which at the time he believed to be his last. (Read Sections 220, 221, 223.)

When we come to inquire into the occasion of the Epistle we find nothing special in the state of the Ephesian Church which may account for it. Rather does it seem to have sprung out of the circumstances of the Apostle's employment at the time. He was sending by Tychicus and Onesimus a weighty letter to the Colossian Church, occasioned by defects in its belief and practices. His mind was much exercised on the points which he had to treat in that Epistle. But these very matters were parts of a larger and more complete subject which the special import of that letter would not allow him to introduce. He longed to set forth the length and breadth and height of the Church of Christ as founded in the counsel of the Father's will, wrought by the obedience and love of the Son, carried on and nourished by the indwelling influence of the Spirit. And to whom should such an Epistle be addressed but to that Church which, more than any other, he had founded and built up—the Church at Ephesus? This, then, seems to be its occasion. It is to the Epistle to the Colossians what the Epistle to the Romans is to that to the Galatians: a great offspring, greater than the parent, embracing the general subject of which the other treated a particular portion. He addresses the Ephesian Church as a type, a sample of the Church universal. He sets forth to them the *ground*, the *course*, the *aim* and *end* of the church universal. All through the letter this threefold division is found. The *origin* of the Church in the *will of the FATHER*; the *course* of the Church by the *satisfaction of the SON*; the scope and aim of the Church, *life in the SPIRIT*—these three things run through the whole, dividing the Epistle first into three larger portions, and then in those portions carrying out the same order in every paragraph, and almost in every sentence. The whole is a magnificent apostolic comment on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, as the divine Persons are concerned in the work of our redemption. Those who deny that doctrine must either set aside this Epistle altogether or must tear out of it all meaning and coherence.

After the customary apostolic greeting, begins the first portion of the Epistle (1: 3; 3: 21), the *doctrine of the Church of Christ*. This is subdivided as follows: 1. The Ground and Origin of the Church,

in the *Father's Council*, and his Act in Christ, by the Spirit (1: 3-23). 2. The Course and Progress of the Church through the *Son* (2: 1-22). 3. The Aim and End of the Church in the *Spirit* (3: 1-21).

3-23. *The Ground and Origin of the Church, in the Father's Council, and his Act in Christ, by the Spirit.*—In carrying out this, the apostle gives, 1. The preliminary idea of the Church, set forth in the form of an ascription of praise (3-14), and thus arranged: The *Father*, in his eternal love, has chosen us unto holiness (v. 4), ordained us to sonship (v. 5), bestowed grace on us in the beloved (v. 6); in the *Son* we have redemption through the riches of his grace (v. 7), knowledge of the mystery of his will (vs. 8, 9), inheritance under him as the one Head (vs. 10-12); through the *Spirit* we are sealed by hearing the word of salvation (v. 13), by receiving the earnest of our inheritance (v. 14), until the redemption of the purchased possession. 2. The idea of the Church carried forward, in the form of a prayer for the Ephesians, in which the fulfillment of the Father's counsel through the Son, by the Spirit in his people, is set forth as consisting in the knowledge of the hope of his calling, of the riches of his promise, and the power which he exercises on his saints as first wrought by him in Christ, whom he has made Head over all the Church (vs. 15-23). A.

3. *All blessings in Christ.* The feeling and the cry of faith is, He gives us Christ, and in him all things. Christ can not be ours and any grace be absent; this King can not enthrone himself in our spirit and not bring with him his whole retinue of blessings. Christ is here, and He, the "Son over his own house," will take care to rule it in wisdom; in having Him we have pardon, in having Him we have holiness, in having Him we have heaven itself—"raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." W. A. B.

4. *Chosen us.* 5. *Predestinated us.* The doctrine of predestination is in the Bible. But how is it there? Is it proclaimed in awfulness and anger, to tell that gospel blessing and gospel invitations are of little use, for God's decree has narrowed them to a scanty number? As it stands in the Bible, how does it look, benignant or forbidding? How does it sound? harmonious or harsh? Not only what is its tenor? but its tone? Turning to one of its stronghold passages (Eph. 1: 3-12), and noticing how it is qualified and tempered by the object of it all, "that we should be holy and without blame before him in love," I beg you to observe its tone. Observe how ecstatic and exulting the whole passage is, beginning and ending with hallelujahs, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus," and steeped in joy and love from end to end. When viewed from the evangelic standpoint, observe what a benignant doctrine this election is, hindering no man's salvation who is willing to be saved, and giving glorious security for their salvation who have once found acceptance in the beloved. *Hamilton.*

A thoughtful nature can not shrink from those

absorbing inquiries which relate to the harmonies of divine intentions with the unquestionable facts of self-science; but the whole history of moral philosophy demonstrates that no man is safe in approaching the brink of this great ocean except as he is led by the hand of Christ; then this great and wide sea is calm, and the outlook on its length and breadth and depth is cheerful, and the soul trusts, and adores, and loves, but does not sink; for Christ, the living, loving Saviour of the soul, is the center about which all the purposes and decrees of God in regard to our race and world revolve, and, whatever else we doubt or ponder in vain, this is clear and indubitable, that God would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. For a practical, theologic use, what better definition can be given of God's eternal and sovereign decrees than this—Christianity no accident, no incident, but God's original plan? and sovereign election—so often conceived and presented as a philosophical abstraction by which many are chilled and repelled—what is it, in fact, but this blessed and most comforting assurance, that Christianity will be no failure or disappointment; that its success depends on no contingency, but is made certain by the very love from which it drew its origin? W. A.

6. Accepted in the beloved. The sinner hands over his sins to the perfect One, and the perfect One hands over his perfection to the sinner. Thus, by reason of this blessed transference or exchange, the imperfect one becomes as the perfect One in the sight of God, and is dealt with as such in regard to all favor and blessing. Perfection covers imperfection, and the believing sinner stands "complete" in the perfect One: "accepted in the Beloved." Crediting God's testimony to the perfect One, and his perfect sacrifice, we stand before God on a new footing—as men who have "become the righteousness of God in Him," and who now get life, and peace, and pardon, and blessing, simply because the perfect One has deserved it for them. We have all in Him. *Bonar.*

God's hearing of our prayers doth not depend upon sanctification, but upon Christ's intercession; not upon what we are in ourselves, but what we are in the Lord Jesus; both our persons and our prayers are acceptable in the Beloved. *Brooks.*—Repentance is, properly speaking, a change of *mind*, or a new mind *about* God; regeneration is a change of *heart*, or a new heart *toward* God; conversion is a change of *life*, or a new life *for* God; adoption is a change of *family*, or a new relationship *to* God; sanctification is a change of *employment*, or a consecration of all *to* God; glorification is a change of *place*, or a new condition *with* God; but justification, which is a change of *state*, or a new standing *before* God, must be presented as going before all,

for being "accepted in the Beloved" is the foundation and the cause of all. *An.*

7. In whom we have redemption through his blood. Never has there been, never was there, never will there be such another—but only He, the virgin-born, God and man; whose inherent worthiness is not only equivalent to the multitude of the guilty, but many times outweighs it. Being of his own free will condemned, he annulled the death deserved by his crucifiers, and converted the crime of his slayers into the criminals' own salvation. He came to save, but it behooved him also to suffer. How could both these things be? A mere man had no power to save; God, by himself, could not possibly suffer. What then took place? Emmanuel, being himself God, became man. That which he was wrought salvation, that which he became suffered. *Proclus.*—Holy and full of blessing is the living law of our redemption—Jesus Christ, who blesses us through the forgiveness of sins. Condemned is every righteousness and holiness of man. The way to righteousness and holiness is Jesus Christ and his atoning death. All bonds burst from hands and feet, from heart and head, from word and life, from soul and body, when Jesus Christ forgives our sins. Redemption is no dead letter; it is life, and it works life. A. C.

9-12. Believing in God, and reasoning consistently, we can not avoid the conclusion that there is a system of things upborne and guided by the agency and government of the Almighty; but it is only when we are informed in the Christian revelation what this system is—even the purpose of God, before the foundation of the world was laid, to make it the theatre of redeeming love—that God's sovereign decrees are taken out of all association with fatalistic necessity, and made to glow with a most celestial joy. Would it comfort our rational souls to be assured that this world and its affairs were drifting along without plan or purpose; that redemption was an after-thought, an improvised expedient gotten up of necessity to remedy an unforeseen accident? Does it not comfort every rational soul, taking its position by the side of the Son of God, looking backward and upward, to be informed that the one purpose, which includes every other pertaining to our race, is that which according to his good pleasure God hath purposed in himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of time he might gather together in one all things in Christ, that we should be to the praise of his glory who trusted and hoped in Christ? W. A.

10. All things in heaven and on earth. From intimations such as these, it is probable that, in the great work of redemption as well as of creation, there is a vast stupendous plan of wisdom, of which we can not at present so much as conceive the

whole compass and extent. And, if the redemption wrought by Christ extended to other worlds, if its virtues penetrate even into heaven itself, if it gather together *all things* in Christ, who will then say that the dignity of the agent was disproportioned to the magnitude of the work, and that this small globe of earth was not a scene sufficiently splendid for the Son of God himself to appear upon, and to display the riches of his love, not only to the race of man, but to many other orders of intelligent beings? P.

12. Trusted in Christ. Talk what we will of *faith*, if we do not trust and rely on him, we do not believe in him. Believe in him and not trust in him! You might as well say the Jews did love him when they nailed him to the cross. *Farindon*.—The faith that brings salvation is the act of a being toward a being, sinner to Saviour, man to God. "He that believeth in *me*," says Christ, not he that believeth some things, or many things, about me. The simple first point of it is Christ, a Saviour, manifested in such love and divinity that, taken for salvation as a being, he can be trusted. And, when he is thus trusted, that is saving faith. H. B.

13. Sealed with the Holy Spirit. Sealing implies the direct contact of the seal with the thing sealed, and involves the idea that the consequence of that sealing is the impression on the thing sealed of the device that is carved on the seal. The purpose of that sealing is security and safety. The thought, then, is just this, that God's Holy Spirit comes into real contact with the Christian man's soul, and there stamps and impresses the character and copy of its own likeness; and that these God-like desires, feelings, emotions, thoughts, the whole reflected character of the divine majesty and holiness, as mirrored and molded in a believer's heart, are the pledge of the security of that man, and of the certainty that he will be kept in the way in which he goes. If you take *that* for your doctrine of final perseverance, there is no fear of its ever being turned to anything but the noblest purposes, or being found to contain anything but the mightiest inducements to walking in the Divine life, and to seeking to possess that mirrored image of the Divine Word. A. M.

14. The *earnest of our inheritance* means the experience of it, in some measure beforehand, ministered with faith by the Holy promised Spirit, until the time when, by redemption completed, it shall come to be held in actual everlasting possession. God gives us not *mere* testimony, though it be his own, but experience also, and the *evidence* of experience in the Christian life. But experience is not the first thing. First comes belief in the things revealed of God, because God testifies of them, because God declares them. Then comes knowledge,

the knowledge of experience growing out of faith. G. B. C.

17-23. The first chapter ends with a sublime prayer of intercession in behalf of the Ephesian saints. Paul desires their spiritual illumination. They have the spirit of life; he asks for them the spirit of wisdom. They have a holy calling; he asks that the eyes of their hearts may be opened, so that they may know "the hope of his calling." They have forgiveness through the death of Christ; he asks that they may know in themselves the power which God put forth in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The prayer ends with mention of the exaltation of the Saviour, and his headship over all, to the Church, which is his body. Then these thoughts run through all the remainder of the Epistle. It recognizes the heavenly places, and sees the Church in elevation with Christ, regarding it as his mystical body, his holy temple, and his ransomed bride. D. F.

17. The spirit of revelation. The Spirit of God is represented by various types: by ointment that clarifies the eye to see things aright; by cleansing, refreshing water; by purifying, refining fire, correspondent to his sacred operations in the soul. As the Spirit of truth, he illuminates the understanding to see the reason and excellency of supernatural and heavenly things, of the great mysteries of godliness, of eternal glory; so that a Christian, in his most deliberate, solemn, and composed thoughts, in his exactest valuation, infinitely prefers them before the vanities of this transient world. When the eyes of the mind are truly enlightened, present things appear, or rather disappear, as shadows. *Bates*.

19, 20. Jesus has universal dominion, and uses that dominion, as mediator of the new covenant, to bring about the everlasting counsels of his love in our deliverance from sin and death and hell. Here is the security of the covenant. Corruption is mighty, enemies are mighty; but he who loveth us, he who reigns for us, is mightier. He gives strength and power unto his people in their present conflicts, and will bring glory to himself and them in making them at last "more than conquerors" over all. *Goode*.

21. Principality and power. The creative power of God is adequate to the peopling of the universe with beings as various as the infinite variety of material objects. Only the divine wisdom limits the divine power. That wisdom is its own judge of what is fit and best for this power to accomplish. The reason of man has no foothold in this superior sphere. On this subject the word of God is singularly clear and decisive. It declares to us the existence of such a class of intelligences. It describes them in their personality, distinguishing them broadly from man and the powers of nature. It attributes to them all the attributes of personality and intelligence, will, affections, powers. It gives some of their names, expressive of their characters—Michael, who is as God, a prince; Satan, the adversary. It tells of the love and joyful obedience of one class; of their delight in God and holiness; of their interest in the progress of the Redeemer's kingdom, and their outburst of praise at his birth; and of their joy over the conversion of sinners, their worship of God and the Lamb, and their agency in the final destruction of this world. It describes to us the malignity of another class, their

opposition to man, their evil influence, their fall, their condemnation; it tells us of those who kept not their first estate, who through the indulgence of pride fell, who ever since the creation of man have been engaged in constituting the kingdom of the world in opposition to the kingdom of heaven. S. W. F.

22. Head over all things to the church.

That is, he hath placed him at the head of all things, and given him supreme dominion over them; so that the highest angels are only servants in his kingdom, whom he sends forth to minister to the heirs of salvation. But his relation to his Church carries in it a more close and intimate connection. He is not only head *over his Church* in respect of supreme authority, but he is the head *of his Church* in respect of vital influence; for so the apostle himself explains it in the following chapter, verse 19: He is that head "from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." R. W.—We need the Prophet to give us the knowledge and arouse in us the feeling of what religious duty is. We need the Priest of sacrifice to restore and reconcile and pardon us when duty has been lost. We need, too, the holy and governing Head to preside over and guide and intercede for and quicken us till we come into the assembly of the just, the Church of the First-born—when the kingdoms of this world are all made the kingdoms of our Lord. In these three celestial characters of the Son we find the manifestation of what we are taught to believe are the three great attributes of God—wisdom, love, power—wisdom in the Teacher, love in the Sacrifice, power in the King. Every one of the three offices, with the three corresponding dispositions in us—docility to the Teacher, faith in the

Propitiator, loyalty to the Ruler—becomes a theme of thanksgiving. No one of them depresses, disempowers, or restrains our energies. They all uplift, encourage, and liberate. They are full of animation, promise, gladness. The Teacher enlightens; and what more glorious or gladdening gift than light? The living Sacrifice rolls away the burdens of remorse, and sets us in a world where love is seen for ever victorious, with the cross for its sign. The "Head over all things to his Church" inspires us with the felicity of a divine friendship, opens to us the inviting doors of that kingdom which is not of this world—embracing earth and heaven, the holy life here and the holy life everlasting. F. D. H.

All in all. Alike in ancient prophecy, in direct personal claim, in apostolic description, and in the yet loftier portraiture of the future world, a Being is found to move through the Bible, invested with characters of dignity beyond which no higher exaltation is conceivable by man. To this Being a power is by his own hallowed lips declared to be "committed," which embraces all things in heaven and in earth. A prophet, who is subsequently interpreted by a prophet, represents Him as surrounded by the adoring hosts of heaven, who veil their faces in presence of his surpassing luster; and the last book of divine prediction discloses the same transcendent abode, not merely as evermore resounding his praises, but even as owing the very light that fills and beautifies it to *Him*. And if it be true of the sinless heaven that "the Lamb is the light thereof," no marvel that He should be designated as "the light of *this world*"; or that, from every department of our lower creation, a tribute should be levied to celebrate *His* praise who is declared to be the one that "fillet all in all." W. A. B.

Section 298.

EPHESIANS ii. 1-22.

1 AND you *hath he quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past
2 ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of
3 the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we
4 all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the
5 flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But
6 God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were
7 dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by *grace* ye are saved;) and hath
8 raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus: that in
9 the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his *grace* in *his* kindness toward
10 us through Christ Jesus. For by *grace* are ye saved through faith; and that not of your-
selves: *it is* the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his
workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained
that we should walk in them.

11 Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Un-
 12 circumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at
 that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and
 strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:
 13 but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of
 14 Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle
 15 wall of partition *between us*; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of com-
 mandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* mak-
 16 ing peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having
 17 slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to
 18 them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.
 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the
 20 saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and
 21 prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*; in whom all the building fitly
 22 framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded to-
 gether for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

A DYING body is adapted to the world of sense and time, a deathless spirit is meant and made for a world immortal as itself. The life for eternity is *already* begun; we are, from the very hour of our regeneration, introduced into the spiritual world—a world which, though mysterious and invisible, is as real as the world of sense around us; the Christian's life of heavenliness is the first stage of heaven itself! "The Father," saith the apostle, "hath (already supernaturally) made us meet for the inheritance of the saints." Christian men are already in a true though most mysterious sense raised with Christ Jesus and set in heavenly places in him; they are now virtually in the very presence and kingdom of God; they already possess the seed of immortality; "he that hath the Son *hath* life"; that life is now "hid with Christ in God," to be manifested when he "shall be manifested" in glory. There is a power now within us in the germ, of which our celestial immortality shall be the proper fruit. The dawn of heaven hath already begun in all who are yet to rejoice in its noontide glory. No thought surely can be more awakening than this; none of more urgent practical importance. Christianity is but half unfolded to us without this doctrine of the present indwelling of the powers of the world to come. W. A. B.

1-22. The course and progress of the Church through the Son, thus subdivided: 1. The power of the Father in quickening us, both Gentiles and Jews, in and with Christ (vs. 1-6); his purpose in manifesting this power (v. 7); inference respecting the method of our salvation (v. 10). 2. Hortatory expansion of the foregoing into detail; reminding them what they once were (vs. 11, 12); what they now were in Christ (vs. 13-22).

1. "In trespasses and sins" should read "by reason of your trespasses and sins." A.—2, 3. When we read of this evil spirit *working* in the disobedient, and when we consider more closely the very nature of spiritual influences, we can scarcely refuse to recognize in this diabolical agency that indwelling tyranny, separate from the man, but so mysteriously interwoven in his nature that the will is a will and yet a captive, and the tyrant and the slave blended inconceivably in one. W. A. B.—If we do not see the signs of the Spirit of God, we are but too sure that the evil spirit is there. We know him by the sign of an increasing selfishness, the everlasting cry of the thousand passions of our nature, all for ever calling out "Give, give"; all for

ever impatient, complaining when their gratification is withheld, when the call of duty is set before them. We know him by pride and self-importance, as if nothing was so great as self, as if our own opinions, judgment, feelings, were to be consulted in all things. We know him by the deep ungodliness which he occasions—no thought of God, much less any love of him; living utterly without him in the world, or, at least, while health and prosperity continue. T. A.—Either our sins, our self-righteousness, our evil and good works condemn us, or we are born again into the kingdom of God, and we escape condemnation; a third state is impossible. Either children of wrath or children of grace. A. C.

4. **Rich in mercy.** A thought of unfathomable meaning and sweetness with which the apostle introduces the fact and the fruit of God's *great love*, a love that quickens us from the death of sin, and raises us purified to the heavenly fellowship of Christ. It reveals the riches of his wisdom and power as subordinated to the supreme purpose of mercy in achieving "his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." B.

5. By grace ye are saved. "The doctrines of grace" is the best name that can be given to that system of truth distinguished from all other by the deep impression it has ever made, and the incalculable importance its recipients ever attached to it—the tenacious truth, ever holding its own, ever recovering from attack, and from which all divergencies have ever wandered more and more until lost in the utter darkness of atheistic infidelity. This was its essential orthodoxy: a great perdition from which to be rescued, a great and most real peril to man, a great salvation, a great and divine Saviour. Grace is the significant word—grace as distinct from every idea that ever springs from any mere earthly thinking. Man ruined by himself, and saved by God; lost in Adam, found in Christ. Here has been the Church, the visible Church—visible in the light of this Word. With this Church we should love to be in communion, to agree with it in doctrine, to interpret by it and with it the Word of God. T. L.

6. What hope for single souls or for the world in the knowledge that Christ was good, or in the belief that he had gone up on high? The eyes that have grown wan with waiting will have no light of hope kindled in them by such a gospel as that. But bid them look, languid and weary as they are, to him who is lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish—that vision will give to the still loftier sight of Christ on the throne its true meaning, as not a barren triumph for himself alone, but as victory for us—yea, our victory in him. If we can say, "God hath quickened us together," then we can add, "and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Jesus Christ." A. M.—Believers are in Christ, so as to be partakers in all that He does, and has, and is. They died with him, and rose with him, and live with him, and in him are seated in heavenly places. When the eye of God looks on them they are found in Christ, and there is no condemnation to those that are in Him, and they are righteous in his righteousness, and loved with the love which rests on him, and are sons of God in his sonship, and heirs with him of his inheritance, and are soon to be glorified with him in his glory. T. D. B.—Assuming the human, not the angelic nature, and glorifying it with the robe of a holy resurrection and immortality, He carried it above all heavens, above all choirs of angels, above the cherubim and seraphim, placing it at God's right hand. There it is praised by angels, adored by dominions, and all the powers of heaven bow before the God-man above them. This human nature is my whole hope and all my confidence. For in our Lord Jesus Christ himself is a portion of each one of us, flesh and blood. Where, therefore, a portion of me is reigning, there I believe that I

shall reign myself. Where my flesh is glorified, there I know that I shall be glorious. *Aug.*

Together in Christ. Shall we meet friends again so as to know them, or shall they not be separated from us by the vast expanses of that world, and by the varied courses they may have to pursue? We may have our thoughts about these things tranquilized, if we bring them into connection with Christ. Our eternal life begins in union with Him, and it must for ever so continue. If we are gathered round Him in heaven, and know him, and are known of him, this will insure acquaintance with one another. It is strange that it ever could be made matter of doubt. And when we think that he gave us human hearts and took one into his own breast—that he bestowed on us human homes and affections, and solaced himself with them—we need not fear that he will deny us our heart's wish, where it is natural and good. *Ker.*

7. Riches of grace. It is a figure under which he seems to delight in describing them. The Lord, he says, is "rich in mercy"; he is "rich unto all that call upon him." He tells us of "the riches of his goodness," "the exceeding riches of his grace," "the unsearchable riches of Christ." The gospel which proclaims his mercy he calls "a treasure," and says that in it, or rather in that Saviour of whom it testifies, "are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." C. B.—Forgiveness is according to the riches of God's grace, wherein he has abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence. Grace can continue to pardon, favor, and save—from falls, in falls, and out of falls. Grace can comfort, relieve, and help those that have hurt themselves; and grace can bring the unworthy to glory. This the law can not do, man can not do, angels can not do; this God can not do but only by the riches of his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. *Bun.*

8. Through faith. Faith is the hand by which we seize the pardon, the promises, the love of the Father; and the providing us with this spiritual hand forms the second miracle of grace. Grace is therefore the cause, the source of salvation; faith is only the means, or, if you will, there are two graces: one which is performed out of us, and which the apostle calls simply grace, and another which is accomplished in us, and which the apostle calls faith. In principle grace is one; but it has different moments, different places, different forms. There are several gifts, but the whole is gift. Grace out of us, grace in us; such is the Gospel. A. V.—Though a gift of God, faith is withal an act or habit of the human mind; like every other virtue, it is on the one hand a boon of heaven, on the other, the exercise of unfettered human agency—it is the natural result of evidence duly and im-

partially considered, and no man can be guiltless who willfully turns away from the contemplation of that evidence. W. R. W.

Faith as the gift of God is not the Saviour, as our act doth merit nothing. Faith was not the cause that God gave Christ, neither is it the cause why God converts men to Christ; but faith is a gift bestowed upon us by the gracious God, the nature of which is to lay hold on Christ, whom God before did give for a ransom to redeem sinners. If we speak properly, it was God's grace that moved him to give Christ a ransom for sinners, and the same God with the same grace that doth give to the soul faith to believe and by believing to close in with him whom God out of his love and pity did send into the world to save sinners; so that all the works of the creature are shut out as to justification and life, and men are saved freely by grace. *Bun.*—It is indeed Jesus Christ who is the object of faith, and he has been made of God wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; all of these jointly, and none of them severally. But all these together constitute grace. To have faith is to believe all those things of which the center and the source is Jesus Christ crucified. Under the name of grace, therefore, it is Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ wholly, that we have set forth as the object of faith; not merely his Godhead, but his humanity; not merely his death, but his life; not merely his doctrine, but his example; not merely his sacrifice, but his glory; for it is by all these things united, without excepting any or diminishing any, that Christ Jesus is our Saviour. A. V.

9. Not of works. It is not by a painful counting up of duties undone, and sins committed, and by a resolving ever so earnestly to be more careful in all these things for the time to come, that we can be saved; "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified." Much less is it by a fond trust in outward rites and ceremonies, or the belonging to what is in such a sense most falsely called Christ's holy church. We must belong to Christ's church through Him, to that church which will be his for ever, not to him through his church. Salvation is not in even the most faithful church which ever followed its Lord, but in Him only. T. A.

10. His workmanship. There is no moment of life in which some part of the work is not going on under the hand of the new-creative power. In the hands of God, who carries out his perfect and loving idea, it is Faith which, by a patient and perpetual energy, operates with ten thousand separate shaping influences of Truth, all carrying forward the living sculpture, and bringing out the eventual form of holy grace, which shall be the everlasting delight of angels and of God. J. W. A.

That we should walk in them. The law has said, "Do these things, and live," but the language of the gospel is, "Live, and do these things." The gospel declares that we are saved, not by our works, but *before* our works. It gives rest and enlargement to the heart. Conquered by gratitude, the believer is seized with a desire to do everything for Him who hath first loved him, and given himself for him. The law will become to him more dear and sacred. But he will observe it in another spirit—as the law of love, as the law of a Father and a Saviour. It will no longer be necessary to say to him, In the name of your eternal interests, in the name of the terrors of the judgment, do this and live; because his eternal interests have been provided for, and the sentence which condemns him has been nailed to the cross. But it will be said to him, "Walk in good works, for which ye were created in Christ Jesus." A. V.

If we live a dumb, unpositive life, under the power of the world, selfish still as before, and self-pursuing; if the old man is not crucified, and the new man, Christ, is certainly not being formed within, then our profession signifies nothing but the mere respectability of our sin. What is our supposed piety but this, if it have no spiritual and inwardly transforming power? Christ is redemption only as he actually redeems and delivers our nature from sin. If he is not the law and spring of a new spirit of life, he is nothing. H. B.

11-22. The commonwealth of Israel was the outward type of that spiritual community of which God is the head, and in which holiness is the life. The Gentiles, who followed other gods, were aliens from that commonwealth, and could have no part in its promises or blessings. But when the Jews had begun to boast this as their salvation, the walls of the material city were broken down, and the true spiritual Jerusalem came forth as the household of God, embracing all believers. This commonwealth has its temple; a temple built of living stones. The prophets, who had taught of the coming of Christ, and the apostles, who witnessed for his doctrine, his death, and his resurrection, joined in laying their faith upon Christ himself as the chief corner-stone. On that same foundation all true believers are established; in that same faith they are builded together, so that, without distinction of name, race, or country, all who believe constitute one household, in which God himself abides, pervading every heart with his Spirit. J. P. T.

12. No hope. Let a night be never so dark or tempestuous, yet the hope of the morning is a mercy and a light. How sick, then, they who are hopeless. Everlastingness is the sting and poison of all miseries; it is, indeed, the sting of hell. Heaven is a day that shall never see any approaches

of night. Hell is a night that shall never see any dawning of day. *Caryl.*

"*Without God in the world.*" Think what a description, and applicable to individuals without number! If it had been "without friends, without shelter, without food," that would have had a gloomy sound; but "*without God*"! Without Him! that is, in no happy relation to him who is the very origin, support, and life of all things; without him who can make good flow to his creatures from an infinity of sources; without him whose favor possessed is the best, the sublimest of all delights, all triumphs, all glories; without him who can confer an eternal felicity! We fall unspeakably below the true and dreadful emphasis of the expression, after we have given our utmost aggravation to its significance. And still it is but the description of an actual condition. The description belongs to that state of mind in which there is no communion with him, maintained or even sought with cordial aspiration; no pouring out of the soul in fervent desires for his illuminations, his compassion, his forgiveness, his transforming operations; no earnest, penitential, hopeful pleading in the name of the glorious Intercessor; no solemn, affectionate dedication of the whole being; no animation and vigor obtained for the labors and the warfare of a Christian life. *J. F.*

14. He is our peace. "He has made peace through the blood of his cross." That which makes peace, and which gives peace, has been finished and perfected in Him upon the cross. Peace is not a thing to be made by *us*. It was made by *Him*. He finished the reconciling work, the peace-making work, eighteen hundred years ago. *It is done. Bonar.*

—Our communion may be subject to sad alternations of warmth and coldness; our love may burn strongly to-day and feebly to-morrow. But that does not change our real standing before God. We can not now be in a state of justification and now out of it. As God has put the terms of salvation so high that we could not of ourselves make them, so he has put our title-deeds to salvation so high that we may not mar them, having hidden them "with Christ in God." As Rutherford says, "Unbelief may perhaps tear the copies of the covenant which Christ hath given you; but *he still keeps the original in heaven with himself. Your doubts and fears are no part of the covenant, neither can they change Christ.*" If Christ is the complete and only reason of our acceptance, must there not be some greater reason for our rejection than our doubts and misgivings? If "in Christ Jesus we who sometime were afar off are made nigh," will it not take something more than our distrust and despair to remove us far off again, and set us among aliens and strangers? *A. J. G.*

Made both one. Four thousand years of

Jewish and Gentile self-righteousness had proved that there is no self-recovering power in humanity alone. That power must be lodged in a Person who has in him both of the estranged natures that are to be reconciled to each other; it must be a mediation between an everlasting law of purity and right which every man is concerned in having kept honorable and inviolate, and the weak but repenting soul which has violated its commandment; it must be a suffering so free and so glorious in its charity that it shall be a bond of union between believers, mightier than the wall of partition which it broke down. Beyond all the blessings of the Saviour's life among men was the mediatorial mercy and reconciliation of his death. So runs the teaching and testimony of the gospel from first to last. *F. D. H.* —The death of Jesus Christ, as being every way powerful for reconciliation and union, did not only break the partition wall of guiltiness that stood betwixt God and man, but the wall of ceremonies that stood betwixt the Jews and Gentiles; made all that believe one with God, and made of *both one*—united them one to another. Christ's work in the world was *union*. He began the union in the wonderful union made in his person that was to work it—made God and man one. And by what he performed the persons of men are united to God. Faith makes them one with Christ, and he makes them one with the Father; and from these results oneness among themselves, centering and meeting in Jesus Christ; and in the Father, through him, they are made one together. And that this was his great work we may read in his prayer, where it is the burden and great request that *they may be one as we are one*.

16. He hath reconciled us by his cross, having slain the enmity; he killed the quarrel betwixt God and us; killed it by his death. He thus brings the parties together, and hath laid a sure foundation of agreement in his own sufferings; appeases his Father's wrath by them, and by the same appeases the sinner's conscience. All that God hath to say in point of justice is answered there; all that the poor humbled sinner hath to say is answered too. He hath offered up such an atonement as satisfies the Father; so he is content that sinners come in and be reconciled. *L.*

18. The entire Trinity is bound up in prayer. To the Father the petition is offered. Through the Son's mediation, and through his intercession, it is rendered acceptable. From the Spirit's instigation it took its rise, and by the Spirit helping our infirmities, and making intercession within us with groanings which can not be uttered, it is ultimately brought to the birth. And so it is written, "*Through Him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father.*" *E. M. G.*—I behold in my once-crucified Redeemer a glorious Mediator. Seeing that I have such a

High Priest in the heavens, one so merciful and gracious—one who has shared my griefs and carried my sorrows; one who in his unparalleled misery never forgot my wants, and who now, in his wonderful joy, is still touched with a feeling of my infirmities—I now come boldly unto the throne of grace. I cry, Abba, Father; I feel at a Father's feet, and am at rest. C. B.

20-22. In other places the individual believer is represented as a temple of God; but here, by a change of figure which beautifully and expressively brings forward the fellowship, multitude, and union of believers, the whole are set before us as compacted into one perfect structure. The stones are no longer masses of granite, marble, or porphyry, but men, redeemed and sanctified, and hereafter to be perfected and glorified. Every saint has his appointed place. The temple comprises all the righteous, who have been, are, and shall be to the end of time. It was meet that the Son of God should take humanity in order that he might be the foundation of this human temple. It rests on him for its coherence, beauty, grandeur, and very existence. Its walls are cemented by his precious blood. Every lively stone in the pile bears his image, and is fash-

ioned after the headstone of the corner. His truth is the basis of all faith in the Church. His righteousness is the ground of all pardon, acceptance, and title to life. His Spirit prepares and adorns each individual member, brings him into the structure, and keeps him there. Each soul, and all conjoined, rest and rely on Jesus Christ alone as the source of strength, union, and perfection. J. W. A.

20. Absolutely, Christ is called the foundation of the Church, besides which no other can be laid; but, in a secondary or relative sense, so are the apostles also, whom Christ uses as his instruments. Hence it is said of the saints, that they "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone"; and hence the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem bear the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb (Rev. 21 : 14). P. S.—To the Christians at Ephesus, dwelling under the shadow of the great temple of Diana, and daily seeing its outward grandeur, the allusions in this Epistle to that mystic building, of which Christ was the corner-stone, the apostles the foundations, and himself and his fellow Christians portions of the august superstructure, must have spoken with a force, an appropriateness, and a reassuring depth of teaching that can not be overestimated. S.

Section 299.

EPHESIANS iii. 1-21.

1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of
2 the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward : how that by revela-
3 tion he made known unto me the mystery ; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when
4 ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages
5 was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and
6 prophets by the Spirit ; that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and
7 partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel : whereof I was made a minister, according
8 to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.
9 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach
10 among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ ; and to make all *men* see what *is* the
11 fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God,
12 who created all things by Jesus Christ : to the intent that now unto the principalities and
13 powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of
14 God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord : in
15 whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. Wherefore I desire
16 that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. For this cause I bow my
17 knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and
18 earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strength-
19 ened with might by his Spirit in the inner man ; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by
20 faith ; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all
21 saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of
Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now
unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according
to the power that worketh in us, unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus through-
out all ages, world without end. Amen.

"THAT ye may be rooted and grounded in love," says the apostle—grounded on it, as the temple on the base ; rooted in it, as the tree in the soil, to which it is attached by myriad ties, and from which it

drinks its nourishing life. Every pillar, and wall, and arch, and spire in the personal attainment will then manifest the permanence and reveal the uplifting and molding power of this love which is beneath. Every branch, and bloom, and leaf, and fruit in the complex character will exhibit the beauty and throb with the life of this permeating force. How essential and how immense the change which is thus prefigured as the anticipated fruit of the gospel in each who receives it! A change in the outward habit not only, or in the intellectual views and beliefs, but in the sovereign passion of the heart; a change not transient, but enduring as life; not limited in its influence, but extending in the force that radiates from it to all the powers, and even to each particular of the conduct; a change that will shed through the soul itself, and through the activity in which that is expressed, the inspiration of such a love as breathed throughout the works and words of Christ, and was uttered with absolute energy in his cross; of such as reigns eternally in God, the source of his felicity, and the moral ground of his dominion. Christianity proposes to take the humblest man—ignorant, weak, sinful, condemned, darkened in mind, vitiated in heart, and inwardly severed from goodness and from God—and to make *him* that which Paul prefigured, which Paul now is. It is to make Christ dwell within him; to ground and root his character in love; to fill him in spirit with all that is divine unto the fullness of God himself! How necessary *faith in the Divine Master* as the means by which the soul in man shall open to and appropriate these heavenly treasures, and make them all at last its own! Not faith in teachers, faith in opinions, faith in a church; we need for this that faith in *Christ* which he demanded; which apostles proclaimed the condition in each of the life everlasting; which is the element of victory on earth, of serenity in death, and of the vision that comes beyond. R. S. S.

1-21. *The Aim and End of the Church in the Spirit.*—Mainly set forth in the revelation to it of the mystery of Christ, through the ministry, working in the Spirit; and primarily as regarded these Ephesians by himself. Thus: 1. Of his office as apostle of the Gentiles (vs. 1-13). 2. Under the form of a prayer for them, of the aim and end of that office as respected the Church; its becoming strong in the power of the Spirit (vs. 14-19). Then (vs. 20, 21) a doxology concludes this first portion of the Epistle. A.

8. The apostle declares he was commissioned as an ambassador from God to proclaim "among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ"; to tell them of the justice, the judgment, the mercy, and love of God; of the justice that pronounces sentence on sinners, but which Christ has satisfied; of the judgment that is to be executed on them, but which Christ has borne; of the mercy that they have for ever forfeited, but which Christ has purchased for them; to tell them of the wisdom that devised, the faithfulness that carried out, and the love that began, continued, and carries on the glorious plan of salvation for a guilty world; and call them thus to turn from their idols and their vanities to serve the living God. *M'Ghee.*—As he turns from gazing at the page of his commission, on which a single name fills all with its radiance, the name of Jesus, to look at what he was, what he is, he is amazed and overwhelmed that such a one as he should have this honor. He looks at the treasure of which he is a steward, the *Riches of Christ*, well so called; riches of his nature, of his grace, of his atonement, of that love which passeth knowledge; riches of its consequences, in the wealthy bliss of millions of overflowing vessels of mercy. *Unsearchable riches!* incalculable in number, in height, in depth. A river of life flowing from the throne of God and of the

Lamb, unsearchable in its sovereign source, immeasurable and unfathomable in its ocean flow. J. W. A.

10. "By the Church," said the apostle—and remember that he was writing to the poor converts of the earliest century, very imperfect in their character, very limited in their influence, who were gathered at Ephesus and the various near commercial cities—"by the Church," made up of the ignorant and the weak, of slaves and of the outcast—"by the Church may be made known"—made known to whom? to the world around it? Nay, verily! "by the Church may be made known to principalities and powers in heavenly places the manifold wisdom of God"! And, however humble the Church may be, by its agency in bringing men to Christ—through its ministry of the truth, when that is accompanied by the grace of the Highest—the manifold wisdom of the Creator is revealed, even to angels in heavenly places; is so revealed as it could not be in all the wonders of creation and all the mighty order of Providence. R. S. S.

Unto principalities and powers. Conceive of them as spectators of the fall and the first measures of God for the restoration of man. Something yet remains in this world-history to satisfy these minds, for which they wait in faith. At length the full solution comes, in Christ incarnate and suffering. Now they burst into rapturous joy and learn new wisdom, and become more faithful to righteousness, as they see the mystery of grace unfolded. T. D. W.—**The manifold wisdom of God.** Heaven can not lack for evidences of the divine wisdom; but, if it would see this attribute in its glory, it must come down to earth. Justice vindicated, and mercy triumphant; sin punished, and the sinner saved; heaven bestowed upon the guilty

and the vile, and the recipient not elated, but humbled; Satan vanquished by the seed of the woman; death turned into a fountain of life; the cross not merely transfigured into the brightest crown of the Son of God, but multiplied into as many such crowns as there will be ransomed sinners in heaven—this is the wisdom which streams forth from redemption, and bathes cherubim and seraphim, no less than man, with its splendors. H. A. B.

12. Access with confidence. What we all of us need to learn more is how to walk with God hour by hour as a man with his friend; not so much to be continually going in and out of his presence as to be always living in it, without effort thinking of him, without insincerity consulting him, without hesitation obeying him, without embarrassment speaking of him. Surely he prefers the simple trustfulness of kinsfolk to the distant homage of strangers; and if we made it more our endeavor to bring every thought, every word, every habit, every employment, every recreation, every commonest act of life into captivity to Christ, and so into harmony and fellowship with him, it would not violently interrupt us, as it often does, to lay down the task of the moment, to hold intercourse with Him. A. W. T.

Verse 15 should read, "from whom every family in heaven and on earth." It is very difficult to convey in English the apostle's meaning, which depends on a similarity of words in the original; the word for family (*patria*) being derived from that for father (*pater*); that heavenly *Pater*, from whom every *patria* in heaven and on earth derives its name and its laws of being. A.—**In heaven and earth.** The difference betwixt us and them is, not that we are really two, but one body in Christ, in divers places. True, we are below stairs, and they above; they in their holiday, and we in our working-day clothes; they in harbor, but we in the storm; they at rest, but we in the wilderness; they singing, as crowned with joy, we crying, as crowned with thorns. But we are all of one house, one family, and are all the children of one Father. Bun.

16-19. This wondrous prayer of the apostle opens to us the infinite possibilities of the life of faith. Beginning by resting the soul in Christ as the source of its life, faith rises above the range of human wisdom, and looks into the mysteries of redemption, which only the mind of God could unveil; and with this unfolding of spiritual knowledge comes an expansion of love, which, grow as it may, is continually filled and satisfied with the fullness of love that flows from the infinite Father. J. P. T.

16. By his Spirit. Careful walking is produced only by the Holy Spirit; that sweet and loving Spirit who can bend our will, or rather lift it up and direct it toward his own, so that we may be able truly to understand, fervently to love, and

effectually to fulfill that will of his. Bernard.

—The two great needs of our condition and nature are met by the central provisions of the faith—the atoning sacrifice and the sanctifying Spirit. Through these we are brought to God and made *like* Him. We can be so raised above ourselves as "to pass our sojourning here" like men that "continually look for their Lord," so touching all things temporal as not to lose sight or hold of those that are eternal. "Jerusalem the Golden" will be reached at last. T. B.

17. Christ is said to dwell in our hearts by faith. Faith is seated in the whole soul, and accepts of Christ entirely as prophet, priest, and king. To those in whom he dwells, Christ is made of God, *wisdom*, to cure their ignorance and folly; *righteousness*, to abolish their guilt; *sanctification*, to renew their natures; and *redemption*, to free them at last from the grave, and bring them to glory. Bates.

Rooted in love. The fruit of the Spirit is love: penitence is love, bathing the Saviour's feet with her tears; patience is love, kissing the rod; prayer is love, holding communion with the Father; praise is the adoration of love; hope is the expectation of love; joy is the delight of love; heaven is the full appreciation of love. Love is the bond that unites the whole family. The harmony of the music that fills the eternal spheres is love; the light that glitters there is the light of love; and our meetness for heaven, and our progress toward the eternal inheritance, is proportioned to our being "rooted and grounded in love." N. Hall.

19. The love of Christ. Here is a love that weighs not our deservings, comes down to our poor estate, asks not anything that we have, engages to make us worthy of itself, and gives us, even what it exacts, our love again. Wonderful love! Itself both our teacher and our joy—enriching us when we have a sense that we are poor, as it is only then we can enjoy gifts; exalting us when we are humble, as it is only then we can profit by exaltation; strengthening us when we know our weakness, as it is only then we will use his help; returning to us when we will return to him, as it is only then that he can bind us to our duty—such is the love of God to us, giving us all the good that we may safely have, and making us the better for all he gives—our example and our blessedness for evermore! H. H.—Paul calls it (v. 9) a mystery—a secret—which had been hidden from the foundation of the world till then, and was then revealed by God's Spirit; namely, this boundless love of God, shown by Christ's dying on the cross. And, he says, his great hope, his great business, the thing on which his heart was set, and which God had sent him in the world to do, was this: to make people know the love of Christ; to look at Christ's cross,

and take in its breadth, and length, and depth, and height. It passes knowledge, he says. We shall never know the whole of it, never know all that God's love has done and will do; but, the more we know of it, the more blessed and hopeful, the more strong and earnest, the more good and righteous we shall become. C. K.

20. The apostle does not say God is *willing*: this was unnecessary. He turns the gaze of the Ephesians upon the wonders of God's power—God "is able to do"; and connects it with that love of Christ and fullness of God of which he had just been speaking. There is a little cleft of heaven opened to us by these words, and some light breaks in. Thoughts and prayers are both together swallowed up and drowned in the depths of God's power and goodness; for he "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." The word is peculiar, "out of measure—surpassingly, or transcendentally," breaking over all bounds of our comprehension. You will feel its force more when you take along with you the whole of the glowing context, wherein the language labors in order to indicate the great ideas. We have to comprehend the incomprehensible, and to measure the immense, and to sound the unfathomable, "to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge"; to comprehend with all saints the dimensions of that which stretches beyond all human lines—the "love of Christ." As the measure of what God will give is his power, so the measure is the love of Christ; and both are summed up in that amazing expression, "all the fullness of God!" J. W. A.

"He is able to do abundantly more, yea, exceed-

ing abundantly above all that we ask or think." It is a text made up of words picked and packed together by the wisdom of God; picked and packed together on purpose for the succor and relief of the tempted; that they may, when in the midst of their distresses, cast themselves upon the Lord their God. *Bwn.*—Our Heavenly Father always sends his children the things they ask or better things. He answers their petitions in kind or in kindness; but, while we think only of ease, he consults our profit. We call for present comfort; he considers our everlasting rest; and therefore, when he sends not the very things we ask, he hears us by sending greater than we can ask or think. *Cecil.*

The power that worketh in us. In God to will is to act, to favor is to bless; and thus grace is not simply kindly feeling on the part of God, but a positive boon conferred on man. Grace is a real agent; it is "the power that worketh in us," illuminating the intellect, warming the heart, strengthening the will of redeemed humanity. It is the might of the everlasting Spirit renovating man by uniting him to the sacred manhood of the Word Incarnate. H. P. L.

21. The apostle strikes a note of thanksgiving that is to be endless in the Church, militant and triumphant. All ages shall be full of the "praise of the glory of his grace." Here we form low conceptions of what our Heavenly Father is able to do; and we can give thanks only according to our knowledge; but, as our comprehension of divine grace and glory increases, we shall fall down on the golden pavement in speechless rapture of gratitude. J. W. A.

Section 300.

EPHESIANS iv. 1-16.

1 I THEREFORE, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation
2 wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one
3 another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. *There*
4 *is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord,
6 one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in
7 you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of
8 Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and
9 gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into
10 the lower parts of the earth? he that descended is the same also that ascended up far above
11 all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets;
12 and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for
13 the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the
unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the
14 measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we *henceforth* be no more children,
tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and

15 cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may
 16 grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ: from whom the whole body
 fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the
 effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edify-
 ing of itself in love.

THOUGH the Son of God, says the apostle, ascended on high that he might fill all things, yet he condescended to give to men a regal ascension gift, that of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. And the end to be attained by this gift is, that all the Church become one in faith and knowledge, and so become one that it shall be, as it were, the earthly counterpart of the Redeemer. Christ is one person, divine and human, and so is the Church, which is his body, to be one in him. As the end of the first creation will be realized, when it becomes the unclouded mirror of the internal glory of the Creator, so the end of the new creation, which is grounded in the incarnation, will be reached when it becomes the express image of the incarnate God, when it comes to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. This is the prophetic hope, the ideal end of the Church of our Lord. Its very growth, if it be healthful, must be a growth in union and toward unity, just as a plant is held together while it grows by a more intense unifying power at the heart of its life. The Church in its essence is a spiritual organism, vitally united to Christ, and all its atoms are ensouled by the common life of one and the selfsame Spirit. And though this "note" of the Church applies in an eminent sense only to the radiant bride, the New Jerusalem, yet it is also the instinct of her deepest life, even while militant here on earth, that she may at last appear before her divine bridegroom, having no spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, and receive from his loving hands the seamless robe and the victor's crown. H. B. S.

1-16. This section presents the ground of the Christian's duties as a member of the Church, viz., the unity of the mystical body of Christ (vs. 1-6), the manifoldness of grace given to each (vs. 7-13), that we may come to perfection in him (vs. 14-16). A.

1. Nothing is there more noble than to suffer any evil for Christ's sake. I count not Paul so happy because he was "caught up into Paradise" as because he was cast into the dungeon; I count him not so happy because he "heard unspeakable words" as because he endured those bonds; I count him not so happy because he was "caught up into the third heaven" as I count him happy for those bonds' sake. For, that these latter are greater than the former, hear how even he himself knew this; for he saith not, "I, who heard unspeakable words, beseech you"; but what? "I, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you." *Chrys.*

3. **Keep the unity of the Spirit.** Only think what it would be if we looked on one another as brethren, redeemed by one ransom, pledged to one service; if we bore with one another's weaknesses, if we helped one another's endeavors, if each saw and heard in the words and life of his neighbor an image of Christ and a pledge of the truth of his promises. Consider what it would be if, with no quarrels, with no jealousies, with no unkindness, we sought, not every man his own, but every man also another's welfare, as true members, one of another, of one body, of which Christ is the head. Consider what it would be if our judgments of men and things were like Christ's judgments—neither strengthening the heart of the careless and sinful

by our laxity, nor making sad the heart of God's true servant by our uncharitableness; not putting little things in the place of great, nor great things in the place of little; not neglecting the unity of the Spirit. T. A.

In the bond of peace. It is not possible that unity should exist in enmity and discord. Paul would have us linked and tied one to another, not simply that we be at peace, not simply that we love one another, but that in all there should be but one soul. A glorious bond is this! With this bond let us bind ourselves together, alike to one another and to God. *Chrys.*—It is a truer discrimination that recognizes the presences of God in men, the saints that are in the world, not by the miracles they work, but by the miracles they are; by the way in which they bring the grace of God to bear on the simple duties of the household and the street. The saint-hoods of the fireside and of the market-place—they wear no glory round their heads; they do their duties in the strength of God; they have their martyrdoms and win their palms, and though they get into no calendars, they leave a benediction and a force behind them on the earth when they go up to heaven. P. B.

4. **One body.** The idea of the Church as presented in the Bible is that believers scattered over the world are a band of brethren, children of the same Father, subjects of the same Lord, forming one body by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, uniting all to Christ as their living head. This indwelling of the Spirit makes all believers one in faith, one in their religious life, one in love. Hence they acknowledge each other as brethren, and are ready to

bear each other's burden. This is the communion of saints. The Church, in this view, is the mystical body of Christ. As believers in their individual capacity scattered over the world constitute the mystical body of Christ on earth, so the local churches constitute one body, which is the visible church in each successive age. These churches are one body, first, spiritually. They have one God and Saviour. They are united in one spiritual life. They have one faith and one baptism. They are one body also externally and visibly. First, because they recognize each other as churches. This involves the acknowledgment that each has all the prerogatives and privileges which by the law of Christ belong to such organizations: the right to conduct public worship, to preach the gospel, to administer the sacrament, and to exercise discipline. Secondly, they are one body, because membership in one of these local churches involves the right to membership in every other such church. The terms of church membership are prescribed by Christ, and can not be altered. We are bound to receive those whom he receives.

5. So far as all believers are taught by the Spirit, they must agree in doctrine. The apostle, therefore, says that, as there is one body and one Spirit, so there is one faith, as well as one Lord and one baptism. What is thus taught in Scripture is found to be historically true. All Christians believe in the apostles' creed; they all accept the doctrinal decisions of the first six Ecumenical Councils concerning the nature of God and the person of Christ. They therefore all believe in the doctrine of the Trinity and of the perfect Godhead and perfect humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. They adore him as God manifest in the flesh. They receive him as the only Saviour of men. They believe that he saves us by his blood, by bearing our sins in his own body on the tree. They believe that all power in heaven and earth is committed to his hands, and that to him every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. They all believe in the Holy Ghost, and the absolute necessity of regeneration and sanctification by the power of his grace. They believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. This is the confession that has been made in all ages, in all languages, and in all places where Christians have existed. C. H.—The unity of faith in the Son of God; the unity of common regeneration by the power of the Holy Ghost; the unity of love to Christ, and love in Christ to all who are Christ's; the unity of loving work for Christ, which, amid all distinctions of minor dogmas, has a single eye for the glory of Christ and a single aim to develop his kingdom in every ransomed soul—that is the unity of the Church. That is the unity which has been manifested in every age. That is the unity which Christ prayed for, and which was granted him, and which distinguishes and separates the Church of Christ from the world. In that unity all modes of holding truth coincide. With that unity denominational distinctions are entirely consistent. As we exhibit the loving principles of that divine unity, all the earthly that divides the spiritual brotherhood becomes secondary in thought, and the children of God realize their absolute and eternal oneness. *Bedell.*

8. The same God is revealed as Redeemer both under the Old Testament and the New, and the Je-

hovah of the one is the Jesus of the other. In Ps. 68, here cited, the inspired poet, while discussing the interpositions of Jehovah, has used language which was fully realized only in the victory and exaltation of Christ. Not that there is a double sense, but the Jehovah of the theocracy was he who, in the fullness of time, assumed humanity, and what he did among his people prior to the incarnation was anticipative of nobler achievements in the nature of man. The Psalmist felt this, and, under the influence of such emotions, rapt into future times, and, beholding salvation completed, enemies defeated, and gifts conferred, thus addressed the Conqueror, "Thou hast ascended on high." Such a quotation was, therefore, to the apostle's purpose. There are gifts in the Church—gifts the result of empire and victory—gifts in accordance with the earnest expectation of ancient ages; for it was predicted that Jesus should ascend on high. *Eadie.*

Ascended up. Amid the shades of night he came; in the redness of the morning dawn he went away; ever, ever shalt thou stand before our souls, thou glorified Saviour, in the same attitude in which thou didst leave the world, with thy hands extended over thy chosen to bless them! A. T.—If we look to the Ascension and that last blessing with which Christ's earthly work was consummated, we shall know that all we do and all we are has in possibility—God grant that it may have in deed—a vital relationship with heaven. Earth may be seen by us united with heaven, not as in a dream to the sleeping patriarch, but in the open triumph of a Saviour. The whole life of a Christian, when we view it in the light of Ascension day, is one in its character, in its progress, in its issue. Such a view of life is undoubtedly solemn, but it is also inexpressibly grand. B. F. W.—**Led captivity captive.** Christ, the King on high, hath imprisoned sin, slain death, destroyed hell. Sin, death, hell, and the devil had imprisoned us; but Christ hath taken them captive again. His kingdom and office are above, that He may lead captive my captivity, kill my executioner, condemn my sin, slay my death, and condemn my hell. *Luther.*

7-16. The most comprehensive view of the Christian ministry is given here. Its original grant and institution is traced to the mediatorial work of the Son of God. The high preëminence of this gift appears in its distributive variety of office—"apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers"—and in the important end for which it was ordained—the completion of the Church. We can not conceive any more entire view of this institution, nor one that more decisively marks its divine original. *Bridges.*—Our ascended Lord has given to his people apostles and prophets—these being for the foundation of the Church—evangelists for its extension, and pastors and teachers for stationary work of consolidation and instruction. These are given in order to the "perfecting" or thorough equipment and

training of saints to their "work of ministry" in truth and love. D. F.

11. "He gave some, apostles," etc., should be filled so as to be intelligible—"he gave some to be apostles," etc. A.—When the Lord made this gracious gift to the Church, he only continued and exemplified his Old Testament plans, with such changes as the new arrangement demanded. The whole tribe of Levi he gave of old to Israel for the work of the ministry. A ministerial tribe became unsuitable to a dispensation that was for all nations; and so the families of God's people everywhere furnish the ministers of the New Testament. The New Testament introduces not a new religion, but a new form of the old, and it continues therein a separate body of men, chargeable specially with keeping the house of the Lord, and instructing the people out of his law. *J. Hall.*—Whether we take the Prophets under the old dispensation, or the Lord's messengers under the new, we find that the distinctive characteristics of a true minister of God lay in a call and a qualification. The qualification involved a gift, a power, and a training. He who had a call from God, a gift from God, and a power from God, and he only, was ever prophet, evangelist, or pastor and teacher in any scriptural sense. The training varied with the age, dispensation, and circumstances; but no training ever did, or ever can, make him a minister who has no call, no gifts, and no power sent upon his soul by the anointing of the eternal Spirit. *Arthur.*

The third rank is assigned by Paul to the *evangelists* or itinerant missionaries. The name itself indicates that their chief business was to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation, primarily among nations yet unconverted, but not exclusively. The discourses of the evangelists turned chiefly upon the main facts of the Saviour's life, especially his resurrection. This easily gave rise to the later application of the term to the authors of our written gospels. We find the evangelists commonly in the immediate neighborhood, or at least in the service, of the apostles, as their "helpers" and "fellow-laborers." **Pastors and teachers.** Denoting by these terms the regular overseers of *single congregations* in their twofold capacity. These officers are undoubtedly the same with those elsewhere in the New Testament commonly called presbyters and four times bishops (viz., in Acts 20: 28; Phil. 1: 1; 1 Tim. 3: 2; Tit. 1: 7), whose business is expressly declared to be the feeding of the flock. P. S.

12, 13. Stripping this passage of its beautiful inspired phraseology, and dropping its reference to those miraculous gifts which have now passed away, its gist is this: that the ministry of God's word is the great appointed means for the perfecting of the saintly or Christlike character in man. E. M. G.

13. The central principle of the Christian system is, *The personality of the Being who, as its founder, gave Christianity its name*—that Being who is unlike every other being within the whole scope of our knowledge; who is God, who is man; the manifestation of divinity; the restorer of humanity; the world's Creator, and the world's Redeemer; the author of life, the conqueror of death; the royal Head of an everlasting kingdom, and the meek pattern of patience under shame and suffering; the Son of God

and the Son of Mary; having a glory with the Supreme before the worlds were made, yet born of a woman and laid in a manger; tasting death upon the cross, dying once, but dying no more for ever; living once, and alive for ever, the Head, the Saviour, the Lord, the Life, the King of the human race. This is the Being who forms the radiant center of the Christian system. Here have we a complete organism, and Christ is the very heart and life of it. Many things are revealed for our belief and practice, but they all proceed from and return to Jesus Christ, to find and prove their complete unity in his immortal personality. There is not a truth, not a fact in the universe, which is not related to this centrality in Christ. The importance of every truth and every fact is to be measured by its nearness or remoteness as related to him who is the sum of the whole. W. A.

14. The institutions and gifts conferred upon the Christian Church are represented as established and conferred for the very purpose of training, disciplining, and developing the Christian man; and *one* of the ends to be answered by this is, that, being no longer a child, liable to be influenced by others—to hear arguments which he can not answer, and to have doubts insinuated which he can not repel—he will be in no danger of being the sport of every "wind of doctrine," or of falling under the influence either of erroneous or immoral teachers. T. B.

15. "Speaking the truth" is a most inadequate rendering. It is the whole being, not the tongue alone, that is treated of. A.—Let us "follow truth in love," and, of the two, indeed, be contented rather to miss a speculative truth than to part with love. When we would convince men of any error by the strength of truth, let us withal pour the sweet balm of love upon their heads. Truth and love are two of the most powerful things in the world, and when they both go together they can not easily be withstood. The golden beams of truth and the silken cords of love, twisted together, will draw men on with a sweet violence, whether they will or no. *Cudworth.*

Everything in us daily must grow up into him who is the Head. Everything must be done with reference to him, nor is there anything so small or unimportant which may not bear its proportionate shade of sweet coloring drawn from him. The daily conquests of our temper; the daily patience, meekness, charity of spirit and of action; the daily gentleness, kindnesses, forbearances, forgivenesses of life; the daily experiments and practices of faith; the daily services of grace in prayer; the daily lookings to Christ, like the flower that follows the sun; the daily submissions of everything to him; the daily effort to find him, and to grow in his knowledge and love; the daily feeding on a portion of his Word; the

daily endeavor to do good as we have opportunity, winning souls to Christ; the daily ~~attention to our~~ business under Christ's love; the daily subduing and denial of self, in bringing everything to him, for him and not self to stamp and seal it as his own, imbuing it with his Spirit; the daily rejoicing in his goodness, and thanksgiving for his mercy: all these things daily, and all these things each day for itself, and not put off to the morrow, nor the morrow thrown upon to-day. G. B. C.

A little daily reading of the Word; a little fixed, earnest thought; short but frequent and fervent prayer; the weekly rest, with its break and pause stilling the noise and whirl of the week; the Sabbath solemnities and the Sabbath leisure, with their larger opportunities for spiritual culture—these are the things which, being constantly and conscientiously used, will keep the realities that are unseen before the eye of reason through the clear shining of the light of faith, and at the same time will give to them a calm and steady supremacy over the affections of the heart. This is the life of God in the soul of man, and this is the way, or one of the ways, by which men may retain and increase it by living habitually near to God. He who thus lives is led "in the paths of righteousness"; he runs, wrestles, resists, pursues, as the case may be, or the call come; but, though often fatigued, and sometimes faint, he is never disheartened, for he always finds that "as his day is, so is his strength," or so at least are his means and opportunities of renewing it. Constant wear is met and counteracted by constant watchfulness; weekly exhaustion by Sabbath refreshments. The sanctuary at times unveils again, and gives power to what the world may have wellnigh hidden. The closet lets in glimpses of the sky, which frees the soul from the attractions of earth, by detecting afresh its impositions and falsehoods. And so it comes to pass that,

in spite of oscillations and slips and falls, the progress of the soul is steadily onward. T. B.

16. Throughout the New Testament the system of the Church is assumed to be such as to call forth the gift of every member, no matter of what order it might be; and the active coöperation of each one is enjoined to promote the edification of all. Here "every joint" is to *supply somewhat*, "every part" to perform its "effectual working"; and by this means the body is to increase, "edifying itself" in love. No system can be made to accord with this passage, any more than with the general spirit of the New Testament, wherein the pulpit is the sole provision for instruction, admonition, and exhortation; the great bulk of the members of the Church being merely recipients, each living a stranger to the spiritual concerns of the others, and no "effectual working" of every joint and every part for mutual strengthening being looked for. *Arthur.*

Maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. Christ is here presented as the one to whom the whole development must tend; the aim of all is to grow up into true fellowship with him, to receive him wholly into themselves, to become full of him. He is equally the one from whom the whole growth up into him can alone proceed; from whom issue all the vital energies; from whom alone all the members can receive life and direction. The Christian should ever bear in mind that our various necessities, and the means of supplying them, are distributed in varying modes and proportions through the different members, in order to keep them in a state of mutual dependence and reciprocal influence. N.

This body *grows up and edifies itself in love.* All the members receive spirits from the same Head, and are useful and serviceable one to another, and to the whole body. Thus these brethren, receiving of the same Spirit from their head Christ, are most strongly bent to the good one of another. If there be but a thorn in the foot, the back boweth, the head stoops down, the eyes look, the hands reach to it, and endeavor its help and ease. In a word, all the members partake of the good and evil one of another. Now, by how much this body is more spiritual and lively, so much the stronger must the union and love of the parts of it be each to other. L.

Section 301.

EPHESIANS iv. 17-32.

17 THIS I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gen-
18 tiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated
from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of
19 their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work
20 all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have
21 heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that ye put off concern-
22 ing the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;
23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after
25 God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak
26 every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and

27 sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil. Let
 28 him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing
 29 which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communica-
 tion proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may
 30 minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are
 31 sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour,
 32 and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another,
 tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

THE rejection of light tends to strengthen the power of sin. It decreases the restraining and remedial power of conscience; it kills the sense of danger and even adds hopefulness to sin; it destroys any influence which the beauty and glory of truth could put forth; in short, it removes those checks from prudence, from the moral powers, and from the character of God which retard the career of sin. Closely connected with this blinding power of sin is another law of character—that sin tends to benumb and root out the sensibilities; by which process again, its power over the soul is anew increased. That such a law does exist, we may almost assume; it is acknowledged, and its workings are seen on every hand. It is seen in the acquired cruelty of men of blood; in the horrible want of pity of the miser; in that deadness to conscience, produced by long sinning; in the disregard of rights which the prodigal manifests; in the extinction of the family affections; in the destruction, almost complete, of the religious sense of the blasphemer. And this view of sin shows it in its true light as a perverter of nature; an overturner of all those particular traits, the union of which under love to God makes the harmony and beauty of the soul. Sin tends to destroy even those qualities which in a brute awaken our deep interest, and to put into their place a lead-colored monotonous selfishness, which is not properly human nature, but its wreck and overthrow. Oh! when selfishness, from being an instinct, becomes a law, a reign, a tyranny over the soul, when this corruption has absorbed and assimilated to itself all the feelings and affections, must not the power of sin be greatly augmented? T. D. W.

17. If the Ephesians were sitting in heavenly places as respects nearness and access to God in Christ, that privilege ought to induce a holy and consistent walk on the earth. It would ill become them, it ill becomes any one to glory in celestial privilege, unless there be an honest endeavor to purify the terrestrial life. Before their conversion, the Ephesians had walked according to the course of this world. After it, they are bound to walk worthy of their new calling; and this is explained further by the expressions—walking not as other Gentiles walk, walking in love, walking as children of light, walking circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise. D. F.

18. The consciousness of God is exactly what was lost in transgression, and nothing was left, of course, but the little, defiled consciousness of ourselves, in which we are all contriving how to get some particles of good, or pleasure, or pride, or passion, that will comfort us. We do not know God any more; we only know ourselves. We have the eyes and the ears that were given us, but we are too blind to see, too deaf to hear—"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in us because of the blindness of our heart." H. B.—God begins with the heart. The teaching of his Spirit prepares the heart to see, and then the mind

is taught to see, through the heart. God hath shined in our hearts. He must begin there, because there, and not in the mind, is the seat of darkness and evil. Therefore the great Physician of the soul, whose omniscience discerns not the mere *symptoms*, but the *seat* of the disease, goes directly to the heart. There the teaching of God's Spirit produces this spiritual discernment, which is sharpened and increased just in proportion as a right state of the affections is produced and made permanent. G. B. C.

19. Past feeling. The Holy Spirit, glorious and joyful truth, does find a way into souls that are steeped in spiritual lethargy, does beget anew the sense of holy things that appeared to be faded almost away. But, when the very faculty that makes his working possible is quite closed up, or so nearly closed that no living receptivity is left for him to work in, when the soul has no fit room, or function, to receive his inspiring motions, more than an ossified heart to let the life-power play its action, then, manifestly, nothing is to be hoped for longer from his quickening visitations. H. B.—In the eternal world no one can be indifferent, no one shall be insensible. The world of darkness will be a world of feeling. There shall be weeping there. Not tears of penitence, but tears of despair. The worm shall never die. There will be a fire unquenchable in every sinner's heart that will burn like a seven-

times-heated furnace. Conscience will be fearfully busy there—pointing to the visions of a Saviour offered and a Saviour despised—recalling mercies once contemned, and precious invitations trampled under foot. That smothered conscience will rise again. It will awake to new life on that dread morn when the archangel's trump shall sound. It will be alive with an intensity of torment on that day when the "books are opened"; and it will live amid the agonies of perdition *never again to become* **PAST FEELING!** T. L. C.

21. As the truth is in Jesus. We often, indeed, hear it asserted that "Christianity is a life, and not a creed"; that it is "devotion to a Person, not adhesion to a dogma." False antithesis appears to be, in these days, a most popular form of fallacy; and in this language we encounter it full-grown. Christianity is a life governed and molded by a creed; a creed which gives motives and energy to a life. It is devotion to a person who is manifested through a doctrinal medium; who can not, without such a medium, be recognized, loved, or worshiped, as he has revealed himself, and as he is. This is the heart of the whole matter. Dogma [or doctrine] is our expression of the *truth as it is in Jesus*; of that truth which can indeed make us free, because it is the substance of the words of a divine Redeemer. Men may speak and feel heartily about the character of Christ; but they can not accept the Christ of the gospels, and then be consistent in disowning a dogmatic religion. They must choose between a doctrinal Christianity and no true Christianity at all. They must have a creed, or they must go without a Christ. *Bright.*

By indifference to doctrine altogether, and representing the whole care for doctrine as narrow-mindedness and bigotry, the battle of infidelity against true religion has been fought in every age. *Doctrine*, indeed, is commonly the first point of attack; and in the attack upon doctrine, the more inward parts of religion, such as faith and holiness, are often made use of as points of advantage, on which the batteries against doctrine may be planted. But, in truth, the attack is against religion altogether; and faith and holiness themselves, and all the structure of religion, inward and outward, shortly disappear, when the assault upon doctrine has by any willful heart, with whatever pretext, been made successfully; not to say that it is commonly because faith and holiness are themselves in decay within that the assault on doctrine is thought of. *Moberly.*

Creeeds are due to ourselves, that we may honor the blessed God by open profession of faith; due to ourselves, that we may be fortified in the faith by that obligation which open profession lays upon us. They are also due to others whom we desire to draw to us, that we may approach them with our principles pinned upon our breast; due to others who deny our faith, that we may warn them of their errors, and exhibit the truth upon which we seriously believe the salvation of their soul depends. *Chamberlain.*—The value of the creeds to the Christian world can not be overestimated. They are a bond of union as to belief in "the first principles of the oracles of God." They form a short statement of truths necessary to salvation which even children can learn. They are an index to the faith of the

New Testament, bearing the sanction of seventeen centuries of learning, practical wisdom, and saintly piety; words which we may safely carry with us from our childhood to the grave as a guide to the knowledge of God and of the kingdom of heaven. *Blunt.*—The Apostle's Creed is most wisely concise and simple; and yet, as a skeleton of New Testament theology, full and complete. It expresses no man's opinion; it gives no man's explanation. It simply records the facts of our religion, without either accounting for them or deciding in what particular manner they shall be held. Account for the facts as you may, explain them as you will, draw what inferences from them you like—these are the facts; and "they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture." As all Christians believe these facts, it would be a notable sign of the fundamental unity of the Church, if every congregation throughout the world would stand up and declare aloud, before God, before angels, before all men, and before devils, their personal faith in this ancient, comprehensive, and precious creed. *Pulsford.*

22. For "concerning the former conversation," which conveys very little meaning to the English reader, substitute "as concerneth your former way of life." A.—The gospel sets before us the pattern of the new man, of man as God created him to be, of man as restored in Christ to a true and holy life. Such we are required to become by putting off that type of selfish, sinning man which is as old as Adam, by retrieving the spirit of the mind from its long subjection to the propensities and passions of the flesh, and putting on the new Adam, the true type of man, whose characteristics are a childlike obedience to God, an unselfish regard for others, a self-sacrificing devotion to truth, duty, and love. This is a renewal "in the *spirit* of the mind," a radical change in its objects of thought, in its aims and desires, in the bent and purpose of living. J. P. T.

24. Sanctification is moral transformation, and is altogether different from justification, which is only a change of legal condition. At regeneration the Christian begins to lead a new life—a better, but not a sinless, life. Though a new nature has, so to speak, been grafted upon the soul, the old nature is not dead. The fruits of sin and the fruits of the Spirit hang side by side. Sanctification is a gradual change of character; it is a putting off of the old man, which is "corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts," and a putting on of "the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." F. L. P.—The Master wants, not simply better conduct, but a solid, new man—so, new husbands, wives, children, citizens; new kindness, truthfulness, honor, honesty, beauty. This new man is to be put on; man after God even as Christ was when he came in God's love to take us on his soul that we may take him on our soul and be covered in by the new investiture of his life; that sighing we may sigh with him, dying die with him, rising rise with

him, carrying up all our once low affections to sit with him where he sitteth, at the right hand of God. All which he figures in the parable of the great king's wedding-feast; where the guests are called by sending round to each, for his card of invitation, a *caslan*, or splendid wedding-robe. Putting on this robe, the guests are to come in, and, by this found upon them, are to be admitted and have their places assigned. H. B.

Is created. There must come down a Divine leaven into the mass of human nature before this new being can be evolved in any one. There must be a gift of God. A Divine energy must be the source and fountain of all holy and of all Godlike life. Christ comes, comes to make you and me live again as we never lived before; like possessors of God's love; live tenanted and ruled by a divine Spirit; live with affections in our hearts which *we* never could kindle there; live with purposes in our souls which *we* never could put there. If redemption be the giving of life from God, and if redemption be the change of position in reference to God's love and God's law as well, neither of these two changes can a man effect for himself. You can not gather up and reissue the past life. The sin remains, the guilt remains. The inevitable law of God will go on its crashing way in spite of all penitence, in spite of all reformation, in spite of all desires after newness of life. There is but one Being that can make a change in our position in regard to God, and there is but one Being that can make the change by which man shall become a *new creature*. A. M.

There has been too much in the popular representations of the gospel, as if its *principal* design was to save men from hell, and that, if *that* was secured, they might be happy and content. It is to do that certainly, but it aims at doing far more. It is to save from wrath; but, in addition to that, it is to unite to God, and to make men like Him. Pardon, justification, the blessedness thence resulting—these are not *ultimate* ends; *they* exhaust not the Divine purpose. They are only *means* to a further end, a sublimer result—the production of a subjective sanctity, and, through that, of that deeper and higher blessedness which flows from a new birth unto righteousness; a resurrection from the death of sin into the life of God; the being “created anew unto good works.” Redemption, incarnation, a divine Mediator, sacrifice, intercession, the mission of the Comforter, with all other correlative truths, seem to be the most natural things imaginable, when it is understood that the grand, ultimate object is to recover man from the pollutions of the flesh and the power of the devil, and to make him a partaker at once of the holiness and the blessedness of God. T. B.

25. Truth with his neighbor. It needs

but a coarse, dull sense of right and wrong to abstain from telling lies, while it belongs to a very sensitive, delicate conscience to shun the numberless by-paths of false appearances and false pretenses which meet one on all sides and are very pleasant to walk in. The finish of the character, in regard to truthfulness, is one of the noblest attainments of Christian manhood, and it is as difficult as perfection is in any other department. To make any progress in this direction, we must have a clear view of the field; we must form an idea of what it is to be an Israelite indeed without guile; we must perceive how insinuating in some of its forms untruthfulness is, and how blessed the height—if we can reach it—where our whole soul shall breathe the air of truth, and of nothing but truth. T. D. W.

26. The prohibitions and restraints of Christianity are laid upon the malevolent and selfish passions—as anger, malice, envy, revenge, of the first, and vanity, pride, and ambition, of the second. These, with the exception of anger, it absolutely prohibits; and it prohibits that, so far as it is malevolent. It distinguishes between the holy indignation which must be excited by wickedness and any mere personal feeling or desire to inflict pain for its own sake; and hence it speaks of Christ as looking on men “with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts,” and it commands us to “be angry and sin not.” M. H.

27. Those who indulge fretful feelings, either of anxiety or irritation, know not what an opening they thereby give to the devil in their hearts. “Fret not thyself,” says the psalmist, “*else shalt thou be moved to do evil.*” And in entire harmony with this warning of the elder Scriptures is this precept of Paul against undue indulgence of anger: “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath, *neither give place to the devil.*” Peace is the sentinel of the soul, which keeps the heart and mind of the Christian through Christ Jesus. So long as this sentinel is on guard and doing his duty, the castle of the soul is kept secure. But let the sentinel be removed, and the way is opened immediately for an attack upon the fortress. And our spiritual foes are vigilant, however much we may sleep. E. M. G.—Though the suggestion of evil is attributed to Satan, by Peter's question to Ananias (Acts 5: 3), yet the question is addressed to Ananias. This intimates that he could have closed the door of his heart against it if he would. Give not place to the devil; and wanting “place” given by yourself, he has no foothold to strike any blow. *Arnot.*

28. The desire of property Christianity regulates wisely. Recognizing the inadequacy of property to meet the wants of a spiritual being, it prohibits covetousness as idolatry, and exhorts the rich not to trust in uncertain riches, but in the living

God. At the same time it forbids indolence, requiring industry and frugality; and, when property is acquired, it commands us to be "ready to distribute, willing to communicate." He that stole is to steal no more, but is to labor, working with his hands, that he may have to *give* to him that needeth. Thus would Christianity transform every lazy, thievish pest of society into an industrious, useful, and liberal man. Its exhortations would all lead men to works of general beneficence—to give to him that *needeth*, whoever he may be—and would thus cause money to become a means of spiritual culture to him who has it, as well as a blessing to him to whom it is given. M. H.

29. As we avoid the evil of the tongue, so we should commune one with another more frequently and fruitfully, quickening one another to a sweet and grateful apprehension of the benefits of God, and especially of that greatest benefit to man, the gift of his dear Son Jesus Christ—the light of the world, the refuge of the lost, the Priest, Prophet, and King of our profession. T. M.

30. The work of the Spirit *in* man is not only as real and important as the work of Christ for him, but it is as much required to *keep* alive as to *make* alive—to preserve the life as to impart it. The Holy Spirit has not only to visit the soul, he has to "dwell" in it, to "abide" with it, to make the heart his home, the body his temple. If he be "grieved" or offended, if he withdraw or depart, the spiritual life droops and languishes; just as all nature would do if the sun were to be protractedly eclipsed; just as the earth would suffer if the heavens withheld the dew and the rain. T. B.—That Spirit that sometimes does illuminate, teach, and instruct them, can keep silence, can cause darkness, can withdraw itself, and suffer the soul to sin more and more; and this last is the very judgment of judgments. Bun.—Take heed, respect the great Person you have in your company, who lodges within you, the Holy Spirit. *Grieve him not*, for it will turn to your own grief if you do; for all your comfort is in his hand and flows from him. L.—It is to grieve him, when you stop his blessed work in you; when you will not let Him deepen and widen the impression of his seal. He grieves over your unmarked hours and days and weeks, because he knows that the time which is unmarked by you is marked by your enemy; that when you sleep, then your enemy is most busy. He grieves over the weakness that will not be made strong, over the carelessness which will not be made thoughtful.

He grieves over this, because he sees to what end it is hastening. But if he grieves over our manifold faults and weaknesses, it will be a joy to him no less if we follow his guidance and love his comfort; it will be a joy to him, so he permits us to speak, if we suffer him to finish his work, and to make his seal every year more visible on us; and if it be a joy to him, his joy will be our infinite blessing; his finished work is our life eternal. T. A.

31. Of all things that are to be met with here on earth, there is nothing which can give such continual, such cutting, such useless pain as an undisciplined temper. The touching and sensitive temper, which takes offense at a word; the irritable temper, which finds offense in everything whether intended or not; the violent temper, which breaks through all bounds of reason when once roused; the jealous or sullen temper, which wears a cloud on the face all day, and never utters a word of complaint; the discontented temper, brooding over its own wrongs; the severe temper, which always looks at the worst side of whatever is done; the willful temper, which overrides every scruple to gratify a whim—what an amount of pain have these caused in the hearts of men, if we could but sum up their results! How many a soul have they stirred to evil impulses; how many a prayer have they stifled; how many an emotion of true affection have they turned to bitterness! How hard they sometimes make all duties! How painful they make all daily life! How they kill the sweetest and warmest of domestic charities! Ill temper is a sin requiring long and careful discipline. Long after you have seen the duty of controlling it, you will find your control of it very imperfect. God gives some victories speedily; this victory he rarely gives till after many battles. F. T.

32. Two very distinct Greek words are translated by the single, very beautiful English word, *forgiveness*. One signifies merely a letting go, a release of charges, an exemption from punishment, the merely negative good of not being held in condemnation; a word accurately translated here and there by the word "remission." The other signifies the very positive and operative matter of sacrifice and suffering to gain the heart of an adversary; that which not merely lets go, but prepares men to be let go. Literally this word means "to bestow grace." Thus here we may read: "Dealing grace one toward another, even as God for Christ's sake hath dealt grace toward you." H. B.

Section 302.

EPHESIANS v. 1-21.

1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children ; and walk in love, as Christ also hath
 2 loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmell-
 3 ing savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named
 4 among you, as becometh saints ; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which
 5 are not convenient : but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger,
 nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom
 6 of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words : for because of these
 7 things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore
 8 partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord :
 9 walk as children of light : (for the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness
 11 and truth ;) proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the
 12 unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*. For it is a shame even to speak of
 13 those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprov'd are made
 14 manifest by the light : for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith,
 15 Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See
 16 then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the
 17 days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord
 18 *is*. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess ; but be filled with the Spirit ;
 19 speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody
 20 in your heart to the Lord ; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in
 21 the name of our Lord Jesus Christ ; submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

THERE can be no perfect melody in the heart while sin is there. If word is discordant with word, or deed with deed, or thought with thought ; if one speaks what he does not mean, or professes what he does not practice, or promises what he does not fulfill ; if the elements of his moral being are at war with one another, the passions with the reason, the appetites with the conscience ; if, in a word, the psalm of life has not been tuned to the keynote of the gospel ; if our uniform and practical purpose of consecration to God does not bear down all before it ; if the aims and aspirations of the soul do not all accord in "glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will to men," there can be no proper melody in the heart. But let this be the case, and that melody is the legitimate and necessary result. Let the soul, by nature at discord with itself, with conscience, with its condition, with the laws of holiness and God, be converted, so that selfish will is subdued, so that God is loved and his law becomes a delight ; let the soul, purified by the power of atoning blood and attuned to the praise of Divine grace, be brought to feel that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, and then all its faculties and affections shall unite in the chorus of "Holiness to the Lord." The grace of God shall breathe through it, and wake from its trembling strings a music beyond that of Æolian harps. There will be a sweet concert of thought and deed, an un murmuring submission to God's providence, a holy joy in doing his will. E. H. G.

1. To the grace of pardon, and the grace of renewal, succeeds the grace of adoption in the order of blessings of his covenant ; whereby God, in infinite condescension, is pleased to stand to redeemed sinners in the relation of a *father*. They walk with him as "*dear children*." Goode.—*Religion is the harmony of the soul with God, and the conformity of the life to his law*. The loftiest purpose of God in all his dealings is to make us like himself ; and the end of all religion is the complete accomplishment of that purpose. There is no religion without these

elements : consciousness of kindred with God, recognition of him as the sum of all excellence and beauty, and of his will as unconditionally binding upon us, aspiration and effort after a full accord of heart and soul with him and with his law, and humble confidence that that sovereign beauty will be ours. "Be ye imitators of God as dear children" is the pure and comprehensive dictate which expresses the aim of all devout men. A. M.—The Christian life is a transfigured childhood. Like children, we believe without suspicion ; like children, we love

without distinction ; like children, we hope without limitation. A. T.

2. The offerings prescribed by the Levitical law fell into two entirely distinct classes. The one class were called sweet-savor offerings, and were for the acceptance of the worshiper ; the thought in them was, man giving to God something which God views with complacency. The second class consisted of the sin and trespass offerings, and are never said to be of a sweet savor ; in them the thought was man, as a transgressor, enduring the curse which sin has entailed. Our blessed Lord endured this curse, when, upon the cross, he poured out his soul unto death ; as it is said : " Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." But before he became our sin and trespass offering, he had been our sweet savor offering, presenting to the Father a human heart all aflame, as no human heart but his ever yet was, with heavenly love and zeal, a life wholly devoted to the service of God and man, and the only pure worship which since the days of Eden had ever ascended from the earth. E. M. G.

3. It seems a trifle to all but earnest believers to give way to bad thoughts, to take sinful liberties with the eye or hand ; but what says the Scripture ? Your eyes and your hands are members of Christ ; shall I then take Christ's eye and hand, and make an unclean use of them ? Indeed, we shall never understand how grievous are our sins against purity until we have learned really to believe that we are members of Christ ourselves. *An.*—In verse 4, "*which are not convenient*" would be better expressed " things which are not becoming." *A.*— " Let there be no coarseness, nor rapid and gossiping conversation—no, nor even the refined but sinful rillery of the man of fashion." Such is a fair paraphrase of the passage. If this be its meaning, it gives us the salutary warning that, albeit pleasantries itself be no sin, it is under certain circumstances very closely allied with sin. By way of preserving pure this offspring of the heart's merriment, three cautions should be rigidly observed : First, from all our pleasantries must be banished any, even the remotest, allusion to impurity, which forms the staple of much of this world's wit. Pleasantries should be the fruit of a childlike playfulness, and of a heart buoyant because it has not the consciousness of guile. If you once make it the vehicle of uncleanness, you foul it at the spring. Secondly, all such sarcasms as hurt another person, wound his feelings, and give him unnecessary pain, are absolutely forbidden by the law of Christian love. The flashes of wit should be like those of the summer lightning, lambent and innocuous. Thirdly, all such pleasantries as bring anything sacred into ridicule—or, without bringing it actually into ridicule, connect with it in the minds of others ludicrous

associations, so that they can never see the object or hear the words without the ludicrous observation being presented to them—are carefully to be eschewed. At all times our primary duty—that which is inalienably binding upon us, and from which no plea of entertainment can excuse us—is to hallow God's name. E. M. G.

5. *Nor covetous man.* The lax opinions of the Church on the sin of covetousness may delude one with the hope that cupidity alone shall not exclude him from the divine presence ; but the decree has gone forth against every covetous man, whatever his standing in the Christian Church. Streams of worldly affluence may seem to seek him, and, like a sea, he may receive them all ; but he thinks not of transferring his treasures by deeds of beneficence to the hands of God ; and, consequently, when he passes out of time into eternity, though he should be sought for before the throne of God above, sought for diligently among all the ranks of the blessed, he would nowhere be found, for " he shall not inherit the kingdom of God." J. H.

8. In the reformation of men whose lives had been bad, the gospel evinced a power such as put to shame the highest achievements of philosophy in this practical direction. An inspiration was furnished for the amendment of character such as the world had never witnessed before. This is evident from statements in the Apostolic Epistles and in the early ecclesiastical writers. " We," writes Justin Martyr, " who formerly were the slaves of lust, now only strive after purity ; we who loved the path to riches above every other, now give what we have to the common use, and give to every one that needs ; we who hated and destroyed one another, now live together, and pray for our enemies, and endeavor to convince those who hate us without cause, so that they may order their lives according to Christ's glorious doctrine, and attain to the joyful hope of receiving like blessings with ourselves from God, the Lord of all." G. P. F.

Now are ye light. The Christian is able clearly to discriminate between his old life and the new, whereby, through Jesus, he has been brought to life and light. Here is no twilight, but the clear light of day, which knows no turning from the light of grace to the darkness of sin. The conversion effected in us by God the Holy Ghost, through the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus, is the clearly defined boundary between things old and new. Not a single footbreadth of the new heart's dominions belongs to the old Adam. A. C.

Walk as children. Were we acquainted with the way of intermixing holy thoughts, ejaculatory eyings of God, in our ordinary ways, it would keep the heart in a sweet temper all the day long, and put an excellent influence into all our ordinary actions, and into our holy performances at those times when we apply ourselves solemnly to them. Our hearts would be near them, not so far off to

seek and call in as usually they are through the neglect of this. This were to *walk with God* indeed; to go all the day long as in our Father's hand; whereas, without this, our praying morning and evening looks but as a formal visit, not delighting in that constant converse, which yet is our happiness and honor and makes all estates sweet. This would refresh us in the hardest labor; as they that carry the spices from Arabia are refreshed with the smell of them in their journey; and some observe that it keeps their strength and frees them from fainting. L.

12. What is the voice of God's word is also the voice of natural feeling. The man who is fair outside and foul within is condemned of all men as a hypocrite. Men reserve all their strongest terms of reprobation for the dark, reserved, and secret sinner. Nature and revelation both warn us against the danger we run if we pollute our inner and secret life with what we dare not tell. F. T.

13. It should run thus: "But all things when they are reprov'd are made manifest by the light; for everything that is made manifest is light; that is, the light of your Christian light, which will be by your reproof shed upon these deeds of darkness, will bring them out of darkness into light, for everything, when it is manifested, becomes light." The Ephesians themselves were "once darkness," but were now become "light in the Lord," having been reprov'd "by God's Spirit." For this reason it will be better in verse 14 to render instead of "*Christ shall give thee light*," "*Christ shall shine upon thee*," make thee light. A.

14. **Awake thou that sleepest.** To the men of this world it seems, as they look upon the restless activity that surrounds them, that any other term than "asleep" should be the figure to describe it. "This world around us asleep?" they ask—these panting millions, pressing, dashing, trampling each other in the dusty highways of fortune, fame, or pleasure? Asleep! this restless, raging ocean of life, over which the storm-king rides in his fury? Humanity asleep, that neither night, nor sickness, nor satiety can check in its tumultuous course? But the Scriptures teach that spiritual slumber may consist with great physical and intellectual activity. Godless men are not only sleepers but somnambulists. They walk and still sleep; they speak, though still they sleep; with open eyes they sleep; in the view of the gospel they have eyes and see not—ears have they, but they hear not. They see what is not, and do not see what is; things far off seem near to them; things near seem far off. While they walk, as wakeful men, their steps are not directed by the reality of things. S. R.—Wake in death you must, for it is an earnest thing to die. Shall it be this, I pray you? Shall it be the voice of death

which first says, "Arise," at the very moment when it says, "Sleep on for ever"? Shall it be the bridal train sweeping by, and the shutting of the doors, and the discovery that the lamp is gone out? Shall that be the first time you know that it is an earnest thing to live? Let us feel that we have been *doing*; learn what time is, sliding from you, and not stopping when you stop; learn what sin is; learn what "*never*" is: "Awake, thou that sleepest."

15, 16. It is a distinct duty to use life while we are here. Time is short; therefore opportunities are so much the more valuable. There is an infinite value stamped upon them. Therefore use the world. But, then, it is a duty equally distinct, to live above the world. Unworldliness is the spirit of holding all things as not our own, in the perpetual conviction that they will not last. It is not to put life and God's lovely world aside with self-torturing hand. It is to have the world, and not to let the world have you; to be its master, and not its slave. F. W. R.—An Italian philosopher expressed in his motto that *time was his estate*; an estate, indeed, which will produce nothing without cultivation, but will always abundantly repay the labors of industry, and satisfy the most extensive desires, if no part of it be suffered to be wasted by negligence, to be overrun with noxious plants, or laid out for show rather than for use. Johnson.—All that life has of good, or great, or valuable, or useful, is fashioned out of time. Out of it we bring the well-spent hour, the well-spent year, the well-spent life. Time for an intelligent being is the equivalent of existence, and we must estimate it by the capabilities or possibilities which it involves; what it can do for character, virtue, integrity, piety, Christian hope, beneficence. E. H. G.

18. "Excess" is a mere truism. The word thus rendered means "ruin," "profligacy," reckless casting away of body and soul. The best rendering would be "profligacy." A.—18-20. "Be not drunk with wine, like those who live riotously; but be filled with the indwelling of the Spirit, when you speak one to another. Let your singing be of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and make melody with the music of your hearts, to the Lord. And at all times, for all things which befall you, give thanks to our God and Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Throughout the whole passage there is a contrast implied between the heathen and the Christian practice. *When you meet, let your enjoyment consist not in fullness of wine, but fullness of the Spirit; let your songs be, not the drinking-songs of heathen feasts, but psalms and hymns; and their accompaniment, not the music of the lyre, but the melody of the heart; while you sing them to the praise, not of Bacchus or Venus, but of the Lord Jesus Christ.* C.

All fullness of one thing hinders the receiving and admittance of any other, especially of things so opposite as these fullnesses are. A brutish fullness makes a man no man; this divine fullness makes him more than a man. It were happy to be so filled with this as that it might be called a kind of drunkenness, as it was with the apostles (Acts 2). L. —There is one intensity of feeling produced by stimulating the senses, another by vivifying the spiritual life. Stimulants like wine inflame the senses, and through them set the imaginations and feelings on fire; and the law of our spiritual being is, that that which begins with the flesh sensualizes the spirit—whereas that which commences in the region of the spirit spiritualizes the senses, in which it subsequently stirs emotion. Wine is but a specimen of a class of stimulants. All that begins from *without* belongs to the same class. The stimulus may be afforded by almost any excessive enjoy-

ment of the senses. The prophet tells us of those who are drunken, and not with wine. . . . We want the vision of a calmer and simpler beauty, to tranquilize us in the midst of artificial tastes—we want the draught of a purer spring, to cool the flame of our excited life—we want, in other words, the Spirit of Christ, with power to calm and soothe the feelings which it rouses; the fullness of the Spirit which can never intoxicate! F. W. R.

20. Giving thanks always. If, when thou art in prosperity and happiness, in success and enjoyment, thou givest thanks, it is nothing great or wonderful; but what is looked for is, that thou shouldst give thanks when in tribulation and in sorrow. Utter nothing in preference to these words, "I thank thee, Lord." Let us give thanks, not merely for manifest blessings, but also for those which are not manifest, and for those which we receive against our will. *Chrys.*

Section 303.

EPHESIANS v. 22-33; vi. 1-9.

22 WIVES, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband 23 is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Saviour of 24 the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might 27 present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but 28 that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own 29 bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; 30 but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his 31 body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and 32 mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great 33 mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife *see* that she reverence *her* husband.

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and 2 mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and 3 thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: 4 but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

5 Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh, with fear and 6 trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; 7 but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing 8 service, as to the Lord, and not to men: knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free.

9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

THE family state is the beginning and the condition of society. He who passes out of its healthy training into the larger circle of fellow-citizens or fellow-men, has a foundation already laid for all social

sympathies, for the conception of human brotherhood, for the exercise of good will in every form. It is also the condition of, and the preparation for, all law. The dependent being trained up in it to listen to higher authority and wisdom, to give up self-will and practice self-control, becomes fitted for the loyal life of the citizen, and for obedience to God. Thus it was meant, according to the primeval plan, that the infant mind should be disciplined in the family for a life of law and of love—*law*, which should lead the soul up to the great central lawgiver of the universe, and *love*, which should embrace the brotherhood of souls, and God, the Father of all. Such was the idea and type of the family which, through the fall of the race, has not been fully realized. T. D. W.

To watch your own spirit; to be ready with the soft answer which turneth away wrath; to wait on the invalid and never weary; to be yourself the invalid, yet neither fretful nor exacting; to minister to the mind diseased, pulling it out of the self-same slough many times a day; to carry in your own bosom some great care or sorrow, and yet rejoice with those that do rejoice; to break away from favorite pursuits in order to give to others pleasure; to do all this is difficult, so difficult that it can only be long and systematically sustained in strength of God's giving; but just because so difficult, it is the discipline which God prescribes to thousands who, up the steps of social life and domestic duty, are climbing to glory, honor, and immortality, and who, as they reach the landing, will find repayment in the children whom God hath given them. *Hamilton.*

22-33. He is enforcing the duties of the domestic state, and begins with those arising from the conjugal relation. His method is to illustrate these by the relations of Christ to his Church. The relative duties of marriage are more fully comprehended when the essential oneness of the relation is compared with the oneness of the believer with Christ. The husband is the head of the wife, just as Christ is the Head of the Church. The wife is to be subject to her own husband, just as the Church is subject to Christ. The husband is to love the wife, just as Christ loved the Church. He is to nourish her as his own body, just as Christ nourisheth the Church, which is his body. The parallel is drawn out in all these details, and then the very terms are cited in which the law of marriage was first given, in order to show that the two are *one flesh*, precisely as believers are members "of Christ, of his flesh and of his bones." And the whole form of exposition assumes that there was a mystical feature in marriage, designed to prefigure the mystical union of Christ and the Church. A "mystery" was put into the most fundamental of our natural relations, and was kept a secret through all the ages, until the corresponding "mystery" was revealed in our spiritual relations, which cleared up its meaning—the hieroglyph over the very portals of marriage, not to be deciphered until the key was furnished in the work of redemption. What sanctity is lent to the conjugal bond, when from the beginning the husband was designed as the type of Christ, and the wife a type of the Church, and human marriage a symbol of the sacred espousals between the Lord and his people! If there be a holy shrine upon the earth, it is the Family which wraps within its hidden folds the "great mystery" of grace, the believer's living union with his living Head. B. M. P.

22-24. The wife stands related to the husband as the Church to the Lord; that is, she is to be subject to him, and to show him all due reverence. But this obedience does not exclude equality of personal and moral dignity. It should have nothing slavish or bitter about it, no fear nor trembling. It should be free and joyful in, and for the sake of, the Lord. So the Church finds her highest honor, delight, and freedom in everywhere following her heavenly bridegroom in the most trustful self-resignation. P. S.—*This subordination of the wife is urged upon*

the ground of its meetness or propriety, "as it is fit in the Lord" (Col. 3 : 18). The duty is thus laid upon her conscience, and is not left simply to the operation of instinct. At the very first, the woman did not separately exist. When God executed his counsel to "make man in his image and after his likeness," he created Adam alone. The woman existed as yet only potentially in the man, and was formed afterward, by what may be termed a secondary creation, out of his substance. Her natural condition is that of union with man as a portion of him. The wife is always the rib, having her true place in the side, again reincluded in the man, from whom she was at first taken. In the beautiful language of Matthew Henry, she "was not made out of his head to top him, not out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side, to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved." Her derivation from man as the rib, and her restoration to him as the woman, are both to be connected together; and their typical significance is that the union in marriage is the most intimate which can be conceived, that it is spiritual in its nature, and that headship in the one, with submission in the other, are the two halves that make up the whole. But over and beyond this God has made the subordination of the wife and the supremacy of the husband a part of the constitution of marriage, and has established both by positive statute. Can there be any degradation in the wife's obedience to the law of her husband, when this is obedience directly rendered to the authority of God? B. M. P.

Is it nothing for woman to remember, when her sex is made the type and tabernacle of love, that we have ascribed the loftiest glory even to the Almighty Father when we have said that his name is love? Is it nothing to her that her place in society and her powers in the world correspond to her character? that, while she shares with man, in honorable and often equal measure, certainly in these modern times, every intellectual privilege and literary accomplishment, she yet has a realm all her own, sacred to her peculiar ministry, where she reigns by a still diviner right? It has been historically demonstrated that scarcely a single hero, reformer, statesman, saint, or sage has ever come to influence or adorn his age who was not reared by a remark-

able mother that shaped his mind; and then ask whether it is not equal folly for woman to claim the *name* of power and for man to deny her the *possession*. Then let her take up and wield the spiritual sovereignty that is her birthright. Let her understand the power lodged in her whole spirit and voice and look and action for or against the kingdom of heaven. Let her be the brave domestic advocate of every virtue, the silent but effectual reformer of every vice, the generous patroness of intelligence, the guardian of childhood, the minister of heaven to home, the guide of orphans, the sister of the poor, the disciple of Christ's holy Church. On Jesus of Nazareth—all fails except for this—on the Saviour's heart let her rest her unchangeable and unassailable hope, her unquestioning trust, her unconquerable love. For then shall man and woman be fellow-helpers to the truth; marriage the pure sacrament of a spiritual faith, and families on earth humbler branches of the great family of heaven. F. D. H.

25. For this Church Christ "gave himself." That token of love is immense. His strong love laid the foundations of that Church; his strong love preserves it. That affection can neither abate nor die. Jesus will love the Church as long as he loves the Father, that is, for ever; and as he loves the Father, that is, with a love that is infinite. A. V.

26, 27. When Paul exhibits the union of the Church with Christ under the image of the bride and the bridegroom, declaring it to be the divine purpose to present the bride to her Lord "holy and without blemish," he really offers the strongest conceivable appeal to the Christian disciple for an unspotted life. F. D. H.—How highly Paul himself estimated this heavenly purity we may infer from his dwelling so much on the idea of it in this place. He mentions it, and then he repeats the mention of it, and then, not satisfied, he repeats it again; heaping up words as though he found words too poor to describe it, too weak to come up even to his conceptions of its blessedness. The Church is first "sanctified and cleansed"; then it is "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing"; and at last it is "holy and without blemish." In our present state we are wanting in everything. In heaven every defect shall be supplied; nothing shall be wanting in us which can bring glory to our Redeemer or happiness to ourselves. C. B.

28, 29. The relation of the *husband* to the wife is the same as that of Christ to the Church. He is not to lord it over her ambitiously and arbitrarily, but with the power of love, surrendering himself to her, as a part of his own being, as his other self, making her partaker of all his joys and possessions, patiently and meekly bearing her weaknesses, promoting in every way her temporal and, above all, her spiritual welfare, and sacrificing himself for her, even to his last breath, as Christ has given his life for the Church, is continually purifying and sanctifying her with his blood, and raising her as a spotless, richly adorned bride to full participation in his glory and blessedness. This, then, makes the sanctification and moral perfection of the character the highest end of conjugal life. P. S.

The broad doctrine of the husband's supremacy grounded in love receives additional emphasis from the twofold argument by which the apostle enforces it upon the conscience. The first is the *consideration of the wife's identity with her husband*. The allusion, of course, is to the mystery of the woman's

original derivation from the body of the man. She is, therefore, his other self. And, as "no man ever hated his own flesh," so in "nourishing and cherishing" her he simply loves his own body. She is henceforth one with him in a mystical unity holier and closer than that which was broken when the flesh was closed over the cleft in his side. The second argument of the apostle is *the analogy between the husband's love and that of Christ for the Church*. The immense sacrifice whereby Christ "gave himself for the Church" finds its type, indescribably faint, it is true, in the consecration of the husband; when, forsaking all past associations and fellowship, he cleaves unto his wife, and devotes himself to her alone. And how beneficent is the reciprocal effect of a true conjugal intercourse between the two; when she, by her winning tenderness, softens in him all that is harsh and rough, and he, with his kindly firmness, upholds and trains those pliant graces which bloom the brighter as they twine themselves around his strength. B. M. P.

30. Three principal relations are included in this conception of the Church as the body of Christ. Christians as such are essentially united together in virtue of their relation to Christ, and that irrespective of any feeling or will of their own. Next, they are bound to one another by the obligation of mutual offices, the fulfillment of which is necessary for the well-being of the whole. And lastly, all alike derive their life from their Head who is in heaven. B. F. W.

32. A mystery is a truth, a fact, but to us a hidden truth. It is a truth hidden, whether from the eye of sense or from the direct glance of natural reason. It is apprehended as true, it is not comprehended. It can only be known from the evidence or symptoms of its presence. Yet the evidence, whatever it be, proves to us that the truth is there; and the truth is not the less a truth because it is itself shrouded from our direct gaze. Thus Paul speaks of the mystery of the Incarnation, and of the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles, when alluding to the fact that these divine purposes were hidden for ages in the mind of God and at length revealed. And he speaks of marriage as a great mystery, meaning that it embodies a secret correspondence to the union between our Lord and his Church, which does not lie upon the surface. H. P. L.

1-3. The first duty of *children* is obedience. This is not to be slavish but cheerful, the obedience of unreserved confidence and grateful love. It is also the first form of all piety toward God and reverence for divine things. For in its parents the child sees the representative of God, the reflection of his majesty and love. Where this course, which even natural right and the first commandment of the second table point out, is forsaken, there inevitably results wildness, slavery, and curse. Obedience to the divinely ordained authority of parents forms the only true training for real freedom and manly independence. P. S.

1. *Authority is here presented to the conscience as grounded in absolute right*. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." A broad foundation is thus laid, upon which a steady obedience may rest; for the appeal is made to the intelligence and reason as well as to the conscience and heart of the child. But, while the divine will is presented as a motive to filial obedience, it reflects equally upon parental authority. If the child must "obey in the Lord," the parent must command in

the Lord. If the child must obey as "well pleasing to the Lord," the parent is equally to please the Lord in his rule. In no case can the parent plead a divine warrant for obedience in unlawful things. He must rule, and the child must obey, under the law which sets forth the supreme authority of him who is the Creator and Lord of them both.

2, 3. *God has lent a gracious sanction to filial obedience in the promise appended to it.* Here, in the center of the moral law, is a commandment with promise. In the New Testament it is reingrossed, and stamped with the seal of grace, "that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." As though to add a deeper emphasis, this obedience is declared to be "well pleasing unto the Lord." The promise itself is abundantly fulfilled in various directions. In the goodness of God, the child acquires the great secret of life in its first lesson that virtue is bliss. In the home it learns that life's pleasure is to be found in the faithful performance of duty, and that self-conquest is indispensable to happiness. The solid character, moreover, which is formed under this discipline, almost insures the success which is promised. The qualities which are thus matured are precisely those drawn upon in the prosecution of every earthly calling, and which will wrest even from hard fortune itself a final triumph over all obstacles; while, in addition, the language of the promise conveys an assurance of the divine blessing.

4. Children are given to us, not simply to be enjoyed and caressed, but to be educated—to be educated for this life and for the life to come. The admonition is addressed to parents in a form that at once recognizes the disciplinary office with which they are charged and the peril of miscarriage. Beneath the negative style of the admonition we discover a positive principle, that *children should never be thrown into an attitude of antagonism to the parent.* The rule of the parent is one of law, but of law as tempered with grace. The father must recognize his responsibility to the whole nature of the child, and regard him as a being to be *molded* as well as *controlled*. This is the key to the interpretation of the passage. The obedience of the child is to be free and unconstrained, under the promptings of affection. He must not be teased, and worried, and provoked until he loses heart, and renders an obedience in which there is no soul: "lest they be discouraged," adds the apostle in the corresponding passage (Col. 3 : 21). B. M. P.

Christian parents should specially be careful how they strive for the worldly advancement of their children at the hazard of their spiritual interests. It fills one at times with a kind of despair to see how those who profess to regard religion as all-important subordinate it to almost every other thing

in life; how educational accomplishments, and choice of pursuits, and friendships, and alliances, are discussed and fixed without this ever coming into serious view. Were it bodily infection, it would fill them with alarm, but spiritual danger is lightly passed by. It is one great reason why Christianity makes so little progress, and why Christian families are constantly melting away into the worldliness around them; while the parents have to see their children lost, not only to vital religion, but even to that strength of mind and steadiness of purpose which are necessary to any firm position in life. Both worlds frequently slip from the grasp in the miserable attempt to gain the false glitter of the present, and the bitter waters of disappointment sweep, like the Sea of Sodom, over the ruins of fortune and fame coveted at the cost of consistent principle. Let the kingdom of God and his righteousness be sought and maintained in the first place; if worldly position follows, it will be honorably borne and usefully employed, and if God does not see fit to give it, there will be sufficient compensation in the pure and imperishable treasures with which He can fill the soul. *Ker.*

Looking at the laws of our nature, the analogies of Providence, the experience of former times, and above all, at the explicit testimonies of the divine word, we are constrained to believe that the heaven of Christianity will diffuse itself through the mass of human nature, not so much by the impulsive agency of societies for the reformation of particular evils, or even by local revivals of religion, as by the still and patient work of training up children in the nurture and admonition of the gospel. T. H. S.

5-8. These servants were mostly slaves to heathen masters. If ever of any calling one might say, "There is no divine stewardship in it," this might have been said surely of slavery among the heathens. Yet it is recognized in the strongest way that even such a slave's duties may be sanctified by importing into them a Christian motive, and that then the service is really done, not to the human master, but (marvelous condescension!) to the great Head of the Church himself. E. M. G.—9. "Forbearing threatening," says the apostle. It is a special caution thrown into the body of the law, securing to the servant that regard to his sensibilities and feelings due to him as a fellow-being. B. M. P.

Life is here; but life blended with the life of heaven. The great characters of human existence are unchanged; its relationships—father and child, master and servant, husband and wife—are as before; but there is a seal upon them stamped by the signet of God; they are all "in Christ." "Children, obey your parents, in the Lord." "Servants, be obedient—as the servants of Christ—for ye serve the Lord." "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church." This new and celestial connection with Christ became the ground and motive of everything. W. A. B.

Section 304.

EPHESIANS vi. 10-24.

10 FINALLY, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on
 11 the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For
 12 we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against
 13 the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. Where-
 fore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil
 14 day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with
 15 truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the prepara-
 16 tion of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able
 17 to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the
 18 sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and suppli-
 cation in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all
 19 saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth bold-
 20 ly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds:
 that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

21 But that ye also may know my affairs, *and* how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and
 22 faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: whom I have sent unto
 you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and *that* he might comfort your
 23 hearts. Peace *be* to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord
 24 Jesus Christ. Grace *be* with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

THE most wondrous thing about this great conflict is its deep silence! The battle of God and of Satan is raging around us every hour; we are in the thick of the encounter; and yet we scarcely hear it. It is not that the *name* of religion and of the heavenly warfare is altogether unheard. But the true contest, that which includes the winning or losing of *hearts* to God—the inward securing of blessedness or condemnation—that contest is lost and stifled amid the busy bustle of man's interests and passions. It goes on, but it goes on unnoticed. Yes! the disputes of a neighborhood, the momentary encounter of rival interests, are loud enough to occupy every ear and every mind; the conflict of heaven and hell, the strife that fills the whole length and breadth of eternity, is around us—nay, within us—and not one in one hundred has even really known of its existence! And what infinitely heightens this wonder is that in this very contest we are ourselves the combatants! Were we mere spectators, we might slumber in the contemplation. But under the rival standards we are every one of us arrayed; each busy in manifesting allegiance to his master, and earnest in spreading his empire. W. A. B.

10. Strong in the Lord. Spiritual strength does not exist in us by nature; nor even by grace and after renewal does it so exist as to be a permanent stock, upon which we can draw as something of our own. It is the plan of God that his redeemed people should feel their dependence at every step. Every well-instructed disciple has discovered that he can not walk for a single hour without the help of the Divine arm. He leads the safest, truest, happiest life, who most consciously leans upon the strength of the Redeemer, and takes each several step of the way with his eye fixed on the author and finisher of his faith. J. W. A.

11. The wiles of the devil. That that tremendous antagonist of human happiness stands concealed behind the entire machinery of evil, no one can doubt, who is not disposed to question the

whole revealed account of the personages of the spiritual world. It is a living spirit with whom we have to contend, as it is a "living God" whom we have to aid us. It is no abstract law or ideal conception of evil, as some have dared to theorize; but a Being personal, and conscious, and distinctively active as ourselves, though with faculties immeasurably beyond us; a Being profound in purpose, subtle in arrangement, bold in enterprise, undaunted in execution; a Being who knows us far better than we know ourselves, and hates us far more intensely than even his worst inspirations have instigated us to hate one another; a Being whose compass of possible activity, extending through every region where temptation can extend, seems for a time permitted to span the universe, and even (if we may dare to interpret certain mysterious intimations of holy

Writ) to darken, by his occasional presence, for some unfathomable purpose, the council-chamber of the Omnipotent himself. Satan, then, is the prime efficient cause of this lethargy; he who deceives that he may destroy, stupefies that he may deceive; the cunning of the serpent alone can reach the master-subtlety of making the soul of man do his work by being its own unpitying enemy, and traitor, and cheat; it is only the "father of lies" that thus can make the wretched heart a liar to itself. W. A. B.

12. Principalities and powers, rulers of the darkness of this world. Existing in numbers designated by legions; filled with a malignity the most implacable, and endowed with a vast intelligence; this world the theatre of their operations, and the ruin of our race the point on which their cunning and enginery are brought to bear—our hope would be indeed forlorn, were it not that Christ has come to our aid, taken upon him our nature that he might destroy the works of the devil; were it not that the mighty Spirit helps our infirmities, and aids our escape; and were it not that, in addition to all these, the panoply of God were cast about us, and we kept upon our watch. Count it not superfluous, then, that we summon you to arms. If any cry peace, our reply is, "What have we to do with peace so long as we wrestle day and night with principalities and powers, and the stake at issue is heaven or hell; so long as the infernal hosts are mingling in all mortal movements?" R. T.

13-17. God has provided for the child of light a panoply for the evil day. 1. The girdle of truth, giving strength and comeliness to Christian character. 2. The breastplate of righteousness, or rather the coat of mail which covers the body all round from the neck to the thighs, guarding all the vital parts. 3. The shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace. The gospel sandals are strong and enduring, but never burdensome; they conduce to alacrity of spirit and rapidity of progress. 4. The shield of faith over all, defending the armor as well as the armed man, capable of being turned hither and thither to meet every attack, and of quenching fiery darts. 5. The helmet of salvation, i. e., the hope of salvation. This protects the head, the seat of thought and principle. 6. The sword of the Spirit, the searching, piercing Word of God. Who-so would be a good soldier of Christ must not only possess such a sword but learn to wield it. 7. All prayer, without which the strongest and most experienced may be worsted in the evil day. All great Christians have excelled in, and prevailed by persevering, vigilant, and affectionate prayer. D. F. —In the circumstances with which the apostle was surrounded, we find a new and living emphasis in his enumeration of all the parts of the heavenly panoply—the belt of sincerity and truth, with which

the loins are girded for the spiritual war—the breastplate of that righteousness, the inseparable links whereof are faith and love (1 Thes. 5 : 8)—the strong sandals, with which the feet of Christ's soldiers are made ready for the universal message of the gospel of peace—the large shield of confident trust, wherewith the whole man is protected, and whereon the fiery arrows of the wicked one fall harmless and dead—the close-fitting helmet, with which the hope of salvation invests the head of the believer—and, finally, the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. All this imagery becomes doubly forcible if we remember that when Paul wrote the words he was chained to a soldier, and in the close neighborhood of military sights and sounds. The appearance of the Prætorian guards was daily familiar to him; as his "chains," on the other hand (so he tells us in the succeeding Epistle), became "well known throughout the whole Prætorium." C.

14. Stand. A true Christian must be a Christian before men, among men, in their face and sight. For their sake and his own he must be enrolled, and in a communion. No concealment, or ambiguity, or misconstruction, as to his place and belongings, can be tolerated. F. D. H.—**Your loins girt about with truth.** By this we are not to understand a loose sword-belt, nor any ornamented girdle, but a very strong girding apparatus, made of leather and covered with metal plates, and fastened firmly round the loins. It was the first part of the armor which the soldier would put on, and it was of essential use to him for the purposes of safety, and especially for the sake of standing firmly. It was to the Roman soldier exactly what truth is to the soldier of Christ. Of Christ himself it is said in the prophecy that, "righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness (the word is *truth* in the Septuagint) the girdle of his reins." H.

16. Darts of the wicked. Satan endeavors to discomfit souls by busying them about the secret decrees and counsels of God, or by engaging them in such debates and disputes as neither men nor angels can certainly and infallibly determine, that so he may spoil their comforts when he can not take away their crown. Brooks.—Few real Christians have not been distressed by wanderings in prayer, and by doubts about the truth of the Scriptures. These are matters that the vassals of Satan seldom perplex themselves about. But if the fiend of darkness can not keep Christ's sheep out of heaven, he will make them go limping thither if he can. Hil.—As an open enemy plagueth a town with fire, so Satan plagueth the heart with evil thoughts; and as a poisoned arrow causeth painful wounds and unbearable days of suffering, so the fiery darts of the devil cause anguish and secret pain which no man can express, and in comparison

with which all bodily sufferings, yea, and all adversities, are to be counted as nothing. *Arnd.*—Satan endeavors to blow out the spark of grace; but instead of that he kindles it into a flame, and only blows away the ashes that covered it. He pliieth the saints with his fiery darts; but, instead of killing them, he renders them more expert in the art of defense, teacheth them the use of "the shield of faith" and the other parts of their spiritual armor. *R. W.*

17. The sword of the Spirit. The Word of God is so called in reference to the use which this divine Agent makes of it in slaying the sins of the heart and in conquering the hostility of the world. The Spirit most efficaciously wields this instrument of heavenly temper with the hand of an authorized ministry of living men. This ministry unquestionably stands in the awfully honorable place of the seen hand with which the Spirit of God generally grasps and wields the sword of divine truth. And this hand is kindly and wisely chosen. *J. S. S.*—The Scripture discovers sin and the devil's devices and malice; it discovers duty and the love of God and Christ; it discovers strength and encouragement in the promises of assisting and crowning grace. By these the Spirit acts, the devil is conquered, and the soul is comforted. These are the words of reconciliation, grace, and truth, and the power of God to salvation; therefore, every day look into these, praying for the Spirit's teachings, and mixing faith with what you read. *Mason.*

18. Praying always. The aspiration of the soul mounting toward its Source and its Deliverer; the speechless language of faith, and hope, and love bounding upward toward the everlasting Throne, and then prostrating themselves before it; these trustful, unformed, hesitating accents—the language of the child who is artlessly pouring his every grief and every joy into his Father's ear; these are the

spirit, the essence of prayer, living ever in the secret hearts of all the children of God. Such prayer in its divinely imparted strength and confidence in the very breath, the inmost movement of the supernatural life. It is the voice of love seeking its heavenly object. *H. P. L.*—Prayer is the abiding background in the life of the Christian. Prayer must give support to his whole life, his every action; in it all must originate, in it all must terminate. The standard by which to estimate our true condition is the degree in which we are conversant with prayer. The life of the Christian must be a living in prayer.

An.—**In the Spirit.** Prayer is nothing but the breathing *that out* before the Lord that was first breathed *into us* by the Spirit of the Lord.—*Brooks.*

23, 24. The Ephesian converts are described in the Acts as publicly burning their books of sorcery, and the value of the books is put on record. Truly they were well recompensed when they got this Epistle to lead them, not into magic and sorcery, but into the mystery of Christ, and hidden wisdom of God. They had burned evil and superstitious volumes, and they obtained a book which can not be valued in silver and gold—an Epistle of wonderful breadth and power, full of riches of the mind and the warm flow of a master spirit. . . . The conclusion is sweet and gentle. Peace of reconciliation they had; now let them have peace of obedience and of communion with God and with one another. Faith they had, and so were saved by grace; now let them have increase of faith for the conflicts they must endure, and with it much love, in order to stand together, grow together, walk together, and be edified together. The last sentence is, "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." No one loves him as he ought to be loved; and we may be thankful that the blessing is not for those that sufficiently love him, but for all that sincerely love him. *D. F.*

Section 305.

PHILIPPIANS i. 1-30.

1 PAUL and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which
2 are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our
3 Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,
4 always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, for your fellowship in
5 the gospel from the first day until now; being confident of this very thing, that he which
6 hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ: even as it is
7 meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in
my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my
8 grace. For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus
9 Christ. And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and

10 in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and
 11 without offence till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which
 are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things *which happened* unto me
 13 have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; so that my bonds in Christ are
 14 manifest in all the palace, and in all other *places*; and many of the brethren in the Lord,
 15 waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. Some
 16 indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: the one preach
 17 Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: but the other
 18 of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding,
 every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do
 19 rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your
 20 prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation
 and *my* hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but *that* with all boldness, as always, *so*
 now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether *it be* by life, or by death.

21 For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain. But if I live in the flesh, this *is* the fruit
 22 of my labor: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having
 23 a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the
 24 flesh *is* more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and
 25 continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith; that your rejoicing may be
 26 more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again. Only let your conversa-
 27 tion be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be
 absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving
 28 together for the faith of the gospel; and in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is
 29 to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. For unto
 you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his
 30 sake; having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear *to be* in me.

THE belief of the final perseverance of the saints is a very different thing from a vain presumption that I am one of them, because of some dreams, or feelings, or past experiences, and that *therefore* I can not fail of salvation, whatever may be the tenor of my life. The privilege and the character to which it belongs can not be separated. The perseverance of God's people is a perseverance in *holiness*; and they, *therefore*, are sure of eternal life, because he who has called them to it calls them to holiness, and pledges himself to *keep* them in holiness as the way to life. He ordains them to the means as well as to the end. The assurance, then, I am a child of God, and therefore I shall never fail of salvation, can not exist for a moment but as the Spirit of God witnesses with my spirit, not that he once (as I may think) *began*, but that he is *carrying on* a work of grace, a *sanctifying* work, in my heart. Any habitually indulged sin at once demonstrates that my confidence of interest in God because of some former convictions and religious feelings, has been a delusion. And the sinful infirmities of God's people, in the same proportion that they grieve and banish the Comforter from their souls, take away *all enjoyment* of this truth of final perseverance; not because the truth itself is doubted, but their agreement with the character of those in whom alone it is verified. This doctrine is a precious cordial for the fainting soldier in the day of battle. It strengthens his weak hands, confirms his feeble knees, animates him under all the terribleness of conflict. He remembers that God is faithful, who has promised, "They shall *never perish*, neither shall any one pluck them out of my hand." Tell him this sweet truth, then, if he be wavering, ready to give up in despair, *as*, but for this hope of salvation, he well may. Tell him of it, if he be *even fallen*, so as he be but struggling and grappling with his enemy, though it be in the dust. But, if he be *parleying* with Satan, *tampering* with sin, *ceasing* the warfare, this precious truth of God becomes as poison to his soul. *Goode.*

THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

PHILIPPI is remarkable as the first European city in which the gospel was preached. In Acts 16: 12, etc., we have the account of Paul's arrival and proceeding there. (Read pages 112-116.) That Church had begun with a discourse to a few pious women by the side of the little river Gangites; it grew to become the affectionate and only helper of

the apostle in his necessities on two several occasions: immediately after his departure from Philippi, and again shortly before this Epistle was written. Paul revisited it (Acts 20: 6) on his return to Asia. But, of the state of the Church from the time of his first visit, all we know is to be gathered from this Epistle, and from a few scattered notices in other Epistles. A.

In his imprisonment he was far less occupied with anxiety for his own life than for the welfare of the churches scattered through various regions, who through the dangers which beset their apostolic teacher might become unsettled in their faith, deprived as they were of his personal guidance in this dark and troubled period. Through his pupils and associates in the preaching of the gospel, who now formed the living link between him and these churches, and through his letters, must the want be supplied. Among these churches was that of Philippi in Macedonia. Its members had been witnesses of the ignominy and suffering endured by Paul on account of the gospel. They had witnessed the example he gave of boldness in the faith, of devotion to the Lord, of triumphant enthusiasm in his service, his joyfulness in suffering, and the wonderful deliverances wrought for him by the Lord. This had served, in a special manner, to give greater depth and ardor to their love for him, who was ready to sacrifice all that he might bring them the glad tidings of salvation. They followed the example of their faithful teacher. The Church at Philippi remained steadfast under persecutions. Their faith and love had been approved thereby. Neither could they be unsettled in their faith by the persecutions which had now befallen their apostolic teacher. They were conscious of that higher fellowship with him under all his conflicts and sufferings. His sufferings, and the dangers which hung over him, but added new fuel to their love and sympathy. To manifest this to him they had sent one of their own number, Epaphroditus, who might also bring back to them more exact information of his circumstances. In order to avoid every appearance of self-seeking, and to take from the opposers among the Jews and Judaizing Christians every occasion of suspicion, Paul had himself assumed the whole charge of his temporal support. Still the Church at Philippi were moved, by their heartfelt love to him, to anticipate his wants; and, knowing how difficult he must often find it to earn a maintenance, they had several times sent sums of money for his necessities. Paul, though he sought no gift, yet, in view of the feeling which prompted it, could not reject the free-will offering of love. This Church had now once more manifested in this way their active sympathy for Paul, by sending to him Epaphroditus. This circumstance, and what he learned through their messenger of the condition of the Philippian Church, occasioned the writing of this Epistle. Its object was to express to the Church at Philippi his gratitude and love; to relieve their anxiety respecting his own situation; to give them a view of his Christian state and temper in the midst of his conflicts and dangers; and to bestow upon them the counsels and encouragements suited to their peculiar circumstances. N.—Of course, in such a writer, this would lead also to a rich pouring forth of the sympathies and counsels of his paternal Christian heart, which under the guidance of the blessed Spirit have become a precious treasure of refreshment, consolation, and knowledge for all ages of the Church. A.

1, 2. The letter alleges no doctrinal error against the Philippians, nor does it reprove any sin or practical fault. It opens easily and graciously. Nothing is said of Paul's apostleship, for in Philippi it had not been called in question. The Epistle professes to proceed from "Paul and Tim-

othy, servants of Jesus Christ," for these had labored together in Macedonia; and it is addressed to "all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." It is a very important description of a primitive Christian community. D. F.

6. The Spirit of God has wrought all the good that is in us; and the imperfections which still cloud the brightness of his work are the lingering remains of our own evil nature. God's work is begun, else we had no faith, no love. But our faith is wavering, our love is blended fire and ice; wherefore God's work is clearly not completed. What, then, is the natural conclusion from the fact which is certified to every Christian, alike by the good which is God's, and by the evil that is his own? What is the natural conclusion from the fact that God's work is begun, but is imperfect? Is it not this—that that work must go on till it be finished? If a Spirit all-powerful and infinite is working in me, never can his work be finished until it is perfected. A. M.

The grace of Christ, when once obtained, shall infallibly prove victorious, and finally prevail against all opposition. He who is the author is likewise the finisher of his people's faith; for "his gifts and calling are without repentance." *Grace*, though a small rivulet in appearance, is fed with an everlasting spring. Where the Lord Jesus begins a good work he will carry it on to perfection, and never leave the objects of his love till he hath made them like himself, all glorious both within and without, and presented them to his Father without spot and blemish. R. W.—In this confidence, though with fear and trembling, let us work out our salvation; God working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Seeking the aids of the Holy Spirit, let us aim at perfection. Let every day see some sin crucified, some battle fought, some good done, some victory won; let every fall be followed by a rise, and every step gained become, not a resting-place, but a new starting-point, for further and higher progress; and, looking over the gloomy confines of the grave to the glory that lies beyond, let us meet our last hour and last enemy, when they come, calm "in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection"—this our confidence, that he who hath begun a good work in us will carry it on to the day of the Lord Jesus! T. G.

8. For "record," read "witness"; and for "in the bowels of Jesus Christ," "in the tender heart of Christ Jesus." The Epistle is overflowing with expressions of affection. We see how such a heart, penetrated to its depths by the Spirit of God, could love. We can see how that feeble frame, crushed to the very verge of death itself, shaken with fightings and fears, burning at every man's offense

and weak with every man's infirmities, had yet its sweet refreshments and calm resting-places of affection. We can form some estimate, if the bliss of reposing on human spirits who loved him was so great, how deep must have been his tranquillity, how ample and how clear his fresh spring of life and joy in Him of whom he could write, "Yet it is not I that live, but Christ that liveth in me"; and of whose abiding power within him he felt, as he tells his Philippians, "I have strength for all things in Him that giveth me power." A.

9. A soul, however well practiced in thinking, will miss the right if not quickened and the eye of the spirit made single by love. To love, therefore, Paul here gives the first place, and ascribes to its quickening presence the knowledge and capacity required for distinguishing the good and the bad, the true and the false—as he himself expresses it, "that your love may more and more abound in all knowledge"; meaning that *therein* its effect is seen, that increase of knowledge is the fruit of more abundant love. Paul desires for them especially increase in knowledge, is the faculty of perception, that they might test things which differ, the good and the bad, the true and the false, that thus they might avoid the one and choose the other. He assumes that for this work the diligent exercise of the faculty of perception is necessary; that such a power of discernment is the fruit of unremitting exercise of the Christian judgment. N.

More and more in knowledge. He who lives up to a little light shall have more light; he who lives up to a little knowledge shall have more knowledge; he who lives up to a little faith shall have more faith; and he who lives up to a little love shall have more love. The main reason why men are such babes and shrubs in grace is because they do not live up to their attainments.

And in all judgment. That wisdom which a believer has from Christ leads him to center in the wisdom of Christ; and that love which the soul has from Christ leads the soul to center in the love of Christ; and that righteousness which the soul has from Christ leads the soul to rest and center in the righteousness of Christ. Brooks.

10. **Things excellent.** Good and evil, in most common cases, are plain enough to be seen. We do not mistake the one for the other; the fault is wholly in our practice; we knowingly leave good undone and do evil. But there are also many cases where it is otherwise, and where, before we come to the difficulty of right acting, we have a previous difficulty to overcome in the right judging. And here it is that Paul's prayer for the Philippians applies to us also. We need God's help in order to distinguish and approve what is really excellent. T. A.

11. Those fruits of righteousness, by which the

soul is qualified to appear without offense in the day of Christ, the several graces of the sanctifying Spirit, are nothing else but so many holy principles, all disposing the soul toward this blessedness and the way to it; mortification, self-denial, and godly sorrow take it off from other objects, the world, self, and sin; repentance (that part of it which respects God) turns the course of its motion toward God the end; faith directs it through Christ the way; love makes it move freely; desire, earnestly; joy, pleasantly; hope, confidently; humility, evenly; fear, circumspectly; patience, constantly and perseveringly. All conspire to give the soul a right disposition toward this blessedness. The result of them all is heavenliness—a heavenly temper of spirit. For they all, as so many lines and rays, have respect to a blessedness in God as the point at which they aim; and the *point* in which they meet is heavenliness. Howe.

12-16. Paul was at Rome precisely at that time when the Palatine was the most conspicuous spot on the earth, not merely for crime, but for splendor and power. This was the center of all the movements of the empire. Here were heard the causes of all Roman citizens who had appealed to Cesar. Hence were issued the orders to the governors of provinces and to the legions on the frontier. From the "Golden Milestone" below the palace the roads radiated in all directions to the remotest verge of civilization. C.—Paul writes that his imprisonment was favorable to the spread of the gospel. As his guards relieved one another, each told his comrades what he had heard from the apostle, so that the word of the cross became known to the whole imperial guard. In Rome also, it is true, there was no lack of Judaizing false teachers, who preached the gospel from impure motives, from envy and the spirit of contention. P. S.—It is clear that these men were personal enemies of Paul, and that in their efforts to promote the gospel their object was to frustrate the labors of the apostle and to form a party of their own in opposition to him. What self-renunciation must it then have required to enable Paul to rise so entirely above this personal relation that, forgetting the design against himself, he can rejoice with his whole heart that the One Christ, whom it is his sole desire to glorify, is preached, even though it be by his personal enemies! Thus everything pertaining to self gives place to that all-absorbing love to the Lord and to those for whom he gave his life. N.

18. True love rejoices in the truth, by whomsoever professed or disseminated. If *Christ is preached*, whether in pretense or in truth, it rejoices, yea, and *will* rejoice. It does not rebuke a man because he prefers to labor in a field different from that of his neighbor, or cut down the spiritual har-

vest with a different implement, or wear a costume somewhat plainer or more costly. It does not meet the report of a victory in the Christian cause with cold indifference, or with a hesitating approval, till it has first learned what particular sect has the agency or will receive the benefit. It nobly overlooks all such things. It plants itself on no such narrow grounds. Its object is not to make proselytes, but to save souls; not to count up converts to this or that dogma, but to honor the Redeemer of the world. Wherever, in whomsoever it can discern the lineaments of his blessed image, it welcomes him to communion and rejoices in his prosperity. This is the spirit of Christ and of his apostles. B. B. E.

19. The fact is, and it is one which all Christians should deeply ponder, "the supply of the Spirit," the copiousness or deficiency of divine influence, is very much regulated by settled laws. The Spirit being once possessed, his subsequent donations are not matters of accident or caprice or of mere arbitrary sovereignty. There are always reasons for their being given or withheld, not only in the secret depths of the mind of God, but in the character and life of the individual, and in the condition of *his* mind in its relation to spiritual things. In Providence, certain principles, habits, states of mind, courses of conduct, have their appropriate results; in the spiritual life, certain principles, habits, courses of conduct, states of mind, have *their* appropriate results too—in each case, their gracious reward or equitable punishment, an issue at once fitting and inevitable. Hence, Christian men, men with a divine spiritual life in them, are to be held accountable for the *condition* of that life. The enjoyment of holy influence, by which this inner life is nourished and invigorated, is to be regarded as a thing which very much depends upon themselves. To have it is their privilege and duty. T. B.

20-25. The hand that wrote these words of faith and hope was chained to a Roman soldier; the eye that looked forward to the ineffable glory of being with Christ was shut in by the walls of a dungeon. But no chain could bind the spirit that here pours itself forth with such magnanimity of love, such triumph of devotion, which makes bonds witnesses for Christ, and the violence of adversaries a token that God's deliverance is at hand. No dungeon could darken, no threats of execution could intimidate, the spirit which knew that to die would be gain. But, while faith thus triumphed over death, and love longed to depart and be with Christ, the apostle, in his master's spirit of sacrifice, was willing to postpone his own glory to the good of the Church, and to preach Christ through pains and sufferings and patience, if thereby he might inspire others to the like joy of faith. J. P. T.

21. **To me to live is Christ.** A bold figure, showing the mighty magnitude of that object in his esteem. He regarded all the grand truths and interests of religion as centering in *Him*, comprehended in *Him*; insomuch that his very name might stand equivalent to them all. His chief and immediate reference was to the important service which his prolonged life and apostleship would render to the Christian cause, and especially to the Christian converts to whom he was writing. But his thoughts would not turn solely on the benefit he would so impart to others. He would include the happiness which he would enjoy himself, the admiring and grateful contemplation of the personal excellence and glory and sublimity of the Messiah, the Son of God; that communion with Christ to which he and all the apostles so often refer with great emphasis of delight; the hope, the assured prospect of all that was in futurity for himself and for the world. All this he had as a devoted servant of Christ. J. F. —**To die is gain.** Christ was his life here; Christ was in him the hope of glory hereafter. It was this certain assurance of a risen Christ, this conscious relation to a risen Lord, which filled him with such confidence and exultation in the prospect of death, which made him even "desire to depart," that he might "for ever be with the Lord." *Peronne.*

23. **In a strait.** "For him to live was Christ"; that is, to do the work and serve the interest of Christ. For him "to die was gain," that is, would be his own interest and reward. His *strait* was not, whether it would be good to live or good to depart, because both were good; but he doubted which of the two was most desirable. Nor was it his meaning to bring his own interest and Christ's into competition with each other. By Christ, or the interest of Christ, he means his serving the churches of Christ upon earth. But he knew that Christ had an interest also in his saints above; and could raise up more to serve him here. Yet, because he was to judge by what appeared, and saw that such were much wanted upon earth, this turned the scales in his choice; and therefore, in order to serve Christ in the edification of his churches, he was more inclined, by denying himself, to have his reward delayed; at the same time well knowing that the delay of his reward would tend to its increase. [We add some touching and suggestive personal utterances. B.] If I am any way useful to the world, undeserved mercy hath made me so, for which I must be thankful; how long I shall be so is not my business to determine, but my Lord's. If one flower fall or die, others in future summers shall arise from the same root. God will have other generations to succeed us; let us thank him that we have had our time. And could we, without selfishness, *love others*

as ourselves, and God as God, it would comfort us at death to have others survive us, and the world continue, and God still be God, and be glorified in his works. Love would say, "I shall live in my successors; I shall more than live in the life of the world; and most of all, in the eternal life and glory of God." *Baz.*

Desire to depart. The apostle's expression was not uttered in a crisis of despondency, but evidently in a state of the calmest thought, and when he saw that he was successful in his important mission, and should continue to be so in living to prosecute it. In this state of mind he still said, to leave all this, and "*to be with Christ, is far better*"—"to die is gain." To be "*absent from the body*" was, according to his faith, to "*be present with the Lord*." The apostle was of the highest order of Christians. But to every real Christian, "*to die is gain*." The being on the immortal side of death is gain to the believer; preëminently, the perfect deliverance from sin—every propensity of the animated, active, energetic spirit pointing only to good—pure, absolute, unmingled good—so that an unlimited liberty may be given to all its tendencies—the attainment of immense knowledge, all of it, *here*, beyond the utmost reach of thought; the society of happy spirits of the human order and of the angelic; some far more bright and direct manifestation of the Divine Being and of the Mediator; an intense realization of what has been done and obtained for them by the redeeming mediation; the joyful and not impatient looking forward to what is to be revealed and conferred at the resurrection. How mighty the duty, how transcendent the interest, of directing our utmost energy to the end that death may be "*gain*" to us! J. F.

27. The apostle commences an exhortation to the Philippian saints regarding their *calling and duty as citizens* of the kingdom of heaven. The same idea of citizenship (in our version "conversation") recurs in the end of the third chapter; and there may be a special reason for the use of such language in this Epistle. Paul writes from Rome, the greatest city of the world; and those to whom he writes are at Philippi, which was a Roman colonia, and, therefore, politically a miniature of Rome itself. It was there that the apostle alarmed the magistrates who had imprisoned him by announcing himself a Roman citizen (Acts 16). This incident must have been fresh in the memory of the Philippian believers as well as in his own, and in all likelihood suggested his appeal to them that they should

bear themselves as the freemen of a holy city, and partakers of a heavenly calling. D. F.

All the admonitions which Paul gives the Philippians in reference to the Christian walk are comprehended in this one: that they should "*walk in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ*." And what is required of them in their position, in the midst of a corrupt world; he points out in chapter 2: 15, 16. Inasmuch, he says, as they are called to live as children of God in the midst of a corrupt world, they are called to maintain unsullied that divine life of which as children of God they have become participants. N.

As becometh the gospel of Christ. Meeting his countrymen in little groups, or one by one, Christ showed them what was in his heart, and showed them the ineffable beauty of a holy and blessed "conversation" with his Father, while they were yet fishermen and publicans, and reapers and water-carriers about their houses and fields. Before men knew it, he had planted a kingdom to fill and possess the earth—planted it just where alone it could be planted, in the living heart and will of certain individuals who had ceased minding earthly things, or minded heavenly things far more. And so precisely he meets us to-day. With all his spirit of sacrifice and mighty power of redemption, with the cross on his shoulders and the scar in his side, he comes to each one of us, and speaks. F. D. H.

29. **Given to believe.** Why should faith, which is a work of man, not be at the same time a work of God? Why should not he who has granted pardon not also give faith? Should not all that leads to God come from God? They who admit this give him the glory more entirely by ceasing to regard faith as a merely human work, and by doing homage for it, as for everything else, to the Divine liberality. Under this reservation, which secures the honor of grace, they may frankly admit the necessity of faith; they may, without fear, term it a condition of salvation, recognize it as a work, as a moral work; in one word, think on the subject of faith as it is impossible not to think. A. V.

It is not more *given us* to believe on his name than it is *to suffer for his sake*; that is, our sufferings are the gifts, the privileges of his calling, the methods by which that calling is made sure, and we fitted for rest in him, as by a dying unto the world and a living unto him. As he was *perfected through suffering*, so are we; it is the end, the sweetening result of all he gives us to bear. H. H.

Section 306.

PHILIPPIANS ii. 1-30.

1 *If there be* therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship
 2 of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the
 3 same love, *being of one accord*, of one mind. *Let nothing be done* through strife or vain-
 4 glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not
 5 every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind
 6 be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not
 7 robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the
 8 form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a
 man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every
 10 name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things*
 11 in earth, and *things* under the earth; and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ
 is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now
 13 much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is
 14 God which worketh in you both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure. Do all things with-
 15 out murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God,
 without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as
 16 lights in the world; holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ,
 17 that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. Yea, and if I be offered upon the
 18 sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. For the same cause also
 do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of
 20 good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally
 21 care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But
 22 ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the
 23 gospel. Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with
 24 me. But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly. Yet I supposed it ne-
 25 cessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier,
 26 but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. For he longed after you all, and
 27 was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. For indeed he was
 sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also,
 28 lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when
 29 ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. Receive him there-
 30 fore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: because for the work of
 Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward
 me.

INFINITE are the mysteries of that piacular suffering and submission, which were passing within the darkened chamber of Christ's soul, and which no finite mind can ever comprehend! The little that we know is, that he suffers and submits. This is enough. This is the bowing down of the will, the vicarious, mediatory will, to the law which we had injured; to the law in its twofold power, as commanding and as smiting. It is the completest, as it is the most stupendous, oblation unto God which the universe has beheld. In all its parts, it forms the theme of eternal thought and songs. This obedience, even unto death, is the *atonement*. It is a satisfaction of infinite value made to the will of Jehovah, that is, to Justice. It is an oblation both of doing and of suffering. It fills the cup of duty; it exhausts the cup of penalty. It meekly says to Almighty Justice, "Thy will be done." The submission of our Lord amid this inconceivable struggle is *the pattern and motive for our submission to God's will*. So beautiful a sight, to those who account moral perfection the greatest beauty, was never presented, as in the spotless obedience of Jesus; and so preëminent a part of that obedience is nowhere displayed as in the closing night and day of his life of humiliation. I seem to behold all heaven bending down toward a world on which for forty centuries there has not been one immaculate object, to concentrate its gaze on the "Man of Sorrows." "These things the angels desire to look into"; they can not imitate, though they admire. They

"adore and burn"; but such stretches of benevolence are beyond their reach. This is a love which has been the grand attraction of the Church in all ages, and which we celebrate in a sacrament. It is love in its highest exaltation; suffering love; tearful, bleeding, dying love. J. W. A.

1. For "*bowels and mercies*," read "tenderness and compassion." In verse 2, for "*being of one accord, of one mind*," read "with united souls being of one mind." A.

3. The Christian's love will lead him first of all to discern what is good in another, to discover even in his blemishes his peculiar gifts, that in which he is really superior to himself; while, on the other hand, through a self-scrutiny sharpened by the Spirit which quickens him, he detects with rigorous exactness his own faults. And this self-rigor, united with love, will give leniency to his judgment of whatever may obscure the divine life in others. And this manner of viewing one's self, in relation to others, will appear, likewise, in his whole conduct in regard to them. N.—There is naturally in all men a kind of fancied *infallibility* in themselves, which makes them *contentious*, contrary to the apostle's rule, *Let nothing be done through strife*, and as earnest upon differing in the smallest punctilio as in a high article of faith. Stronger spirits are usually more patient of contradiction, especially in doubtful things; and they that see farthest are least peremptory in their determinations. L.

Vainglory. How much more abundant would be our tranquillity, how much happier our lives, how much more attractive to others our Christianity, if the canker-worm of party spirit, vainglory, and contempt of others did not blight the noblest portion of our hidden life! **Lowliness of mind.** Humility is the secret of true *rest*, for the *lowly* heart is also the quiet, the satisfied, the God-hallowed heart. Humility is the secret of true *power*; for in the kingdom of God no one can accomplish so much as he who has learned to think humbly of himself and highly of the Saviour. Therefore, all God's dealings with his people have no other object than daily to free them more and more from the dominion of *self*, in order that Christ may be all to them. Van O.

4. In every age and in every class of life, sympathy is the great craving of the human heart, and if we can be so unselfish as to forget ourselves and show it with the peculiarities of others, we shall be astonished at the rich return—how cold natures open out to a kindly presence, as flowers in spring when the hard frost lifts its repressive hand. And in pursuing such a course we shall best succeed in elevating and broadening our own nature. If we could bring all around us into our own mold, we should only have narrowed ourselves in the process of constraining others. But, if we enter into sym-

pathy with their pursuits, we not merely grow in unselfishness, but add something to our intellectual nature which was not there before. We have so much more of humanity within us. There can be no finer instance of the way in which we gain by yielding, and make conquests of men and things when we seem to be led captive. *Ker.*

Let it only be supposed that selfishness has been banished from the *Church*, and what would ensue? Each denomination of Christians, without sacrificing its distinctive character, would embrace and seek to ally itself as closely with all the rest as a community of interest, hope, and affection could bind it. Each creed would have the necessity and divinity of brotherly love among its primary articles, teaching the Christian that a heart glowing with affection to "the brethren" exhales the incense most acceptable to God; that such love is God in man. Devotion, no longer terminating in itself, would go to God and plead for the world. Piety, no longer seeking after comfort as an end, would find it without seeking; find it in the paths of Christian activity and usefulness. A love which would yearn over the whole human race; a zeal which would be constantly devising fresh methods of usefulness, denying itself, and laying itself out for God; and a perseverance which would never rest till the whole family of man should be seated at the banquet of salvation: these would be the prevailing features of the entire Christian community. The tabernacle of God would be with men upon the earth, God would bless us, and all the ends of the earth would fear him.

5-8. When the Apostle Paul would enjoin the Philippians to "look every man on the things of others," he points them to "the mind which was also in Christ Jesus." He does not content himself with merely stating the fact of our Lord's condescension and death; but, as if the immensity of the stoop which Christ made were too great to be comprehended at once, he follows him downward from point to point, till he has reached the lowest depth of his humiliation. As if he felt convinced that the amazing spectacle could not fail to annihilate selfishness in every other heart, as it had in his own, his only anxiety is that it should be vividly presented before the eye of the mind. Having carried our thoughts up to that infinite height where Christ had been from eternity in the bosom of the Father, he shows us the Son of God divesting himself of his glory; and then he detains our eye in a prolonged gaze on his descending course; condescending to

be born; voluntarily subjecting himself to all the humbling conditions of our nature; taking on himself the responsibilities of a servant; still humbling himself, still passing from one depth of ignominy to a lower still; becoming obedient unto death; and that death the most humbling, the most replete with agony and shame—the death of the cross. J. H.

6. The mind of the apostle, as expressed in the original words, is that Christ, previously existing on an equality with God, did not regard this his equality, this his loftiness and glory, a thing to be held fast by him, but gave it up and emptied himself so as to become man. And the very plain words in which this is expressed are: "Who, existing (or being) in the form of God, deemed not his equality with God a thing to grasp at," i. e., a matter for him to retain, as one who grasps what he is afraid to lose. Thus, by keeping close to the original, the whole preëxistent majesty of Christ is set before us, and "the mind which was in Christ Jesus" is described in all its self-abandonment of divine love. A.

7. We say, using both the Scriptural expressions, that he "became flesh," and that he "took the form of a servant." The word "became" intimates the indivisibility of a perfect union; while the word "took" proclaims the immutability of the Divine nature. Thus, God the Word became perfect man; but so that the immutable nature received no injury from that inconceivable miracle. This, however, we have learned by faith; we have not mastered it by inquiry. And, having become man, he saves, by that in him which could share their sufferings, the race that was corporeally akin to himself, in that he paid the debt of sin, by dying for all as man, and "destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," as God, to whom evil is hateful. *Proclus*.—The nature which had sinned was the nature to be redeemed, and it could be redeemed only by that which was effected in the nature which had sinned. Divinity alone could not be a mediator; humanity alone could not be. The nature of the office, implying two parties, supposes of necessity a sympathy with both; and, as God and man are the parties, none but the God-man can possibly be the mediator. Hence Christ took upon him the form of a servant. Hence "the Word was made flesh." E. M.—What greater mercy toward the wretched could there be than that which brought the Creator of heaven down from heaven, and arrayed the Maker of earth in an earthly body; which placed on the same mortal level with ourselves him who continues coequal in the eternal existence of the Father; which laid the form of a servant on the Lord of the world; that the Bread Himself might hunger, Strength be made weak,

Health be wounded, and Life die? And all this, that our hunger might be fed, our dryness moistened, our weakness comforted, our iniquity quenched, our charity enkindled! What greater mercy than that the Creator should become a creature, the Sovereign become a servant, the Redeemer be sold, the Exalter be abased, the Reviver be slain? *Aug*.

8. **Obedient unto death.** It is to the lifelong obedience of Christ, terminating in that last and greatest act of obedience, *death*, that the apostle here directs us. The life and the death thus connected with each other by the apostle, though differing in many things, yet resembled each other in this, that they were both vicarious. Christ was our substitute, as Luther delighted to proclaim, from his cradle to his cross, from Bethlehem to Golgotha. It was as our sin-bearing substitute that he entered on his life of obedience, and as the same that he finished that life upon the cross. He was the obedient one all his life through; and that obedience was *for us*; that law-fulfilling was *for us*; that perfection was *for us*. In his completeness we are complete; by his stripes we are healed; and by his death we are reconciled. *An*.—It is not by the mere sufferings endured between Gethsemane and Calvary that Jesus Christ saves us, but by all the sufferings of his life, which constituted throughout one entire passion. His work forms an indivisible whole. He could not save us without suffering and dying; but he did not accomplish the work merely by suffering and death. He accomplished it by all that he was and by all that he performed; by his actions and by his words; by what he did and what he suffered; by his life as by his death. A. V.

9. **A name above every name.** Along the track of the ages, above all vicissitudes of opinion and feeling, luminous by his own majesty and beauty, appears the Just One, in whom alone the absolute perfection of the Godhead irradiated over human flesh, the praises of earth and heaven evermore accumulating around him, the sweet savor of his name spreading itself through the air we breathe, strengthening the weary, cheering the sad, restoring our souls. O. E. D.—10. **The name of Jesus.** He took this name on him as though he had chosen it for himself. He bore it about with him as long as he lived on earth, and when he died he died with it above him on his cross. And he bears it now. Think of him on his throne. He has indeed another name written on him there, "King of kings, and Lord of lords"; but when he speaks to us, he says, "I am Jesus still, Jesus your Saviour." C. B.

Verse 10 should stand, "that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend." The meaning in the mind of the writer is, that the purpose of this exaltation of the Lord Jesus was, that in his name

should all prayer be made; that no man should come to the Father but through him. He himself shows what meaning he attached to the phrase "bowing the knee" in Eph. 3 : 14. It is with him an expression for offering up prayer. A.

11. Confess that he is Lord. We feel that he is entitled to be made head over all things, and to have the power, not only of presenting his Church without spot or wrinkle before the presence of the Father, but of collecting the angels under his headship, and extending his grace through all the realms of intelligent being, so as finally to destroy the possibility of sin. This is the grand consummation, and it is a beautiful and glorious reward. He is to finish transgression and to make an end of sin, to redeem and sanctify the Church, and to confirm in holiness every order of unfallen being; so that, when his work is finished and his glory complete, the intelligent universe, by virtue of one grand enterprise of triumphant virtue, shall be bound inviolably to the throne of God. J. H. T.

12. "Work out" ought to be "carry out." We do not *work* out our own salvation, for we are saved by grace; but we do *carry* out our own salvation. A.—"What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder!" Here are joined together, in the compass of one practical exhortation, *faith* in a finished salvation, and yet *work*; God working all in me, and yet I able and bound to work likewise; God upholding and sustaining his child to the very end, "perfecting that which concerns him," making his salvation certain and sure, and yet the Christian working "with fear and trembling," lest he should come short of the grace of God. A. M.

It must not be forgotten that the Epistles were written, not to make converts, but to edify converts already made. In the Book of Acts we have examples of addresses made to unbelievers. G. P. F.—Remember that none but Christian people have anything to do with these words. To all others this injunction is utterly inapplicable. It is addressed to the "beloved, who have always obeyed"; to the "saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi." Paul has no idea of giving his disciples a lesson in abstract theology, or laying for them a foundation of a philosophy of free will and divine sovereignty; he is not merely communicating to these Philippians truths for their creed, but precepts for their deeds. Just as little as Scripture gives countenance to the error that makes religion theology rather than life, just so little does it give countenance to the far more contemptible and shallow error common in our day, which *says*, Religion is not theology, but life; and *means*, "Therefore, it does not matter what theology you have, you can work a good life out with any creed!" The Bible never teaches unpractical speculations, and the Bible never gives

precepts which do not rest on the profoundest truths. A. M.

Work out your own salvation. The apostle has here in view, not the getting correct notions of the grace of God, nor even the exercise of devotional feelings toward God, but mainly the attainment of *the mind* that was in Christ, the putting off the old man and putting on the new. It is the pursuit, in fact, of *practical* godliness, such a spirit and demeanor as *adorn* the gospel. "Only," saith he, "let your conversation be as cometh the gospel of Christ." And he then proceeds to point out the *details* of such a conduct; exhorting them to unity of spirit as brethren, and in the faith and patience of Jesus Christ; to have a tender regard for the welfare one of another, according to the mind that was in Christ Jesus; to be *blameless* and *harmless*, the sons of God without rebuke, shining *as lights* in an evil world. In a word, this working out our own salvation is a following out in our daily walk of that deliverance from evil, and from all its consequences, which is brought nigh to us in the gospel. Goode.

—Work as well as believe, and in the daily practice of faithful obedience, in the daily subjugation of your own spirits to his Divine power, in the daily crucifixion of your flesh with its affections and lusts, in the daily straining after loftier heights of godliness and purer atmospheres of devotion and love, make more thoroughly your own that which you possess. "Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure"; and remember that not a past act of faith, but a present and continuous life of loving, faithful work in Christ, which is his and yet yours, is the "holding fast the beginning of your confidence firm unto the end." A. M.

With fear and trembling. He refers to the feeling of personal accountability and helplessness, of insecurity and instability in ourselves, by which we may be ever admonished to continual watchfulness, and to ever-renewed waiting upon God as the fountain of all our strength. This feeling of dependence, the ground-tone of the Christian life, is ever to be maintained. It is this which must combat the presumption of a vain human self-reliance, which, finding itself deceived in the result, so easily gives place to dejection and despair. N. —But why should he that hath assurance of salvation fear? If there is truth in his assurance, nothing can disappoint him, not sin itself; but it is no less true that, if he do not fear to sin, there is no truth in his assurance; it is not the assurance of faith, but the mispersuasion of a secure and profane mind. This fear is not cowardice; it doth not debase but elevates the mind; for it drowns all lower fears, and begets true fortitude and courage to encounter all dangers, for a good conscience and the obeying of God. L.

13. "Of his good pleasure" should be "for his good pleasure." The meaning is not that God worketh in us to will and to do as he pleases, but so that his will is subserved by our willing and doing. A.—*Because* it is "God which worketh in us both to will and to do" we are called to "work out our own salvation." The instinct of every renewed soul realizes this fact, and his every prayer expresses, in one and the same breath, both the *divine source* and the absolutely *voluntary character* of all his Christian emotions and activities. How the two interact and blend into one is a beautiful subject for thought, but not to be fully apprehended here, and possibly never. D. B.—Paul blends the two things together, and sees—strangely to some people—no contradiction, nor limitation, nor puzzle, but a ground of encouragement to cheerful obedience. Do you work, "for it is God that worketh in you." And does the apostle limit the divine operation? Notice how his words seem picked out on purpose to express most emphatically its all-pervading energy, to express with the utmost possible emphasis that all which a good man is and does is its fruit. It is not that God gives men the power, and then leaves them to make the use of it. The whole process, from the first sowing of the seed until its last blossoming and fruiting, in the shape of an accomplished act, of which God shall bless the springing—it is all God's together!—a thorough-going, absolute attribution of every power, every action, all the thoughts, words, and deeds of a Christian soul to God. No words could be selected which would more thoroughly cut away the ground from every half-and-half system which attempts to deal them out in two portions, part God's and part mine. With all emphasis Paul attributes all to God. A. M.

To let the divine decrees stretch everywhere and hold all, embracing even these finite activities and this finite freedom as a part of their stupendous machinery, is more than we can master. Nor in the Scripture is any attempt ever made to reconcile the two agencies of God and man. Had such a reconciliation been necessary, God would certainly have suggested it. But now it lies back in the darkness, and we must consent to leave it there. It is one of the secret things belonging unto the Lord God. The things revealed are the facts themselves reconciled—on the one side, a divine efficiency which seems to clasp the universe as with iron arms; on the other side, a human freedom which seems to threaten anarchy. These two elements we must accept and hold them together as we can, denying neither, and abating the force of neither, holding to the divine efficiency without flinching, making our faith stout and masculine with it, holding also to the human accountability, making our faith elastic and agile with it. And, as to the harmony between

them, let us never expect to find it in this world. Let us rather leave it, and leave it gladly, for the revelations of eternity. For the present, let us be careful only that God be honored and our own destiny happily accomplished. R. D. H.

A Christian knows God's providence is in all things, yet is as diligent in his calling and business as if he were to provide for his own happiness. He believes beforehand that God has purposed what he shall be, and that nothing can make him alter his purpose; yet prays and endeavors, as if he would force God to save him for ever. He prays and labors for that which he is confident God means to give; and the more assured he is, the more earnest he prays. He believes his prayers are heard even when they are denied, and gives thanks for that which he prays against. Bacon.

14. **Without murmurings.** A singular subtilty attaches to the sin of excessive fault-finding, which makes it remarkably difficult of correction. Self-knowledge comes with peculiar slowness to complainers. It is doubtful whether one person in a hundred of those who are conspicuously given to pointing out real or imaginary foibles in their neighbors, and speaking censoriously to their housemates, would be found to be conscious in the least degree of having any other than a charitable judgment, a sweet tongue, and a reasonably contented disposition. But God searches us within and searches us out. These perpetual murmurings make no acceptable music in his ear. They find no pattern or sanction in the gentleness of the conversation of Christ. They disturb the air, ruffle the temper, provoke angry rejoinders, make virtue difficult, discourage penitents, exasperate children, disorder society, and degrade the honor of the Church. They are a gross form of ingratitude to God; for if we were really mindful of the countless mercies we are receiving, how could we find time or heart to speak only of the blemishes or shortcomings of those around us? F. D. H.

15. Saints are the lights of the world; but lights are not kindled in empty halls and unpeopled solitudes. They burn where houses stand thick and crowds throng the busy streets, or shine out at the harbor mouth through the night and tempest—guiding lights by whose welcome gleams the sailor, leaving storms behind, steers his bark into the desired haven. Let such be the aim of God's people. Living for their sanctification, separate in a sense from the world, and moving, like the stars above it, in a loftier sphere, let them shine with the luster of holy and useful lives, that others, seeing their good works, may glorify their Father which is in heaven. T. G.—Light, pure, rich, varied, dazzling, shines forth from these heavens by day and by night, just as the light of the Christian's example is

to be poured on the darkness of the world. It shines not indeed for display, but for use ; not for its own glory, but, like the light that should radiate from the Christian's life, to illustrate the glory of the great Creator. And if Christian light does *not* shine forth in the life, we have the highest evidence that it has never been enkindled in the heart. A. B.

16. Holding forth the word of life. Let your daily life be an unuttered yet perpetual pleading with man for God. Let men feel in contact with you the grandeur of that religion to whose claims they will not listen, and the glory of that Saviour whose name you may not name. Let the sacredness of God's slighted law be proclaimed by your uniform sacrifice of inclination to duty, by your repression of every unkind word, your scorn of every undue or base advantage, your stern and uncompromising resistance to the temptations of appetite and sense. Preach the preciousness of time by your husbanding of its rapid hours and your crowding of its days with duties. Though no warning against an unspiritual, no exhortation to a holy life might be tolerated, let your own pure, earnest, unworldly character and bearing be to the careless soul a perpetual atmosphere of spirituality haunting and hovering round it. The moral influence of such a life can not be lost. Like the seed which the wind wafts into hidden glades, where no sower's hand could reach to scatter it, the subtle germ of Christ's truth will be borne on the secret atmosphere of a holy life into hearts which no preacher's voice could penetrate. *Caird.*

17. For "if I be offered" read "if I am even being poured out." He alludes to present, not merely to possible circumstances, and regards his own blood as the libation being poured out over the sacrifice, as the Jews poured *wine* (see Num. 28 : 7 ; 15 : 4, etc.). A.—All believers are become, through Christ and in fellowship with him, what he himself is—priests before the God of Jesus Christ. Paul regards as his own priestly calling the apostolic work ; as his own acceptable offering to God, the faith planted by him among the Gentiles and the Christian life of the converted heathen world. It is in this sense he speaks in these words to his Philippian brethren of "the sacrifice and priestly service of their faith" as his offering to God. It was customary, moreover, to pour out wine upon the altar, a so-called libation, as a seal of the offering. Paul, foreseeing that his own blood might be poured out in his priestly office of proclaiming the gospel among the heathen, that he might be called to testify to what he preached in the very face of death, and to put the seal of martyrdom upon his life's work, here speaks of the outpouring of his own blood as a libation—an offering of himself upon

the sacrifice. Thus, with confidence, the apostle advances toward so glorious a consummation of his work. Far from needing solace from others, he could call on the Philippians to rejoice with him. N.

21. Their own, not Christ's. As if their interest and His were two separate, opposite, irreconcilable things, or as if they had never heard of the grace or the claims of Christ, many Christian professors may be seen pursuing their own ends as eagerly and wasting their substance as selfishly as the world around them. Self is Dives in the mansion, clothed in purple, and faring sumptuously every day—the cause of Christ is Lazarus lying at his gate, and fed only with the crumbs which fall from his table. J. H.—Self-seeking blinds the soul, that it can not see a beauty in Christ nor an excellency in holiness ; it distempers the palate, that a man can not taste sweetness in the word of God, nor in the ways of God, nor in the society of the people of God ; it shuts the hand against all the soul-enriching offers of Christ ; it hardens the heart against all the knocks and entreaties of Christ ; it makes the soul as an empty vine and as a barren wilderness ; in a word, there is nothing that bespeaks a man to be more empty and void of God, Christ, and grace than self-seeking. *Brooks.*—More than this, selfishness is the most utter destitution of a human being. It can bring nothing to his relief ; it adds soreness to his sorrows ; it sharpens his pains ; it aggravates all the losses he is liable to endure, and, when goaded to extremes, often turns destroyer and strikes its last blows on himself. H. H.

25-30. Epaphroditus is not so much as named except here and again in the last chapter of this Epistle, yet even by so brief a mention the name is embalmed and consecrated. Besides the testimony to his worth, these verses are remarkable for a refinement of Christian thought and feeling evinced in two or three points. The dangerous illness of Epaphroditus is spoken of with the utmost natural concern. So far is the apostle from chiding the anxiety of the Philippian Church, that he adds a tender expression of his own. He would be himself "the less sorrowful" when they should rejoice in the safe return of their messenger. Here, too, is shown the operation of a true Christian charity, which moves us to relieve the disquietude of others on our account instead of exacting their sympathy. Epaphroditus knew the sympathy which his case would excite among his Philippian brethren, and was in a manner impatient to relieve all such disquietude, as he was now able to do, by giving them personal proof of his recovery. The apostle enters into this feeling, and finds relief in lightening the burden of his companion and of those to whom he returns. How fully the messenger identifies himself with those who sent him, and the apostle with both, each forward to allay the distress and to partake of the joy of the others !

Here also is shown how a loving and devout spirit may lead us to recognize the goodness of God to ourselves in his goodness to others. There is not

anywhere a more exquisite delicacy of sentiment than in Paul's commemoration of his friend's recovery. He naturally spoke of his restored health as a mercy from God on that brother; but he adds, "And not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow": so fully does he identify himself with his friend, first in suffering and peril, and then not less in the deliverance. If the Scriptures have little to say of friendship by itself as a merely human affection, they exhibit its quality and

excellence in examples which make it not the less beautiful because it is not the only and not the principal affection. Could friends stand nearer to each other than Paul and Epaphroditus? Could mere natural sentiment bind them together as closely as the affinity of Christian faith and love? In all ages the Church has nurtured a like union of souls, hallowing domestic ties, intertwining branches of "the true Vine," knitting together human hearts in the unity of the Spirit. O. E. D.

Section 307.

PHILIPPIANS iii. 1-21; iv. 1.

1 FINALLY, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me in-
 2 deed *is* not grievous, but for you *it is* safe. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware
 3 of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and re-
 4 joice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Though I might also have confi-
 5 dence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the
 6 flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin,
 7 an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting
 8 the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things
 9 were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but*
 10 loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suf-
 11 fered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ, and be
 12 found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is
 13 through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know
 14 him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made
 15 conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the
 16 dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow
 17 after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.
 18 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting
 19 those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I
 20 press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.
 21 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be other-
 wise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already
 attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Brethren, be followers
 together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many
 walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the
 enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end *is* destruction, whose God *is* their belly, and
 whose glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly things.)
 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord
 Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glori-
 ous body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto him-
 self. Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand
 fast in the Lord, *my* dearly beloved.

CONVERSION is not merely a submission to the moral law. Paul was a moral man in the full and high sense of the word, subordinating his own will to duty, even to the point of self-renunciation and sacrifice. Conversion is not merely the acceptance, however sincere, of certain religious principles. Saul was a believing Israelite, a zealous Jew, a rigid Pharisee, exact among the exact, submissive to the Scriptures, serving the true God, hoping for the Messiah, equally scrupulous in observing and ardent in defending all the ordinances of Moses. Conversion is not even a mere gradual development, a progressive amelioration of all the good dispositions which we have just recognized in Saul. They could never have yielded any-

thing save that which they contained in the germ; Saul would only have continued Saul, and Paul would never have begun.

Conversion is the starting-point of a new life; opposite to the old, for the very name marks the returning upon and total changing of one's path. By it Saul becomes not better, but he becomes other; he is not more faithful than formerly to his principles, but his principles are changed; that which he regarded as evil, he regards as good; that which he called light, he calls darkness. A germ, new, unknown, and foreign, has been deposited in the depth of his being; this germ is faith in Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God. Henceforth, that which he had sought in the law, he seeks only in grace; that which he had expected from his own righteousness, he expects only from the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ. And every genuine conversion, beginning like that of Saul, ends also like that. It begins by Jesus Christ living and reigning in the heart before God; it ends by Jesus Christ living and reigning in the works before men. *Monod.*

1. **For you it is safe.** As the truths of our redemption are still the same, and as our nature is still the same, so the Christian minister must unavoidably say the same, or very nearly the same things, in his preaching year after year. Naturally, no doubt, it is very irksome to be repeating only what we have said before; quite as irksome to the speaker as it can be to the hearer. But Paul says, "to me indeed it is not grievous, but for you it is safe"; and the reason, probably, why he did not feel it grievous was, because he knew that for his hearers it was safe; and so we ought all to feel when we say or hear what has been in substance often said and heard before. If, from a dread of saying what we have said before, we try to go off to something less familiar, what follows, but that we must put the less important truth in the place of the more important, and curious questions of little real value in the place of the word of life? T. A.

2. The true Christian spirit alone could make the decision between a carnal or a spiritual Messiah; between a righteousness grounded on faith in the Redeemer alone, or in the law and its works; between the transformation effected by the divine life, working from within the reformation of the whole man, or a mere external change in outward conduct; between God's work or man's work, humble acceptance of divine gifts, humble surrender to Jesus as the Saviour, or a carnal Messiah, with the admission of the desert of one's own works. It was because the question for the new churches was of just such an unconditional opposition, between what was Christian and what was un-Christian, that Paul felt himself obliged to present the case so strongly, and to testify so earnestly against those erroneous views. "Beware of dogs" (the term in the original expressing the shameless effrontery of these opposers of the truth); "beware of evil workers" (those who would supplant the Christian by the Jewish standpoint); "beware of the concision." N.—The strange, un-English term, "the concision," is the only rendering possible for the contemptuous word which Paul uses to designate the Judaizing party. What he says is, "Beware of, I will not say the *circumcision* (for that is an honorable name, as I will presently show you), but the *concision*—the mere amputation—the cutting off of the flesh, and no more." He reserves the word *circumcision*, in its true sense, for Christians. A.

3. A scholar trained at the feet of Gamaliel kneels before "the Father in spirit"; a Pharisee of the strictest sect has his shrunk heart expanded into "joy in Christ Jesus"; a proud professor, blameless touching the law, feels "no confidence in

the flesh." "We are the circumcision," he says; says it boldly, after this thorough readjusting of his religious relations. He *thought so*, as a Jew, when there was none to dispute the claim. As a Christian, with all Jewry despising that claim, he is *sure* of it. A Saviour to go to and walk by; a Father to trust in and forget our little selves in glorifying; this is the "circumcision," both "worshipping the Father in spirit" and "rejoicing in Christ Jesus." F. D. H.

4-9. Even the Philippians needed a passing warning. Active and mischievous teachers would have fain placed the sacrifice of Calvary and the sacraments of the new Covenant on the level of the legal shadows which pointed to them. Paul appeals to his own case against the Judaizers. He had actually enjoyed the distinctions of race and blood, of exact compliance with the prescriptions of the ancient ritual, of high religious standing, of public consideration and personal character which they so earnestly coveted or recommended. At the bidding of heaven, he had taken the true measure of these things, and had renounced them. H. P. L.—A wonderful thing! the one, of all others, who could have most boldly claimed a righteousness of his own, is that one, of all others, who has most clearly rejected all self-righteousness, and who has rested most absolutely in the alone grace of Jesus Christ. Minds less enlightened, souls less elevated, in all Christian communions, in all the religions of the world, have sought in privation or in suffering an imaginary method of appeasing God, of effacing their sins and meriting heaven; but in his case, that which calls for, that which sustains, in his heart and in his works, a devotion without reserve, is the distinct contemplation, the profound feeling, of the sacrifice by which Jesus Christ had been beforehand with him without his works, before his good works, and notwithstanding his evil works. The crucified love of the lost creature responds to the crucified love of God the Saviour. Everywhere justification "by grace, by faith," holds the first place; it is his doctrine; he is apostle only for that, as he had become apostle only for that; the transition from Saul to Paul is nothing but the transition from the law to grace. Paul and grace, grace and Paul—this name and this idea are so inseparable that the one should be regarded as the living personification of the other. *Monod.*

7. Paul says that the things which before he counted gain now he counts loss; to let us see that to be born in the kirk, to be of the true religion, to say our prayers morning and evening, to live blame-

lessly, to deal equitably with men, are so far from doing us good to get heaven, that they are loss, and hindrances from Christ, and impediments to keep from heaven. For the man who leans on these never truly repents of sin; never troubles himself to mortify his own evil nature; is not earnest for reconciliation with God; never arrests himself before God's tribunal nor mourns before him in secret for sin; but soothes himself in his estate as if all were well, and thinks, when he compares himself with other men, if he be barred out of heaven many a one has cause to be dismayed. But here we see all these things they count gain are losses and hindrances, main deccits, that hinder men to be humbled before God, and, being leaned to, prove rotten reeds, that break and stab the man that leans on them.

Many never lay their account to seek heaven, but say within themselves, Bide till I grow old; bide till I get such a business by hand; bide till I grow rich. They may as well say, Bide till I can serve the devil no longer. They have their houses and estate to care for, their name and credit to uphold, their pleasures to follow; as for heaven, a soul-righteousness, or life eternal, they care not nor count for these. Yet we see Paul, ere he kenned Christ, was reckoning what things were gain to him, that he might get to heaven.

8. Win Christ. There will be great fight ere this be gotten done, for all our lusts will be on foot to set up some idol in his room. But down must they all, that Christ may be set on his throne; for he has not redeemed us from the devil that the devil should get a seat above him in our soul. But he must be above all; he must be our delight, our wisdom, our riches, our glory, our life; and if he be not in his room, he will not have a room in us at all.

9. And be found in him. Here is the thing he would be in grips with instead of all his losses; he would be found in Christ. This imports that in the day of God's judging there will be an inquisition made for every man, and every man will be sought till he be found. The apostle, when this inquisition is made, has no will to be found out of Christ. D. D. —When the avenger looks for me, I shall not be seen, I shall not be discovered; he will look for me, and he will find only Christ. I shall be inside that refuge against which God's own judgment shall have no power. Judgment may seek me, but I shall not be found; only Christ, only the Saviour, only the Judge. Could any words express more forcibly the safety of the Christian? He will be found inclosed, incorporated, and thus hidden, in Christ himself, in the Lord, in the Judge of man! *It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?* V.

10. That I may know him. He knew him,

but he would know him better. He would so experimentally know Him in his nature, will, office, fashions, that that light of knowledge might be transfused into his soul; that he might draw life and power from Christ; that he might feel the power of his resurrection; that is, such a communion with him in his resurrection as may raise him to newness of life, and make him have more peace and joy in him, and fellowship of his sufferings, that as Christ suffered, so he may be content to be a crucified man, ready to follow after Christ, renouncing the world, contented to be scourged back and side and to suffer many things, whereby he might be like Christ. If the fruits of Christ's resurrection be newness of life, then all the luster a man has of a holy and blameless life before he come to Christ is but of the old man; it is but a pagan's luster. Whoever would have a new life must draw it from Christ risen. 11. By resurrection from the dead is meant complete satisfaction in newness of life. He would be farther on to a higher degree of resurrection from the deadness of his nature, to the life of Christ, and complete stature of a Christian man. In a word, he desires to be a complete Christian. D. D.

In verse 12, for "*attained*," read "*obtained*." It is a wholly different word from that rendered "*attained*" in the last verse, and ought not to have been rendered by the same word in English. And it should proceed, "*or are already made perfect* : but I *press on* (same word as in verse 14 below), if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ." And in verse 13, for "*apprehended*," "*laid hold*." A.—Paul is far from supposing when he contemplates his own life that he has already reached the limit of heavenly perfection, or that he could build his confidence thereon as if it were a life of perfected sanctification. But the ground of his confidence is this—that Christ has taken him into fellowship with himself, that Christ has apprehended him. He knows that Christ, by whom he has been apprehended, will not leave unfinished the work he has himself begun in him, but, if he truly surrenders himself to his hands, will conduct it through all conflicts to a glorious conclusion. N.—This is to be observed of the Christian, that as he advances in the Christian course, his standard of perfection rises, whence what satisfied him once fails to satisfy him now. As he put on godliness perhaps the change was great, and therefore the attainment seemed to be great. But he walks onward, making fresh discoveries all the while of two objects, of himself and of the majestic law of Christian duty. His life pleases him less, for he sees through outward actions more into his soul. His standard rises and rises until nothing but godlike perfection is worthy of his aims or

hopes. T. D. W.—The profession of a state of sinless perfection the Scriptures declare to be a delusion. It is contradicted by the experience and recorded confessions of the most eminent saints of God in all ages; and is, further, in opposition to all the characters under which Christian experience is described in Scripture—as a race, a warfare, a wrestling against spiritual enemies, who certainly are not slain but at the last; a crucifixion which, though it surely *terminate* in death, is lingering. *Goode.*

12. I follow after, if I may apprehend.

That is, I have ta'en a grip of Christ, to see if I can win to that measure of holiness wherefore he has gripped me. Then he says over again, Think not so of me, that I am come so far on in sanctification; for I am not yet won to the mark that I would be at, but have many unmortified sins which hold me that I can not win forward. Yet I am laboring for it. I count nothing of anything that I have done, there is so much yet to be done. I reckon none of bygones, but I am reaching to those before me. I am assaying if I can win to the thing I would be at; and what is not done, I am minding to it. This is set down in the similitude of a race (vs. 13, 14). Then he bids all honest men be like-minded, and come on the same way that he is striving (v. 15). D. D.

Christ is all. All centers in this one point, that we enter into his fellowship and make it more and more our own; that we follow him in the entire renunciation of selfish and earthly interests, not shunning to partake in the fellowship of his sufferings; and following him also as the *Risen One*, experiencing in ourselves the power of his resurrection—the resurrection to an imperishable and divine life above sin, death, and nature, proceeding from him to us, inasmuch as he has apprehended us and we apprehended him. N.—Wouldst thou know if Christ has gripped thee to salvation? Thou shalt know it by this—if thou be gripping him for sanctification. If thou had rather be at holiness than anything, not caring what thou lose or gain if thou win to holiness, then be sure that Christ has gripped thee to salvation. Therefore from this gather strength to look unto Christ, for if thou be set to have all known sin purged out, Christ has ta'en a grip of thee. As Paul was first apprehended and then seeks to apprehend, so art thou. Christ has gripped and loved thee first, for all the work begins upon his side. Christ's aiming about us should be our aim also. Aims Christ at this—to have us strong in the faith, to encourage us against doubting, to give us victory over foes, joy in crosses? wherever he looks, look we.

13. What is Paul's behavior in this race? "One thing I do." Being sensible of short remaining in

the race, he sets himself to this one thing; he laid aside all that might hinder or divert him from this one thing, whereby he teaches us to lay aside every weight that presses down. The care of lawful business in as far as it draws from God, cast thou away the care, but do the business. In loss or gain, labor to further this one thing; and let all the points of thy calling and work be done as parts of this only necessary thing. D. D.

Forgetting the things behind. Paul meant only, "I don't count that these past efforts are complete, I don't build anything upon what I have done already; I recognize the mark of imperfection over it all, I fling it behind me and press onward." But we may widen the application a little further than that, and include all sorts of backward looking, as being (except under very special conditions and in a very limited degree) a positive weakness and impediment to a man in running the race that lies before him. For one thing, *time* given to such an occupation is time withdrawn from the actual work of life. Remembering always tends to become a substitute for doing.

Past failures remembered are apt to weaken. We are prone to take them as measures of the future. A. M.—*It is not good or healthy for a soul to brood over past sin.* Sorrow for sin is foundation work. Should a man be employed all his days in laying foundations, what could he do besides? Sorrow for sin too is *subordinate* work. Let a man stop there, what has he gained, what has God gained? Is not forgiveness, or, as it is called in the Bible, God's having our sins no more in remembrance, intended to put them in a certain sense out of our remembrance, and to aid us in thinking of better things toward which forgiveness opens the prospect? The natural course is from a right estimate of sin to sorrow for it, from sorrow to the purpose of new obedience. If I fail of this last, I fail of whatever is most important, and I surely shall fail if all my religion gathers itself on this one point of looking back upon my past life. No; better would it be, if possible, to forget all my past sin than *thus* to remember it *without remembering* also the gospel provisions and the gospel motives for sinners. T. D. W.—*We lose time in mourning the loss of time. We miss present opportunities while lamenting opportunities that are past.* And in nothing perhaps is the healthy bracing spirit of the gospel more conspicuous than in this—that when we are truly sorry for our sins we find that our sorrow is of a kind which worketh *life*; that while we are still mourning over our manifold offenses it virtually says to us, "Leave all those with Him who has made an atonement for the sin of the world. And now, with a lightened conscience and a cheerful trust, address yourselves to the work that lies before you."

From our very sins and errors and mistakes God evolves a gracious teaching for us so soon as we are able to hear it. The memory of the transgressions we deplore goes with us into the new life, no longer to threaten and affright us, but to deepen our love for Him who has redeemed us, to supply the dark shadows before which the lights of hope and joy burn with a more cheerful and welcome radiance. The recollection of past opportunities neglected or abused becomes an incentive to a more diligent use of the opportunities still vouchsafed us. *Coz.*

Past attainments remembered are apt to become food for complacency, for every vain confidence. We are tempted to look back to past religious emotions and experiences as grounds of our hope. These past emotions were good for the time. If you turn them into the occasion for complacent confidence, as to the present and as to the future, they are simply bad. "Forget the things that are behind." And still further remember, too, that these attainments in the past, like the failures in the past, do very often become practically to us the measure of our notion as to what we shall be able to do in the future.

So we ought to forget *past sorrows and joys*. The one is not without remedy, the other not perfect. "God is able to give thee much more than these"; to bring again blessednesses which surpass all those joys, and compensations which shall make the sorrows seem like a dream. Why live in the past, which, after all, was not so precious when it was a present, since we have God and Christ now as then, and in them may find peace for to-day and endless hope for every morrow?

"But how can I forget?" The apostle tells us, not by resolving to do it. Such efforts simply deepen the impression in our minds of the thought which we want to get out of our minds. The way is, as he says, "reaching forth unto the things that are before." That is to say, this wise oblivion is to be won, not so much by forcing ourselves to forget as by letting ourselves anticipate. If we will occupy mind and heart with that sunlit future, it will dim the past, however bright it may be. It is when we look forward and Christward, letting Him fill the future and the future fill our hearts, and it is only then, that we can forget the things that are behind. *A. M.*

14. The language is sensibly colored by the image of the Greek racer. The race is undecided. In the eager pressure of the struggle, the racer can not measure the ground which he has already traversed; he forgets those things which are behind. He reaches forward to those things that are before, "the bodily attitude exactly picturing the mental impulse both in its posture and direction." He presses forward toward the mark for the prize with

which He who had called him from heaven was at length to bless him. Reflect that, when Paul is writing, that entire section of his life which is described in the Acts of the Apostles is already past. Already he has written his greatest Epistles, he has founded his noblest churches. Nay more, he has even been caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words. Yet he forgets those things that are behind and reaches forward. For his life is true to the law which is obeyed by the highest as by the lowest of the true servants of Christ; it is a life of progress. *H. P. L.*—He had borne every kind of persecution, and shrunk from no kind of labor. Fasting and weariness and perils had been long familiar. He had long given up all pleasure, all honor, all ambition, to the one hope of serving the Master who had shone upon his eyes on the way to Damascus. Surely, if any man had any right to think he had done enough, it was such a man as this. Surely, if old age gives the privilege of repose on the way to heaven, the aged Apostle might claim the blessing of rest. Not so thought Paul. Forgetting all this, forgetting his labors and his sufferings, all that he had given up, all that he had done, now in old age he was still pressing forward for the prize which he did not consider that he had yet attained. *F. T.*—He is gazing on the heights yet to be scaled, the graces yet to be won in his secret soul, on the deepening, purifying, strengthening yet more perfectly that personal love for the Lord who had bought him from bondage and death. That love is in very deed the secret and the principle of his life. He is pondering how best he may win for and impart to thought, to affection, to resolves, new and ever-widening capacities; so that, as his life's stream shall ebb and his natural forces shall decay, he may be gifted within and for ever by a secret strength that had come from heaven. *H. P. L.*

In Christ Jesus. When we know that Christ must cause us run at the race, this makes us draw strength and courage from him, and run still till we come to the end. If we be hungry or faint in the race, he is bread of life to refresh; he is the truth to direct; the life to hold in our life till the race be run; the prize we run for; our swiftness, and strength, and assurer of attainment. So, when we look to the prize or vantage that is to be had at the end of our Christian race, we will care nothing for many crosses, troubles, in the top of the race, for all these further us. This reproves those who clog themselves so with the world that they can not run this race; therefore God many times pulls off such clogs from the backs of his own that they may run the faster. He holds the things of this world from them; and if, instead of these, he gives them sore hearts, by these he is only helping them a lift that they may run the faster. *D. D.*

15. **God will reveal also this unto you.** Paul refers to the great truth that the Spirit of God, which has revealed to them the light of the gospel, will also carry on and complete this his revelation in them; that He will continually advance them in Christian knowledge; and, where they are still in error and divided in opinion, there too will he yet make known to them the one true way. N.

18. There were many persons in the Church at Philippi, pure and noble as that Church was in the main, who professed to be Christians, but who showed by their deportment that they were real enemies of the religion which they professed. The "Cross of Christ" is an emphatic phrase to denote the Christian religion. As the sacrifice on the cross constituted the very essence of Christianity, the term came to denote the Christian religion itself. It is here used, perhaps, also to show more emphatically the apostle's view of the extreme heinousness of the offense, that, while they professed to be *Christians*, they were in fact the enemies of the *very peculiarity* of the Christian religion. Of their character, and of their fearful doom, he had told them often. He now again reminded them, with tears, of the melancholy truth. He knew that the way to reclaim the deceived and the erring was not to denounce them with harshness, but to entreat them with tears. A. B.

19. **Man fallen** is but man *inverted*; his love is where his hatred should be, and his hatred where his love should be; his glory where his shame should be, and his shame where his glory. The apostle says of unconverted men, "They glory in their shame." T. M.

20. **Conversation.** The actual sense of that word is *citizenship*. In the old English of the Bible, a man's "conversation" meant, not the mere act of his tongue, but the entire expression of his life in conduct, and so it revealed to what kingdom

his heart belonged. F. D. H.—**We look for the Saviour.** We speak only the language of truth and soberness, of experience and of Scripture, when we say that the heart of man, of all men consciously or unconsciously, is hungering and thirsting for that which only a Person can satisfy; not hungering and thirsting for a gift, for freedom from a felt evil or for possession of a desired good, but hungering and thirsting for the love of a Person; a Person who can be admired without the suspicion of exaggeration, adored without the risk of idolatry, trusted in without danger of disappointment, and reposed upon without the possibility of failure or of separation for ever. V.

21. "*Who shall transform the body of our humiliation so as to be conformed to the body of his glory.*" The scene of the transfiguration, the radiance of Saul's conversion, the symbolical apparition in Patmos, give us some idea of the body of his glory. And our body shall be like his, fitted to dwell amid the dazzling brightness of heaven. Our bodies shall cease to be animal, and they shall become "spiritual bodies"—etherealized vehicles for the pure spirit which shall be lodged within them. Hence our bodies should now be guarded against all vicious and groveling indulgence, such as are denounced in the previous verses. The body must now be esteemed as sacred, and kept free from contamination. *Eadie.*—There is not presented here a resurrection, as a restoration merely of the same earthly body in the same earthly form; but, on the contrary, a glorious transformation, proceeding from the divine, the all-subduing power of Christ; so that believers, free from all the defects of the earthly existence, released from all its barriers, may reflect the full image of the heavenly Christ in their whole glorified personality, in the soul pervaded by the divine life and its now perfectly assimilated glorified organ. N.

Section 308.

PHILIPPIANS iv. 2-23.

- 2 I BESEECH Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.
 3 And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and *with* other my fellowlabourers, whose names *are* in the
 4 book of life. Rejoice in the Lord alway: *and* again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation
 5 be known unto all men. The Lord *is* at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing
 6 by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.
 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds
 8 through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are*
 honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* love-
 ly, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise,

- 9 think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do : and the God of peace shall be with you.
- 10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again ; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want : for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content.
- 12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound : every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Notwithstanding ye have well done, 15 that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once 17 and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift : but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound : I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things *which were sent* from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well 19 pleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.
- 20 Now unto God and our Father *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen. Salute every saint in 21 Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you. All the saints salute you, chiefly 22 they that are of Cæsar's household. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. 23 Amen.

You may use a childlike confidence in coming to your Father in heaven ; you may unbosom before him your smallest disquietudes. With holy habit, hasten with everything to God ; not merely when the weightier class of calamities oppress you, but amid the perturbations of ordinary life, the collisions of business, the perplexities of the household, the mutations of health and spirits, nay the clouds of the sky, which too often carry darkness into the windows of the shrinking and sensitive soul. The very moods which make our wheels drag slowly through the daily task, the tempers of those around us, the petty disappointment and chagrin, the slight, the cross, the look of unkindness and the silence of rebuke—all are dispensed in season and in love. Happy is the soul which, having secured an interest in providence by securing acceptance in Christ, can roll its burden on the Lord. J. W. A.—Prayer, not only in the morning watch, but prayer sent voiceless from the heart from hour to hour, makes life hallowed, wakeful, and calm. It becomes beautiful with that beauty of God which eye hath not seen. It is not left comfortless, for prayer brings the Saviour to our side. We seem to feel his hand in ours in the passion of our endeavor to do right when duty and interest clash, and his grasp gives firmness to our faltering resolution. And prayer, continually lived in, makes the presence of a holy and loving God the air which life breathes and by which it lives, so that it mingles consciously with the work of the day. S. A. B.

2. EUODIA and Syntyche seem to have been Christian women of position and influence among the Philippian disciples. What set them at variance we know not ; but the dissension between them was unhappy for the Church, as likely to engender a factious spirit ; so the apostle makes direct appeal to them to "mind the same thing in the Lord." He does not look into the dispute between them. Enough that it was not a matter for which the harmony of the Church should be broken. The thing which Euodia and Syntyche ought to mind was the lowliness of Christ Jesus. D. F.

4. **Rejoice in the Lord alway.** He, the prisoner of the Lord, looking it may be to a near approaching death, finds reason to promise and to require an ever-abiding joy in the consciousness of fellowship with the Lord ; to make joy indeed the ground-tone of the Christian life, to make the whole Christian life a jubilee of redemption. But with this connects itself the requisition for a Christian

walk, since that joy in the Lord can not exist if the life of the Christian does not correspond to the law of the Lord, does not testify of fellowship with him. N.—Is there such a thing as an aptitude to delight in our nature, and doth the sanctification thereof entitle the joy of saints to a place among the fruits of the Spirit, and yet is the exercise of it to have no place in their hearts and practice ? Do not think you are permitted to extinguish or frustrate so considerable a principle of the divine life. Know and settle this persuasion in your hearts, that the rational, regular, seasonable exercise of delight and joy is matter of duty, to be charged upon conscience from the authority of God, and is an integral part in the religion of Christians. *Howe.*—Happiness in the sense of Christ's help is one of the great missionary powers on earth, second only to the power of love. And if we would ask how, without any ostentation, we can best obey our Lord's command, to let our light shine before men, so that they

shall glorify our Father in heaven, the answer is: Let all men read in your face the happiness of a Christian that loves his Master. Let them see in your unvarying cheerfulness the assurance of your faith, and the certainty of your hope, and the blessedness of your love. F. T.—It is because God *has* made an atoning sacrifice and set a great light of hope to rule our day that we can, every one of us, enjoy present good with a merry heart. The past is clear from sin, if only we believe on Christ; and, if we believe on Him, the future is all bright with promise. There is nothing, save the weakness of our faith, to impede our obedience or to jar the music of our cheerfulness into jangling discords of discontent. *Coz.*

5. Christianity forbids no necessary occupations, no reasonable indulgences, no innocent relaxations. All it requires is that our liberty degenerate not into licentiousness, our amusements into dissipation, our industry into incessant toil, our carefulness into extreme anxiety and endless solicitude. When it directs us "to make our moderation known unto all men," this evidently implies, that within the bounds of moderation we may enjoy all the reasonable conveniences and comforts of the present life. P.—Everything, in short, requires self-regulative prudence. Innocent in itself, it can be, and very often is, a gate that opens toward excess. We can not refuse everything that has perils in it, for then we should stand back from everything. Take amusements under the same law; not to be mastered by them, but to master them, and be just so much further advanced in all high, manly virtues. H. B.

6, 7. "*Be careful for nothing*" (it lies with us, therefore, to harbor anxieties or to dismiss them); "but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (that is, do *your* part simply and faithfully by recommending your wants to God); "and" (then God shall do his, the author of peace and lover of concord shall confer upon you the blessing, which by your own exertions you could never have attained) "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." E. M. G.—As he had made the whole Christian life a joy in the Lord, so now he makes it also a perpetual prayer. The two stand in intimate connection. Neither can exist without the other. He does not require the suppression of those wants, the sense of which begets anxiety, but that the sense of want should take the form of prayer. Thus will the burdened spirit become lightened, and care of itself will fall away. Yet, although the Christian has wants to spread out before God in prayer, and much to ask of Him for the future, he still finds in every situation enough

that calls for thankfulness to God, since all things work together for good to those who love him. Paul had already enjoined on the Philippians, afflicted as they were, to rejoice always in the Lord; and in this it is assumed that there is nothing unreasonable in the requirement that they should give thanks to God. The whole Christian life should be a prayer, the prayer of thanksgiving and of supplication, in the consciousness of grace received and the conscious need of renewed grace. N.

It was a choice saying of Austin, "Every saint is God's temple, and he who carries his temple about him, may go to prayer when he pleaseth." *Brooks.*—He who wishes for a clear head in pursuing business or study, for an understanding quick to perceive truth and a memory attentive to retain it, for ability to spend his time profitably—not wasting his energies in fruitless pursuits nor exhausting them in profitless speculations—will not find the time lost that is spent in prayer to that God who made the understanding, and who can give it just views of the proper proportion and value of things. A holy, humble, calm, submissive life, a life of cheerful piety, self-denial, and of practical benevolence, and a resigned and peaceful death, are the "open reward" of secret prayer. A. B.—Every mercy that is gathered by the hand of prayer is sweet; but those blessings which are received without either supplication or thanksgiving lack the precious perfume of a Saviour's love, and leave no fragrance in the ungrateful heart. *Brooks.*

7. This peace, as it has God for its author, Paul accordingly describes as a peace which is above all human conception. He who has this peace has more than he himself knows, more than he is able to set forth in thoughts and words. It is an overflowing heavenly repose, with which nothing earthly can be compared. The power of this peace, says Paul, will conduct the souls that live in fellowship with Christ safe and unharmed through all conflicts and assaults from within and from without. From this proceeds the ground-tone of their thoughts and feelings; this is their protection, which avails against all human care. N.—He gives himself most fully to those who ask for him secretly and often. He enters the soul when all the doors of sense are shut; he gives his benediction to each and all of its faculties: "Peace be unto you." The soul hears him, it sees him not; the soul feels him, yet as if insensibly; and his presence is itself that peace of God which passeth all understanding. Henceforth, enriched by his indwelling, the soul's desire is to desire nothing, its will to will for nothing, its care to care for nothing, its wealth to possess nothing, out of God, its one, its everlasting treasure. H. P. L.

8. The apostle is giving the outlines of an exemplary man, and accordingly seizes upon the fun-

damental elements of morality, and inculcates as duty everything in which these elements essentially enter as constituents. The first is truth—*whatsoever things are true*. He assumes the inherent rectitude of veracity, its indispensable and eternal obligation, and enjoins upon his readers to cultivate a spirit that shall reverence and exemplify this obligation in the whole extent of its application. He next signalizes the principle of self-respect, which saves a man from all that is little, or mean, or indecent in deportment—*whatsoever things are honest*; rather, whatsoever things are venerable or truly honorable—*whatsoever is calculated to command respect or deserves veneration and esteem*. Then comes the master principle of justice, or righteousness, without which all pretensions to integrity are vain and unmeaning. This is the solid basis of an upright character—*whatsoever things are just*. Next the apostle, as his Master had done before him, insists upon inward purity, the regulation of the thoughts, appetites, and affections, so as to prevent the contamination of aught that is unholy or defiling—*whatsoever things are pure*. Under this head are obviously included temperance, chastity, and modesty. The things that are *lovely* comprehend everything that is fitted to conciliate or express the sentiment of affection and esteem. It embraces such duties as benevolence, urbanity, courtesy, and sweetness of temper; whatever, in other words, springs from love in us and generates love in others. The things of *good report* have reference to those matters, indifferent in themselves, by means of which we can recommend our persons and our cause to the confidence and good-will of others. As there might be virtues which are included under none of these heads, the apostle, that he may omit nothing, extends his injunction to them. *If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise*—if there be anything which a good man ought to observe, anything right or praiseworthy, that can not be reduced to any of these categories—it is to receive the Christian man's attention. This passage, then, according to the interpretation which has been given, exhibits the model of character which Christianity proposes to its followers, and which their Christian profession exacts of them that they shall steadily endeavor to realize. It is the apostle's picture of an exemplary man. J. H. T.

From the evangelic history is drawn the *idea* of all that is beautiful in virtue; and from the preceptive parts of the Scriptures the explicit rules of morality, and from the doctrinal parts the impulsive principle of affectionate obedience. With a system of ethics, itself faultless as a definite rule, may it not be affirmed that a loving loyalty to such sovereign, at once Teacher and Saviour, embraces every motive that can tend to secure a correspondent moral

harmony and completeness in the conduct and temper of his subjects and disciples? I. T.—Honor, frankness, magnanimity, and the whole of that royal family, are the vigorous and graceful stock on which Christianity ingrafts its new and divine principle. Whatever moral beauty it does not create, Christianity claims and makes its own by adoption. These well-born virtues are orphans in the world till Christ shows them the Father. Something is greatly wanting in them till they learn from Jesus a filial submission and a holy trust. But separate them from self-confidence, and you liberate them for a boundless progress. Hallow them by a gospel penitence, and they rise into a new and an infinite dignity. They root themselves, then, in a firmer soil. That cluster of radiant traits which gain a uniform approval in the worldliest companies, which conform to the highest secular standard, never reach their loftiest growth till Faith crowns them with her unrivaled glory. On their own ground, then, and for their ultimate perfecting, these traits that men everywhere admire for their manliness must confess the sway of religion, and be sanctified by her doctrines. F. D. H.

Think on these things. There is one art of which every man should be master, the art of REFLECTION. If you are not a *thinking* man, to what purpose are you a *man* at all? In like manner, there is one knowledge which is every man's interest and duty to acquire, namely, SELF-KNOWLEDGE; or to what end was man alone, of all animals, indued with the faculty of *self-consciousness*? Revelation has provided new subjects for reflection, and new treasures of knowledge, never to be unlocked by him who remains self ignorant. Self-knowledge is the key to this casket, and by reflection alone can it be obtained. S. T. C.—It is not the bee's touching upon the flowers that gathers honey, but her abiding for a time upon them, and drawing out the sweet. It is not he that reads most, but he that meditates most on divine truth that will prove the choicest, wisest, strongest Christian. Bp. H.

9. In me, do. The perfect model we have in Jesus Christ, and in him alone; but God accommodates himself to a necessity of our weakness, and shows to us also imperfect models, which, while remaining far behind the Master, yet proceed greatly in advance of us, and in whom natural infirmity, without being destroyed, has been to such an extent restrained, that it leaves the field open for a Christian life which is real, complete, and victorious. Paul is one of those imperfect models, and the least imperfect, perhaps, which has ever been given to the earth. Monod.

10-12. Paul here gives us a model of the genuine Christian character in his demeanor in respect to external things. The Christian, in the power of

the Lord through which he is able to do all things, proves his independence of the world, and his supremacy over it, by his ability to endure joyfully all the privations which the Lord lays upon him, in the circumstances of his lot, in what is required of him by his calling. His soul, filled with the divine life, can not be bowed down by earthly want. Subjected to privation, he so much the more feels and proves his inward mastery of the world. But the Christian is far also from that self-imposed mortification of the flesh, in an imaginary spirituality, which nevertheless only serves for the satisfaction of the fleshly mind; for in the Holy Scriptures, all which does not proceed from the divine Spirit, all which comes from our own will, therefore every form of vanity and spiritual pride, is ascribed to the flesh. N.

11. To be content. Though men can not bring their means to their minds, yet ought they to bring their minds to their means, and learn content in every state. *Brooks.*—There is no condition so full and affluent, but content is and will be a necessary supplement to make a man happy in it. Content is the gift of heaven, and not the certain effect of anything on earth; and it is as easy for Providence to convey it without wealth as with it. Happiness and comfort stream immediately from God himself, as light issues from the sun, and sometimes looks and darts itself into the meanest corners, while it forbears to visit the largest and the noblest rooms. Every man is happy or miserable, as the temper of his mind places him either directly under or beside the influences of the divine nature; which enlighten and enliven the disposed mind with secret, ineffable joys, and such as the vicious or unprepared mind is wholly unacquainted with. R. S.

12. We need to become like little children, willing to let our heavenly Father guide us, without imposing upon him any conditions; willing to have much or little, to be learned or ignorant, to go or stay, to sit down or to rise up, to speak on or to be silent, to be on the mount of joy or in the valley of humiliation—to be anything or nothing, just as God wills. *Tauler.*—The greater the faith that lets the Lord take thought, the less the need. The less the faith, the greater the need. The greater the anxious care, the greater the pressing difficulty. The greatness of the need is no condition with the believer for the greatness of anxious thought. The believer says: "Everywhere, and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need." A. C.

13. Observe the order of the ideas: First, I can do all things. This is the expression of a resolution to work, to attempt all duty. He does not say, I will wait until I see and feel the breathing of the Spirit of Christ. No; I will arise and confidently

do every act which is commanded. Second, Through Christ which strengtheneth me. This is the expression of actual belief that Christ does strengthen. This is being strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. We learn this truth, then, as to the order in which these ideas arise in the mind of a Christian. We set ourselves about the work of piety. The Spirit of Christ makes this work effectual. J. W. A.—To be satisfying, or serene, or strong, our life must link itself through a mediator to God, and breathe by his inspiration. When I can begin every day, or undertaking, with the feeling, "I do it not of myself, so much as the Spirit through me," then I labor with more than my poor mortal ingenuity; the cunning of my fingers is the simple desire to be about my Father's business; and I can do all things through Christ strengthening me. Consciously, distinctly, resolutely, habitually, we need to give ourselves, our business, our interests, our families, our affections, into the Spirit's hands, to lead and fashion us as he will. "Without me"—it needs to be brought into the souls, and so into the labor and life, of the people—"without me ye can do nothing—without the principles of my religion—without the purity and justice and charity of the beatitudes—without faith in my person—without the spirit of my life and the sacrifice of my cross!" Nothing, literally nothing, in the final reckoning without our Lord! F. D. H.

15, 16. These poor Philippians willingly constituted themselves the apostle's treasurers; and, whether he was in the course of travel, as at Corinth, or in prison, as at Rome, their beneficence found means to reach him. This was their liberality—often and earnestly acknowledged—to Paul himself. W. A. B.

19. This was the language of gratitude, drawn forth from the apostle by the kindness shown him in a season of difficulty by the Philippian Christians. And it expresses most naturally the feelings of a holy soul under a sense of kindness. "I can not recompense you," it says, "but that gives me no pain—my God can, and my God will. Ye sent once and again unto my necessity; my God will send to you in yours. He will supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." It is our real need that is to be supplied, not our imaginary need. His supplies are to meet our necessities, not our wishes. Sometimes they may be in direct opposition to our wishes. Taking into view their character, their circumstances, and their high destination, the great God will so deal with the people he loves that he could not possibly deal with them more bountifully or more munificently. "No good thing will he withhold from them." They shall have everything which can contribute to their wel-

fare, and have it in the richest measure. C. B.—God's hearing and answering prayer in this life assures his servants that he is their true and faithful Saviour. How often have I cried to him when there appeared to be no help in second causes; and how frequently, suddenly, and mercifully has he delivered me! I have also seen wonders done for others by prayer more than for myself. And what were all those merciful answers but the fruits of Christ's power, faithfulness, and love, the fulfilling of his promises, and the earnest of the greater blessing of immortality which the same promises entitle me to? *Baz.*

22. A strange place, Cesar's household, to hold some of those saints. They lived in the palace of the Emperor Nero, not far from that Pretorian camp in which the bonds of Paul were manifest (1: 13). The soldiers of the Pretorian guard knew the imprisoned apostle well; and even some of the retainers of the cruel Emperor had been turned to the Lord. It was not required of them by Paul, nor did they feel bound in their own conscience to surrender their situations and withdraw from Nero's house. Better that they should shine as lights in that dark place, and walk as saints in Cesar's household. D. F.—Of the line of Roman Cesars—that race standing apart, of whom it has been well said that there met in them “all the heights and depths which belong to man, all the contrasts

of glory and meanness, the extremities of what is highest and lowest in human possibility”—the personage whom Paul speaks of here as having saints in his household was the sixth from the founder. Nero was a prince that as far surpassed others in infamy as Augustus did in royalty; a man who, if every soul besides himself in his household had been a saint, concentrated inhumanity and pollution enough in his person to have darkened all their virtue by the blackness of his unnatural crimes; a man that expended more ingenuity in contriving new modes of dishonoring humanity than most Christians have in serving it, and who earned the reputation of introducing into history as facts crimes so enormous, and combinations of wickedness so revolting, that but for him they would have been held too fabulous for the wildest fancy. In the household of such a man, and such a Cesar, it was that the apostle, himself now a prisoner at Rome, found “saints”—saints that he mentions with special honor when he sends their message in his letter to the friends at Philippi. There and then we can all feel that it was something heroic to be a saint. No wonder Paul thanks God that even then the faith of the *Roman* Christians was spoken of in all the world. F. D. H.

23. A sentence of commendation to the grace of Christ concludes this holy and beautiful Epistle, which tells us how to live and how to die, how to renounce and how to attain, how to endure and how to rejoice. “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.” D. F.

Section 309.

COLOSSIANS i. 1-29.

- 1 PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus *our* brother, to the
- 2 saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace *be* unto you, and peace,
- 3 from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God and the Father of
- 4 our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ
- 5 Jesus, and of the love *which ye have* to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you
- 6 in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; which is come
- 7 unto you, as *it is* in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as *it doth* also in you, since the
- 8 day ye heard *of it*, and knew the grace of God in truth: as ye also learned of Epaphras-
- 9 our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ; who also declared
- 10 unto us your love in the Spirit.
- 11 For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to
- 12 desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual
- 13 understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in
- 14 every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might,
- 15 according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; giv-
- 16 ing thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of
- 17 the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated
- 18 *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, *even*
- 19 the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every crea-
- 20 ture: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible
- 21 and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things
- 22 were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things con-
- 23 sist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from

19 the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence. For it pleased *the Father* that
 20 in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by
 him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or
 things in heaven.

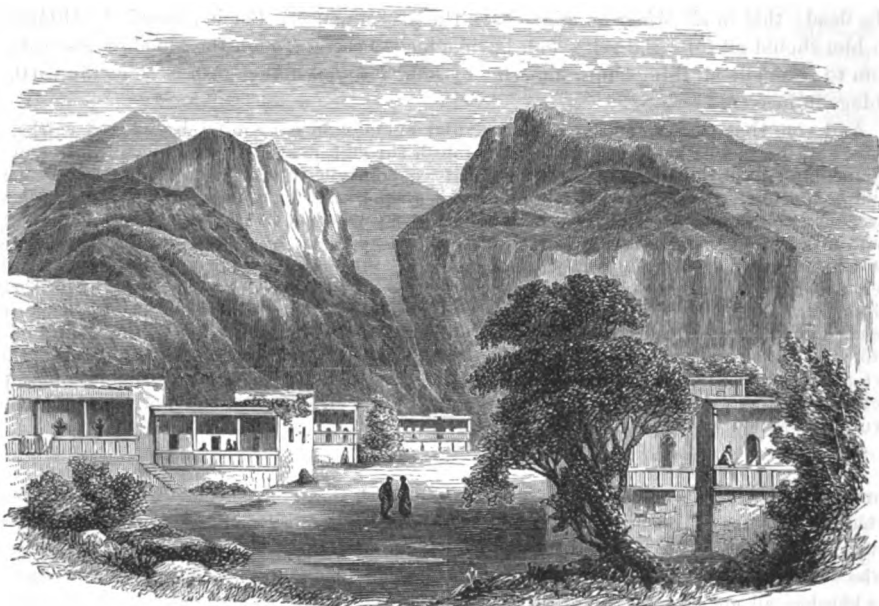
21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet
 22 now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and un-
 23 blameable and unproveable in his sight: if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled,
 and *be* not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, *and* which was
 preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;
 24 who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions
 25 of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: whereof I am made a minis-
 ter, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of
 26 God; *even* the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is
 27 made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the
 28 glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom
 we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may pre-
 29 sent every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labour, striving according to his
 working, which worketh in me mightily.

THE highest kingdom we can conceive to exist is one which aims at the holiness of all that belong to it; which has love for its common principle; which has for its head a Being who unites all human with all divine perfections; who has himself suffered for all the members of this kingdom and in their stead; and who will reign over and within them, not only for this life, but also for that which is to come. In such a kingdom all are bound together by the strongest ties for the highest objects. And such is the kingdom of which Jesus Christ is the Head and redeemed men the body. Beyond the idea of such a system, centering in such a Being, human thought is impotent to advance and the human heart has nothing real to desire; it satisfies all within us which is not sinful, and it is its crowning glory that it subdues our sinfulness itself. Such a system brings together, recapitulates all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are in earth; and by such a Person, "all things are reconciled to God, by him," the apostle says, "whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." When I think of the wonders of our Saviour's person and of the glories of his redemptive work, of all his love, his love for me a sinner, his love to all so great that he could die for all, and of that blessed and perpetual kingdom which his blood has purchased, and of which he is the ever-living Head: when, in some rapt moment, my heart can realize this in all its fullness, then, if ever, is my whole being filled with the profoundest emotions of awe, of gratitude, and of love. Never is the soul so conscious of its full capacities of thought and feeling, never does it throb with such unwonted and divine life, as when it has most fully grasped the majestic reality of the Christian faith as a wondrous and harmonious whole, tending to the highest imaginable end, and centering in that glorious Being who unites divinity with humanity and reconciles heaven with earth. In comparison with the fullness, fitness, and sufficiency of such a system, the most colossal structure which Pantheism ever reared is but a palace of ice, cold and cheerless, contrasted with that heavenly city, whose gates are pearl, whose streets are gold, thronged with a company innumerable and exultant, vocal with the melodies of the redeemed, of which the Lamb is the light, and God the glory. H. B. S.

EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS.

COLOSSE is a place that has not yet appeared in the records of Paul's labors. It was an ancient but somewhat decayed city of Phrygia, on the high-road between Ephesus and the Euphrates. It stood on the river Lycus, in the upper basin of the Meander, and in the immediate neighborhood of Laodicea and Hierapolis, cities by whose growth it had been eclipsed. Paul had heard with deep gratitude of the fruits of faith and love wrought among the Colossians by the word of gospel truth, which had come to them, as it was taught by *Epaphras*, a native of the city, who, having been to them a faithful minister of Christ, had now brought to Paul, in his imprisonment, the glad tidings of their love in the Spirit. In writing to congratulate them on their state, and to utter his prayers for their growth in

the knowledge of God, the apostle takes occasion, with his never-failing faithfulness, to warn them against evils about which perhaps it was a part of the mission of Epaphras to consult him. S.—Error of a very serious kind by degrees made its way into the little community at Colosse. The neighborhood, and indeed the inhabitants of the whole territory of Phrygia, in which it was situated, were prone to mysticism and fanatical superstitions. The heresy afterward known as Gnosticism, the teachers of which professed a higher gnosis, or knowledge, than others, was beginning to spread in various parts of the Eastern Church. We find it at Colosse in strange commixture with a leaning to Jewish observances. With these, and the superstitions with which they had become corrupted, the Colossian Gnostics also combined a vainly curious search into



Colosse.

the degrees and orders of angelic beings, and a worship of the great hierarchs of the heavenly kingdom. This curious mixture of opinions in the Colossian Church is accounted for partly by the fact, told us by Josephus the Jewish historian, that Alexander the Great sent, in consequence of the disaffection of Lydia and Phrygia, 2,000 Mesopotamian and Babylonian Jews to garrison the towns.

Between six and seven years had elapsed since its founding by Epaphras. During this time the Apostle had passed through all that eventful period of his life related in the last nine chapters of the Acts of the Apostles; had escaped the tumult at Ephesus; had crossed into Greece, and wintered at Corinth; had gone up to Jerusalem with forebodings which caused him to take a solemn farewell of the elders of Ephesus at Miletus; had narrowly escaped with his life from his enemies in the holy City; had lain two years in prison at Cesarea; had accomplished that long and perilous voyage to Rome. There he was now a prisoner, dwelling with the soldier that kept him in his own hired house, receiving all that came to him without let or hindrance, and laboring for the gospel of Christ by his tongue and by his pen. At this time Epaphras comes to Rome and brings him a report from Colosse. He spoke of their Christian faith, and love, and hope; but he also spoke of much which pained the apostle's tender heart, and roused his jealousy for the pure faith of Christ. Some time after the receipt of this report Paul wrote the Epistle. Probably he waited till near the time when Tychicus, whom he sent with the letter, was ready to depart. A.

The Epistle to the Ephesians and the Epistle to the Colossians import to be two letters written by the same person at, or nearly at, the same time, and upon the same subject, and to have been sent by the same messenger. Now everything in the sentiments, order, and diction of the two writings corresponds with what might be expected from this

circumstance. The leading doctrine of both Epistles is the union of Jews and Gentiles under the Christian dispensation; and that doctrine in both is established by the same arguments, or, more properly speaking, illustrated by the same similitudes. "One head," "one body," "one new man," "one temple," are in both Epistles the figures under which the society of believers in Christ, and their common relation to him as such, are represented. The ancient and as had been thought the indelible distinction between Jew and Gentile, in both Epistles, is declared to be "now abolished by his cross." Besides this consent in the general tenor of the two Epistles, and in the run also and warmth of thought with which they are composed, we may naturally look for many of the same expressions, and sometimes for whole sentences being alike; since such expressions and sentences would be repeated in the second letter as yet fresh in the author's mind from the writing of the first. *Paley*.

—Out of the one hundred and fifty-five verses contained in the so-called Epistle to the Ephesians, seventy-eight verses contain expressions identical with those in the Epistle to the Colossians. The kind of resemblance is just what we might expect to find in the work of a man whose mind was thoroughly imbued with the ideas and expressions of the one Epistle when he wrote the other. C.—The highest characteristic which these two Epistles have in common is that of a presentation of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, fuller and clearer than we find in previous writing, as the HEAD of creation and of mankind. All things created through Christ, all things coherent in him, all things reconciled to the Father by him, the eternal purpose to restore and complete all things in him—such are the ideas which grew richer and more distinct in the mind of the apostle, as he meditated on the gospel which he had been preaching, and the truths implied in it. In the *Epistle to the Colossians*, this divine Headship of

Christ is maintained as the safeguard against the fancies which filled the heavens with secondary divinities, and which laid down rules for an artificial sanctity of men upon the earth. In the *Epistle to the Ephesians*, the eternity and universality of God's redeeming purpose in Christ, and the gathering of men unto him as his members, are set forth as gloriously revealed in the gospel. In both, the application of the truth concerning Christ, as the Image of God and the Head of men, to the common relations of human life—and particularly of husband and wife, parents and children, masters and servants—is dwelt upon in such detail as to form a perfect code of Christian social morals. S.

3-27. After his usual manner, he congratulates the Colossians on the report which Epaphras has brought of their faith, and love, and of hope. With his thanksgiving for this he gradually and delicately interweaves his prayer for their further advance in knowledge and practice; and then almost imperceptibly approaches the great subject of their error and his anxiety. Admirable indeed is the way in which, through the long sentence extending from chapter 1: 9 to chapter 1: 20, the figure of our glorified Lord is made slowly to rise upon the mind's eye in all its love and majesty, care being taken meantime that every separate clause should do its own work in affirming His truth and impugning their error. Paul uses the very terms which they had adopted for their vain imaginations: as in the case of the word rendered "fullness" in chapter 1: 19, which is the "pleroma" of the Gnostic heretics; he overthrows by anticipation their practice of angel-worship by maintaining the absolute and exclusive preëminence of Christ over all created beings, and that through the blood of his cross. His blood has made peace; and in that peace they who were once God's enemies are included, provided they continue grounded in the faith, and are not moved away from it. To this end, he, the apostle, is laboring, carrying on, in his work for Christ, the afflictions of Christ to their completion, according to the stewardship of the mystery intrusted to him, which was Christ among them, the hope of the glory to come. A.

8. Love in the Spirit. Love, purified and made divine, rises and attaches itself to what is invisible and immortal; it becomes at once more tender and more holy, more intimate and more respectful; it loves God in every soul, and loves every soul in God. The believer who sees all things with the very eye of God loves, if we dare so express it, with the very heart of God. A. V.

9. Light is sent in answer to prayer. Paul is so convinced of this, that he not merely writes the Epistles according to the wisdom given unto him, but he tells the churches that he prays for them, that God may enlighten their minds, and give them spiritual understanding and knowledge. And so it is with all spiritual blessings. "Prayer brings all heaven before our eyes," and within our reach. A. S.

10. Religion is the likeness of God in the soul of man, and a Christian is an imitator of God; hence he is called "to walk worthy of God," to act as becometh one who professes to bear the divine image. He should be blameless and harmless; a fol-

lower only of that which is good; holy in all manner of conversation and godliness: a beautiful specimen of whatsoever is noble, dignified, generous, and useful. The world take us at our word; they accept our profession as the rule of their expectation; and although they often look for too much, considering the present imperfect state of human nature, yet to a certain extent their demands are authorized by our own declarations. J. A. J.

Fruitful. Our Saviour did not undergo all those grievous pains for us merely that we should cease to commit sin. It is not for that sluggish and inglorious virtue that he has prepared the glories of his kingdom. He did not come to reign over the dead; nor was it any part of his purpose to people heaven with drones and sleepers. As his life on earth was active, as he spent his days in working the work of him that sent him, so must all Christians do Christ's work; and they must strive to do it as cheerfully, as faithfully, and as constantly as Christ did the work of his Father. A. W. H.

Increasing in the knowledge of God. All life expands and comes to perfection with due nutriment seasonably administered. You may starve the divine life as well as choke it. A soul conversant with a few stereotyped thoughts which run for ever in the old grooves can never furnish a home for an expanding spiritual life. And there is nourishment for the souls that have been born into the divine kingdom. God has provided the amplest stores for the healthy development of the children He brings into his kingdom here. And, if our piety is to grow, we must resort to and feed on these stores, *all* of them. J. D.

11. Unto all patience. Patience is the Christian's suffering power; it is passive fortitude, an ability to suffer; and so apprehensive he is of their great need of a full and ample supply of this power, that he prays that they might be strengthened in this kind with might, with all might; that they might be even almighty sufferers; strengthened with a might according and corresponding to the glorious power of God himself. *Howe.*

12. We must always take such passages as seem to make the discipline of the world an essential part of the preparing of us for glory in conjunction with this other undeniable truth which completes them, that when a man has the love of God in his heart, however feebly, however newly, there and then he is fit for the inheritance. Christian people make vast mistakes sometimes in talking about "being made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," about being "ripe for glory," and the like. "God *hath* made us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," says the apostle. That is a past act. The preparedness for heaven comes when a man turns to Christ. A Christian at any

period of his Christian experience, if it please God to take him, is fit for the kingdom. The life is life, whether it be the budding beauty and feebleness of childhood, the strength of manhood, or the maturity and calm peace of old age. Remember that, though the root of the matter, the seed of the kingdom, may be in you, and that though, therefore, you have a right to feel that at any period of your Christian experience if it please God to take you out of this world you are fit for heaven, yet in his mercy he is leaving you here, training you, disciplining you, cleansing you, making you to be polished shafts in his quiver. A. M.

12, 13. Light—darkness. Hell is nothing but the orb of sin and wickedness, the hemisphere of darkness in which all evil moves; and heaven is the opposite hemisphere of light, the bright orb of truth, holiness, and goodness; and we do actually in this life instate ourselves in the possession of one or other of them. Take sin and disobedience out of hell, and it will presently clear up into light, tranquillity, serenity, and shine out into heaven. Every true saint carrieth his heaven about with him in his own heart; and hell, that is without him, can have no power over him. *Cudworth.*

14. It is certain that the satisfaction and substitution necessary for the atonement of man can take place only through something which is greater than all save God; and also, that he who undertakes this satisfaction and substitution must be greater than all which is not God. This is even God himself, who became man in order to undertake this satisfaction and substitution for us. *Anselm.*—**15.** Paul says not merely that our Lord *was* when on earth the visible image of God, but that he *is* so still. In Him only God manifests himself to man, and he is still visible to the eye of faith. C.—Notion, conception, image of God, we can form no other than that of Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the image of the invisible God, and in him is represented all the fullness of the Godhead until we shall know even as we are known. T. A.

The first-born of every creature. The difficulty vanishes when we attend to the reason he assigns for giving him that designation. No sooner has he called him *the first-born of every creature* than he immediately adds, “all things were created by him, and for him.” And, that no room might be left for the remotest suspicion that he himself might have been created, *eternally*, in the most absolute sense of that word, is directly ascribed to him: “And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” Surely he who existed *before all things*, must himself be without beginning, or from everlasting. Hence it appears that this designation, *the first-born of every creature*, is of the same import with that other form of expression which the apos-

tle useth (Heb. 1: 2), where, having styled him *the Son of God*, he adds, “whom he hath appointed *heir* of all things.” And both serve to denote that universal dominion which our Lord hath by inheritance, as the only begotten of the Father, of the same essence with himself, “the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.” R. W.

17. By him all things subsist. We shall never understand the Christian thought about God's universe until we are able to say, Preservation is a continual creation; and beneath all the ordinary workings of nature, as we faithlessly call it, and the apparently dead play of secondary causes, there are welling forth, and energizing, the living love and the blessed power of Christ, the Maker, and Monarch, and Sustainer of all. A. M.

18. Christ is more than the founder of the Church. He pours his own life into it. It is his body. Informing it with his Spirit, the Comforter, he took up a constant abode on earth, in the life of his followers. Laying down his Hebrew body, his soul emancipated itself from all national restrictions, and went forth to make its dwelling in every believing heart. So intimate is the union between the disciple and Jesus. “I am the vine, ye are the branches”; “I in you, and you in me.” F. D. H.

19. The prominent thought in Paul's mind through the whole Epistle is the elevation, pre-eminence, and all-sufficiency of Christ. He dilates still further on the qualification of our Lord for this glorious supremacy. “All the fullness was pleased to dwell in him.” “In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Deity bodily.” There seem to have been in the Colossian Church, even at this early period, speculations about a *pleroma* or plenitude of being, such as afterward became so rife among the Gnostics. From this *pleroma* it was supposed that various beings and agencies issued intermediate between God and man. Paul condemns these speculations, by claiming for the eternal Son all the *pleroma*, the true plenitude of Deity. D. F.—The Greek has only “Because he was well pleased that in him should all the fullness dwell.” A.

20. Our Lord is here declared to be the grand center, in whom the reconciliation between God and man, between heaven and earth, is effected. There has been separation, but in him is the adjustment; there has been antagonism, but in him is its reconciliation; the reconciliation of *all* things, of the highest antagonisms, of those between an infinite and holy God and his finite and sinful creatures, is here declared to be consummated in the peace purchased through the blood of the cross of Christ; for it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. And this is the evidence of the abounding fullness in Christ, that by him all things are reconciled unto God. There is something very wonder-

ful in the position here assigned to Christ, as the grand Reconciler of all things. No man can grasp it fully; but the more it is studied, the more marvelous, majestic, and elevating does it seem to be; the more does the sacred person of our Lord stand out alone, as the only center of the world, central between God and man, between heaven and earth. His fullness, in its largest sense, is made up of the fullness of heaven and the fullness of earth, gathered together, recapitulated, brought to its crown and its peace, in him who hath made of both one, breaking down the middle wall of partition. H. B. S.

23. Paul of course speaks here hyperbolically, meaning, the teaching which you heard from Epaphras is the same which has been published universally by the apostles. C.—We learn from the most authentic writers and the most ancient records that the gospel was preached within thirty years after the death of Christ in Idumea, Syria, and Mesopotamia; in Media and Parthia, and many parts of Asia Minor; in Egypt, Mauritania, Ethiopia, and other regions of Africa; in Greece and Italy; as far north as Scythia, and as far westward as Spain. P.

24. The Church militant has inherited the condition of Christ, humbled and suffering. Here below it represents its divine chief as Son of man, and will represent him as such to the end of the world. And, while Jesus Christ, the head or chief, reigns in the peace and glory of heaven, the body, which is the Church, remaining upon the earth, suffers upon the earth all that Jesus Christ would suffer if he were still upon the earth. In one sense nothing is wanting to the afflictions of Christ, and in another sense something will always be wanting; there will always be a residue to suffer until the end of the ages which are reserved to the Church and to mankind; the Church is nothing else than the Man of sorrows, perpetuated in the persons of those who are united to him. A. V.—We are told of self-sacrifice, that it is the law or moving power of Christ's kingdom; it is certainly far from being the law of natural life, yet it seems to stir the heart, even as beauty moves the senses, infallibly, by touching the spring of some hidden sure affinity, lying deeper than the nature with which it seems at present to war. Nothing belonging to Christ's kingdom tells much upon the world which has not in it the element of sacrifice and of Christlike willingness to participate in pain. Keble.

27. Christ in you. As really and more intimately than when men beheld his countenance, and listened to his words of love and power, Jesus is with us still. If it would strengthen you in your difficulties and struggles to know that he is near, to hear him speak, to take hold of his strengthening hand—know that he is nearer still than this. Every pure thought that rises in your breast is Christ's

suggestion; every holy desire and resolution the proof that he is at hand; every kindling of the spirit into devotion the unconscious recognition by the spirit of his heavenly presence near. Open the door of the heart to him, and the very mind and soul of Jesus will pass into yours; your spirit will be suffused with his; the very heart of Jesus will be beating within your breast. Caird.—**The hope of glory.** Heaven begun in the soul is the living proof that makes the heaven to come credible. It is the eagle eye of faith which penetrates the grave, and sees far into the tranquil things of death. He alone can believe in immortality who feels the resurrection in him already. F. W. R.

28. Let the Phrygians boast if they will of their ancient mysteries. Paul has a nobler boast. He deals with a glorious mystery of God, which is no gloomy secret, but a truth brightly revealed, viz., "Christ in you, the hope of glory." They who dealt with what the ancients called mysteries kept many of their disciples in a position of imperfect development, and admitted only a favored few to a knowledge of their *arcana*. On the contrary, the apostle, as a steward of the Christian mystery, proclaims his desire to "present every man complete," i. e., thoroughly initiated, enlightened, and established in Christ Jesus. D. F.

Whom we preach. CHRIST, as the personal center of the gospel, to whom all ancient prophecies point, whom the narratives record and the apostles demonstrate the Saviour of the world, the one divine Being who has taken upon himself our nature and life, and has manifested the Infinite by whom we are encompassed; Christ, as the author and patron of reform, the perfect example of all loveliness and virtue; in whom the poorest may find friendship, the guiltiest forgiveness, and the most defiled an inward cleansing; whom angels worship and saints adore, and whose coming to the earth has crowned its years and lands with glory, and yet who is interested in each of his followers, is their strength in temptation, their solace in sickness, and who comes hereafter to be their Judge; through whom men may be heirs of God, partakers of his nature, partakers of his peace, and after this life participants of his glory. He is to be preached as uniting in himself all the attributes of God, and reconciling them all with the rescue of the sinner; as offering himself with an equal appeal from the cross and from the throne; at once absolute in law and infinite in pardon; the Lord of the world and the Leader to the heavens. R. S. S.

The gospel story is a living and a life-giving story! It is not ancient only, nor modern only, but both, and of all time. It fills the amplitude of eternity; for its author is one who is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever"! It links us with Him who was before all worlds, and who will be, and be ours, when he shall have rebuked into annihilation the worlds his word summoned to exist! To preach Christ may then be to preach the facts of a history; but they are the facts of this hour no less than of eighteen centuries ago. What he has done, he is doing; to show him to you, the living impersonation of almighty love, as he walked among us of old, is to show him to you the same quickening spirit of love as he works among us now! W. A. B.

Section 310.

COLOSSIANS ii. 1-23.

1 For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and *for* them at Laodicea,
 2 and *for* as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; that their hearts might be comforted,
 3 being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding,
 4 to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom
 5 are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say, lest any man should
 6 beguile you with enticing words. For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you
 7 in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.

8 As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk ye in him: rooted and built
 9 up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with
 10 thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after
 11 the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him
 12 dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the
 13 head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision
 14 made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision
 15 of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith
 16 of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in
 17 your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, hav-
 18 ing forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against
 19 us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and hav-
 20 ing spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over
 21 them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy-
 22 day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: which are a shadow of things to come;
 23 but the body *is* of Christ.

24 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of
 25 angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly
 26 mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having
 27 nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Where-
 28 fore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in
 29 the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to
 30 perish with the using:) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things
 31 have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body;
 32 not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk ye in him,” might be taken as the solemn superscription of every Epistle. In all places where they are planted, the young churches are addressed as being made up of persons in whom a certain movement of divine life has been begun, but not matured, with a great deal yet to do, and a great deal to undo; graces to be gained, and faults to be fought down; knowledge to be patiently acquired, and active force to be indefinitely enlarged; Christians to be fed, that they may grow—ministered to, that they may be built up—“called to be saints,” indeed, because they believe, and because their relationships and aims are holy, but with a saintship inchoate, as it were; sure in its root, magnificent in its anticipations, and yet beholding the greater glory to be revealed only through a perspective of greater self-denials to be borne, and greater toils to be accomplished. F. D. H.

The imitation of Jesus signifies that we *should walk as he walked*, tread in his steps, with our hand upon the Guide, and our eye upon his Rule; that we should do glory to him as he did to his Father; and account these to be the integral part of our duty, which are imitations of his actions or his spirit, of his rule or of his life. We lead Jesus into the recesses of our hearts by holy meditations; and we enter into his heart when we express him in our actions; for so the apostle says, *He that is in Christ walks as he also walked*. J. T.

1-23. With their mystic philosophy, the Colossian errorists set a high value on sacred rights, especially circumcision (to which Paul opposes the spiritual circumcision of Christ, v. 11), and scrupulously observed the Jewish laws respecting food and yearly, monthly, and weekly feasts—shadows of

the true body which had appeared in Christ (v. 16). But with these Judaistic views and practices they associated a rigid asceticism, a mortification of the body. This in all probability sprang from a pagan view, which made matter and body in themselves evil, and redemption a gradual destruction of the bodily nature. The conception of the body as the work of the devil we find in all the Gnostic and Manichean sects. The Scriptures, on the contrary, make the clearest distinction between *body* and *flesh*, representing the former as the work of God and the temple of the Holy Ghost, but the latter as the perversion of a nature in itself originally good, as the selfish, sinful principle. Finally, these Colossian errorists practiced under the garb of humility the worship of angels (v. 18), instead of holding to Christ, the Creator of angels, the revealed Head of the Church, and communing with God through Him. This Judaizing Gnosticism the apostle meets with a positive refutation, setting forth briefly but comprehensively the doctrine of the *person of Jesus Christ* and his *redeeming work*. Christ is presented as the center of the whole spiritual world, raised above all created beings; as the mediator, by whom the world was made and is upheld; as the embodiment of all the fullness of the Godhead; as the head of the Church and the source of all wisdom and knowledge. The redemption wrought by him embraces heaven and earth, releases believers from outward statutes, from this perishable world, and leads them on gradually to the true perfection. P. S.

The enlighteners of that day and the enlighteners of this are brethren. Both alike would sacrifice to the received wisdom of the time that "everlasting gospel" which is of no time, or rather of all times, because it addresses itself to a nature unchanged in its wants and its weakness from the hour of the fall to the hour of "the new heaven and the new earth."

3. In whom are hid. The Christ whose gospel was invested with the simplicity of infancy was yet, it seems, the fountain of a wisdom deep as eternity; the preaching of his truth was to be, like himself, at once lowly and divine. It was to be a light which "the darkness comprehendeth not," valued not; and yet a "marvelous light," on which angels shrank as they gazed. Through all its earthly fortunes it was to meet an irreconcilable antagonist in that spurious wisdom it deposed. "The foolishness of God" was indeed far "wiser than men"; but to the mass of men it was to be "foolishness" still. The "treasures of wisdom and knowledge" were to be in Christ; but, as the text emphatically has it, they were to be "hid" there. W. A. B.

4, 5. Not being able to transport himself to the Colossians, and appear to them as a living epistle of Jesus Christ, Paul seeks to supply the want by the earnestness and heartfelt warmth of what he writes. He does all he can to make himself present by the power of his love; the impulses of his heart annihilate space; he brings the Colossians near to him by thoughts full of tenderness; he says he is with them in spirit. He has not only heard of the battle array (for this seems to be the idea) which the Colossians oppose to the enemy of their faith, he sees all this, and rejoices at it. He is at their head, or rather in their ranks; and, if they here engage in a struggle or combat, he, an invisible companion in arms, toils and combats by their side. A. V.

6. The principles which must guide us in the

prosecution of saintliness are the very same which must guide us at its commencement. So that the beginning is not a beginning merely, but a beginning which has a development wrapped up in it; it is a seed which has only to burst and shoot up in order to become a blade, and then consecutively an ear, and the full corn in the ear. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him," says the apostle, showing clearly that Christian progress proceeds in the very same method as the commencement of Christian life. E. M. G. —*Receiving Christ*, as Christ himself explains the act, even under the strong figure of "eating his flesh and drinking his blood," is *believing* on him; being "*drawn*" to him, "*coming* to him," and "*seeing*" him with that *spiritual* discernment which results from being "*taught* of God," and from having "*learned* of him." It is *relying* on his sacrifice and righteousness, *loving* him, and *obeying* his word. J. S. S.

Walk in him. Is it not in accordance with reason, and all the deeper feelings of the human heart, that, having found our one Master and Love, and having entered in by the strait gate on our journey to the pearly gates of the heavenly Jerusalem, we should now wish our life to be of one piece, real, sincere, harmonious, where everything is pervaded by the same spirit, so that, wherever our Lord finds us, in meditation, in our daily work, or in social converse, he may find us in loyal and obedient affection? A. S. —We want a Christ entirely one with all that is joyous, pure, healthy, sensitive, aspiring, and even what seems to us commonplace in daily life. We wish Him to share in our anxieties about our children; to come and hallow our early love, and bless with a further nobleness all its passion; to move us to quietude and hope within the temple of the past where our old age wanders and meditates; to be with us when our heart swells with the beauty of the world, and to give his sympathy to us in that peculiar passion; to whisper of aspiration in our depression, of calm in our excitement, to be, in fine, a universal friendly presence in the whole of our common life. Out of that will spring no diminution of reverence to Him, but rather that deepening of awe, that solemnity of love which arise toward one whom we have lived with daily, and never known to fail in the power of giving us the sense of greatness in things which seem the smallest, of making life delightful with the feeling that we are being educated through its slightest details into children of the divine Holiness. S. A. B.

8-23. There is scarcely a single topic in the Ephesian Epistle which is not also to be found in the Epistle to the Colossians; but, on the other hand, this important section has no parallel in Ephesians. The following paraphrase of this part of

the Epistle is given by Neander: "How can you still fear evil spirits, when the Father himself has delivered you from the kingdom of darkness and transplanted you into the kingdom of his dear Son, who has victoriously ascended to heaven to share the divine might of his Father, with whom he now works in man; when, moreover, he by his sufferings has united you with the Father, and freed you from the dominion of all the powers of darkness, whom he exhibits as captives in his triumphal pomp, and shows their impotence to harm his kingdom established among men? How can you still let the doubts and fears of your conscience bring you into slavery to superstition, when Christ has nailed to his cross and blotted out the record of guilt which testified against you in your conscience, and has assured to you the forgiveness of all your sins? Again, how can you fear to be polluted by outward things, how can you suffer yourselves to be in captivity to outward ordinances, when you have died with Christ to all earthly things, and are risen with Christ, and live (according to your true, inward life) with Christ in heaven? Your faith must be fixed on things above, where Christ is, at the right hand of God. Your life is hid with Christ in God, and belongs no more to earth." C.

8. Paul speaks of a vain philosophy and a human tradition. The former is natural reason proceeding without rule, and working on incomplete or false data; the latter is stupid prejudice, which, in estimating any opinion, throws in the dead weights of number and time. Paul wishes to guard the Colossians, and us also, against sophistry in the garb of philosophy, and against custom claiming the authority of proof. At Colosse heresy had this double character; it was a compound of subtle reasonings and unauthorized traditions. The effect of tradition in this discussion was directed not so much against the divine nature of Jesus Christ as against the all-sufficient and perfect virtue of his work as Redeemer. Tradition labored to bring back the Colossians toward the law, not certainly toward that spiritual law which, like a sage preceptor, would have brought them to Jesus Christ, but toward that law of works and observances which was far more fitted than any other thing to replace the idol of self-righteousness upon its pedestal. A. V.

Genius and erudition have made, of late years as of old, prodigious efforts to create systems of philosophy and ethics without the aid of wisdom from on high; and of late years, as of old, genius and erudition have signally failed in the attempt. A succession of men endowed with mighty powers, but voluntarily placing themselves eighteen centuries after Christ in the intellectual position of heathen sages, have, after all, only brought the thinking world to something worse than the hopeless skepticism in which ended the wondrous wisdom of Greece. System after system of philosophy has proved the impotence of man to discover the highest truths without divine guidance. *Bp. Jeune.*—Philosophy may expand our ideas of creation, but it neither inspires a love to the moral character of the Creator nor a well-grounded hope of eternal life. Philosophy at most can only place us upon the top of Pisgah; there, like Moses, we must die. It is the province of Christianity to add, "All is yours!" A. Fuller.

9. This is the endearing peculiarity of the gospel covenant, that all the blessings of it are secured

against forfeiture in the hands of him who hath already fulfilled the terms of the grant, and finished the work which was given him to do; who, as he died to purchase those blessings, so he ever liveth to dispense them; *One* who by nature is God as well as man; and in whom, as the word incarnate and Mediator of the covenant, *all the fullness of the Godhead dwells*, for enriching, to the utmost capacity of created beings, all the members of that body whereof he is the head. R. W.

10. We are complete in Christ. We receive in Jesus, once and for ever, all things pertaining to life and godliness. We are by faith one with him whom God has made for us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. As our righteousness is in heaven, so is our perfection Christ at the right hand of God. And our hope is that we shall be like him; that when Jesus comes again we shall be in body, soul, and spirit conformed to the image of God's Son, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. A. S.—Man's nature, need, and destiny are, so to speak, wrapped up in Christ. The secrets of our inmost being, the enigmas of our destiny, are revealed to us in Christ, and in him alone. Life is a maze; and we do not find the clew to guide us safely out until we find Christ. Life is an enigma; and the word that solves the enigma is Christ, the Word of God. When we know Christ, we know what we are, and are made to be; and out of him we grope in darkness and conjectures. On the other hand, when Christ is revealed to us, we are also revealed to ourselves. We do not know ourselves until we know Christ. Only in him can we unveil the secrets and scan the end of our destiny. We are complete in him. As an old proverb says, with a profound prophetic wisdom, "The secret of man is the secret of the Messiah." He stands alone majestic, yet full of love, with one hand reaching to the very heavens, with the other laying hold of our fallen humanity and raising it from the depths of despair to the beatitudes of redemption. And men in every age have scouted every other deliverer; and men in every age have received him, and him alone, as the Lord of their souls. H. B. S.

The head of all principality and power. So that, when his vicarious function shall have reached its completion, the union of the Divine and human natures shall continue to bear a relation to the social economy of the great immortal family in the heavens, and shall for ever subsist as the principle or the reason of communication and harmony among all ranks. The mystery of redemption has fairly brought all suppositions within our range; for the most amazing facts must still be inferior to this. We may say then that, when the eternal Word took upon him the nature of man, he embraced in one bond of love all intermediate orders. Without annulling real and native inequalities, with-

out degrading the high for the sake of the low, he brought in a law of relationship which at once obliges the highest to recognize a dignity in the lower, without presumption to take the place assigned them. Of Him it is said, that "the fullness of Deity dwells in him"; that "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him"; so that He, standing incomparably above the highest created minds, and yet condescending to maintain familiar intercourse with the feeblest, shall hold all extremes in amity. *Unison* is the word which at once characterizes true religion and describes the upper world. And of this unison Christ is the principle, both in heaven and on earth. Because in heaven "all things are subject to the Son," heaven is happy; and on earth man is not happy, because this is not the fact. I. T.

Speculations as to the relation of an incarnate God to the other innumerable regions of the universe need give us no real alarm. In the present state of our knowledge of the immensity of creation, it is almost impossible but they must arise; and more especially in reflecting on the great mystery which obliges us to contemplate Christ as at once the enthroned Monarch of the whole infinity of being, of suns and systems, and at the same time a Man, bound by ties intimate and everlasting to one little island in the ocean of immensity, one little speck, small in its own system and invisible beyond it. We can well afford to admit Him, not only by right of creation the natural, but even by right of Redemption the *spiritual* King of this multitude of peopled worlds. Our property in the affections of this infinite heart is in no respect limited by any supposition of this kind. Enough it is that the infinite and eternal God is on the stage of this earth manifested as *our* Redeemer; that, in the consummation of that redemption, he has assumed *our* nature into his own, and thus identified us with all his acts—enough is this to fix us with anxiety upon all he has done and still does. W. A. B.

11. In him they have the true circumcision, "that of the heart," which is effected by "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh," even "by the circumcision of Christ, i. e., the circumcision which Christ requires." 12. All this is most strikingly represented in their *baptism*, wherein they are *symbolically* (for *literally* they *can not* be) "buried and raised with Christ." And their death unto sin, their rising to a new life, as here *symbolized*, are *effected* "through their *belief* of that mighty working of God, which raised up Christ from the dead." 13. "And thus it is that, having been once dead in sin, in the uncircumcised carnality of their nature, God hath quickened them together with Christ, and freely forgiven them all their trespasses." This passage, besides implying the *symbolical* nature of baptism, distinctly favors the doctrine that, under the gospel, *baptism* holds the same place as a *seal* of the covenant of grace, with *circumcision* under the law. J. S. S.

12. **Buried with him in baptism.** An allusion to the ancient method of administering baptism. The immersion in water of the bodies of those who were baptized is an emblem of that death unto sin by which the conversion of Christians is generally expressed; this rising out of the water—the breathing the air again after having been for some time in another element—is an emblem of that new life which Christians by their profession are bound, and by the power of their religion are en-

abled, to lead. The time during which they remained under water is a kind of temporary death, after the image of the death of Christ; when they emerged from the water they rose, after the image of his resurrection, to a life of righteousness here, and of glory hereafter. G. Hill.

14, 15. In verse 14, "*took*" should be "hath taken"; and "*his cross*" "the cross." The translators fancied that the *subject* of the whole sentence was Christ, whereas it is God the Father. In verse 15, "having spoiled" should be "stripping off from himself," "divesting himself of," i. e., in the cross of Christ God put off from himself the ministration of angels, by which the law was given, subjecting them all to Christ, whose triumph they grace, as we also are said to do (2 Cor. 2: 14). Therefore, angels were no more to be regarded as mediators between God and man, nor the law which they ministered as binding. A.

14. His nails have fastened the handwriting which was against us to the cross; it no longer stands against us, but is a receipted bill, an evidence of satisfaction rendered. In old paintings divine Justice paints the first nail, divine Mercy the second, divine Peace the third. In Christ's wounds righteousness and peace kiss each other, and peace streams forth upon poor sinners. Through his wounds we are healed. *Besser*.—Sinners now need only come to him, and they receive the forgiveness of sins from him. The Son of man, in that he hath paid the debt of sin, hath now free power to forgive sins. The *handwriting* which was against us is now blotted out and torn; and there lie, duly sealed and ready for poor sinners, many hundred thousand charters and letters of grace. God can condemn no repentant sinner now; he can refuse forgiveness of sins to no poor sinner beseeching for mercy. *Hollaz*.

16-23. If they died to the world with Christ, why did they allow themselves to be debarred from the use of those things which Christ has cleansed for us, as though they were living in the world? Why did they tamely submit to commands not to touch, not to taste, not to handle? Why did they submit to prohibitions against marriage and commands to abstain from meats? Such things are not of the essence of our spiritual life, but belong merely to this perishable condition, and will vanish with it; and these meddling and petty ordinances about them serve to exalt pretended doctors and teachers into a repute for wisdom and heroism, because of their volunteering more than is required, and appearing to be humble and self-denying, but are not God's appointed way of honoring our bodies, the instruments of his glory, nay, are all so many feedings of carnal vanity, under the guise of carnal mortification. Such is the fervid and outspoken denunciation with which the great Apostle meets the ascetics and the ritualists in the Colossian Church. Such is his protest on behalf of the life of Christian liberty and Christian loftiness of aim and spirit. We can hardly conceive a more direct declaration of the apostolic mind on the controversies which in these our times agitate the Church of Christ. A.

18. "Let no man (though he wishes it) defraud you of your prize, persuading you to self-humiliation and worship of angels."

20-23. "If, then, when you died with Christ, you put away the childish lessons of outward things, why, as though you still lived in outward things, do you submit yourself to decrees ('hold not, taste not,

touch not'—forbidding the use of things which are all made to be consumed in the using) founded on the precepts and doctrines of men? For these precepts, though they have a show of wisdom, in a self-chosen worship, and in humiliation, and chastening of the body, are of no value to check the indulgence of fleshly passions." C.

23. The obedience of the Christian is a voluntary obedience, since it is the obedience of love. But to prescribe to one's self difficult duties in order to have the pleasure of obeying one's self; this will

worship, as Paul designates it, is not the worship of God, but that of an idol. This idol is the human self, which, broken in conscience by the cross of Jesus Christ, persists, broken as it is, in raising itself, and rises the higher the lower its fall. Perfidious suggestions of the indestructible enemy! how many souls have ye not carried back to the world by the path of an extraordinary devotion and refined piety; led back to the world merely by your having subjected them to the illegitimate empire of self! A. V.

Section 311.

COLOSSIANS iii. 1-17.

- 1 If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth
- 2 on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.
- 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, *who is* our life,
- 4 shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members
- 5 which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence,
- 6 and covetousness, which is idolatry: for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on
- 7 the children of disobedience: in the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.
- 8 But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication
- 9 out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with
- 10 his deeds; and have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image
- 11 of him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircum-
- cision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all.
- 12 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, hum-
- 13 bleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another,
- 14 er, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye. And
- 15 above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace
- of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thank-
- 16 ful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing
- one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to
- 17 the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus,
- giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

THE reputed virtues of human society are no education for God, inasmuch as they all more or less lack that one essential character without which all virtue is profitless for heaven, and would be useless in heaven—the habit of acting from the love and in obedience to the will of God. Joyful obedience must be the happiness of heaven; joyful obedience must, therefore, be the holiness of earth. No vaunted virtue wrought *out* of God, no amiability of manner, gentleness of temper, fidelity of friendship, honor, integrity, decorum, no virtue that leaves the heart a rebel to its Maker, or forgetful of Him, can dispose for heaven, or “make meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.” How, then, shall we produce the heavenly mind which fits for a heavenly world? Clearly and solely, by cultivating affections that rest in heaven itself and its God; and by devoting our *earthly* affections, not merely as their own instinctive impulses lead, but also, as far as may be, in felt and constant conformity to his appointment. *Religion*, as distinct from the virtues of society, the graceful amenities of ordinary life—*Religion*, which fixes the heart wholly and permanently on God himself—it is no enthusiasm, no idle speculative illusion, to affirm that this alone can meet the requirements of a creature formed for God and his eternity. Faith, and hope, and love, which are the great organs or exercises of religion, are the instruments which, gradually uniting the heart to the spiritual world and its Lord, separate it from earth, predispose it for heaven, win the will to his service, spiritually *disembody* the soul before its time, and train it for the fellowship and the heritage of the saints. Through these the pathway lies to heaven, and through these alone. W. A. B.

1-14. According to Paul, the Christian life in man originates in resurrection with Christ, and is braced and purified by the consciousness of such resurrection. Since believers in Christ are, in a moral and spiritual sense, raised with Him, they are bound to seek the things which are above, and to mind those things rather than objects which are beneath. Duties on the earth are, of course, to be fulfilled, and the occupations of common life must be pursued; but the habitual preponderance of thought and affection is due to objects that are heavenly. The Christian is to be—not by fits and starts, but by habit and repute—conversant with heaven. His life is properly a heavenly life, “hid with Christ in God.” It is only “members” that he has on the earth—not his life, and certainly not his treasure. This position conferred on believers through grace is thus used as an argument for personal endeavors to be holy. Ye have died; “therefore put to death your members on the earth.” Carry out the principle of the extinction of the life in sin, as respects your members in detail, the past instruments and servants of unrighteousness. Ye have put off the old man, and put on the new; therefore put on in detail the attributes of Christian character. These properties the apostle enumerates, giving great prominence, as was his wont, to sweet and lowly virtues, and assigning the highest place to love as “the bond of perfectness.” D. F.

1. The resurrection of Christ, his restored and exalted life, touches, in various ways, and at all points, *the spiritual life of Christian men*. Christ's resurrection is typical of man's new life; for, as he was raised from the dead, so we are to walk “in newness of life”—“as those who are alive from the dead” too. Then, his *present condition*, consequent on his rising from the dead, is to be felt as a motive to spiritual-mindedness. The raised, exalted, living Christ is to be the life of our life, the source of our holiness; even as the dying Christ is the death of our sins. Believing in him, he lives in us. Still further, the resurrection of Christ is at once the pledge and model of our own. His present condition of glory and blessedness is that to which we are to be conformed. T. B.

Risen with Christ. He has already been exalted above the heavens, yet we are not separated from him. Be this our meditation on earth, that we are reckoned as in heaven; and let us labor that, as our Lord ascended with our own body into heaven, so we, as far as we can, may ascend after him in hope, and follow him in heart. Let us ascend after him both in our affections and in our advances toward perfection. *Aug.*—The risen life has its clearly defined obligations no less than its glorious privileges. Those who have in very deed shared in Christ's resurrection-life should seek things above the

level of that tomb which, with him, and through him, they had left behind. H. P. L.—The weaknesses, the littlenesses, the incoherences of daily life, so long as they are felt and struggled with, are evidences of a victory yet to come. They bear witness to us that we can not rest till we rise to the level of Him in whom we live. They never cease to teach us that the end to which we are called is not now or here. B. F. W.—Only he has found the full, controlling, blessing, quickening power that lies in the thought of the future, and in life directed by it, to whom that future is all summed in the name of his Saviour. Whatever makes a man live in the past and in the future raises him; but high above all others stand those to whom the past is an apocalypse of God, with Calvary for its center, and all the future is fellowship with Christ and joy in the heavens. Having these hopes, it will be our own fault if we are not pure and gentle, calm in changes and sorrows, armed against frowning dangers, and proof against smiling temptations. A. M.

2. We ought not to be satisfied till we find in ourselves a refinedness from this earth, a thorough purgation from all undue degrees of sensual inclination and affection, an aptitude to spiritual exercises and enjoyments, a worshiping posture of soul, formed to the veneration of the eternal wisdom, goodness, power, holiness; profound humility and abnegation of ourselves, a praiseful frame of spirit much used to gratulations and thanksgivings, a large and universal love imitating as much as is possible the divine, a proneness to do good to all, a steady composure and serene temper of spirit, every way suitable to the regions where nothing but perfect purity, entire devotedness to God, love, goodness, and peace shall have place for ever. *Hove.*

3. **Our life is hid with Christ in God.** God is the author of the vital action, Christ is the vital center, the very heart of the system, from whom and in correspondence with whom every pulsation of spiritual being is made. They that are Christ's feel that they are in the exercise of grace only so long as Christ lives in them: that the true method of cultivating piety is to cultivate a sense of dependence on Christ; that, if we desire to grow in grace and to glorify God, we must look above and beyond all means, all instrumentality, all ordinances, to Jesus Christ as our living head. J. W. A.—The loftier the exaltation we ascribe to the Saviour in his divineness, the more intimately always we find him related to the sympathies of our humanity. The most reverential view of God manifest in the flesh is the largest producer of daily holiness as well as the dearest to the heart. And thus it is proved, as in many instances besides, that what is most profoundly spiritual is also most directly practical. For the most intensely practical are the vital,

comprehensive truths that lie deep among the springs of action and emotion, and bind us to the invisible. Yes; whatever reaches down to the sources of our being, whatever changes the great central currents of our purpose, whatever transfigures our conduct, regenerates our nature, and thus moves us to a diviner practice every way—that is practical. When our faith does this, it is a practical faith. And by no appeal does it lay a firmer hold on honest convictions, or animate holier energies, than when, by the Spirit's favor, it shows us the beauty and the strength of that "life that is hid with Christ in God." F. D. H.

3, 4. The hidden life has its root and birth in death. "Ye have died with Christ, and your life is hid with Christ in God." The hidden life has its consummation and crown in the *second advent* of our Lord: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Do you think that, with such a starting-point as baptism into the Saviour's death, and with such a goal as the marriage supper of the Lamb, Christians can love the world and the things of the world? A. S.

In verse 4, "*shall appear*" ought to be "is manifested," and "*appear*" the second time, "be manifested." A.—**Christ our life.** Here is my life, namely, the birth of this man, the righteousness of this man, the blood of this man, the death and resurrection of this man, the ascension and intercession of this man for me, and the second coming of this man to judge the world in righteousness. Here is my life, if I see this by faith without me, through the operation of the Spirit within me: I am safe, I am at peace, I am comforted, I am encouraged; and I know that my comfort, peace, and encouragement is true, and given me from heaven by the Father of mercies, through the Son of the Virgin Mary—the Son of man, the Son of God, the true God. *Bun.*—Christ is our life in a far higher sense than the opener of a free way of access to God through the rent veil of his flesh. He is the perennial source of that new life within, which consists in communion with God, likeness to God, in gratitude, in love, in peace, and joy, and hope—in trusting, serving, submitting, enduring. This life hangs ever and wholly upon him; all good and gracious affections, every pure and holy impulse, the desire and ability to be, to do, to suffer—coming to us from him to whose light we bring our darkness, to whose strength we bring our weakness, to whose sympathy our sorrow, to whose fullness our emptiness. W. H.

5. To mortify is to make dead, to destroy. "Ye are dead," therefore let your members on earth be dead: "fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection," etc. As if he had said, By becoming Christians ye engaged to be dead; and therefore see to it

that ye are so. But what he requires us to make dead or to destroy are our evil affections and desires, and these only. T. A.

5-10. Sanctification is not mending the old nature which we inherit from Adam; it is cultivating and developing the new nature which we receive from Christ. The old nature can not be improved; it is under a ban and a curse; it is to be crucified with its affections and lusts, and mortified in its members; we are to put it off, as we put off a worn-out and defiled garment; nay, we are to count ourselves dead to it, as if it had no more relation to us, since we are alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. The soul is like a house of which strangers have taken possession, and lord it cruelly over the owner. What shall you do for your liberty? Can you change the strangers' hearts and make them other men, so that you would be content or even glad they should remain? That is impossible. Pride will never be humble, lust will never be pure, selfishness will never think of a neighbor's interests, envy will never exult in a neighbor's joy. "Old inbred habits will make resistance; but by better habits they shall be entirely overcome." The old affections must be expelled by new; the evil overcome with good. A. W. T.

Some besetting sin, long denied indulgence, against which we have prayed, and watched, and wrestled, appears to be dead: the "old man" hangs motionless, to appearance lifeless, on the cross: when, like the convulsive movement of a body from which bystanders supposed the life was gone, in some bad word, or deed, or thought, the "old man" lives again, and the "new man" learns to his sorrow that the flesh he had crucified is not yet dead. The entire death of sin—a consummation devoutly to be wished for—is a blessing reserved for the close of life. We can not indeed be too diligent in mortifying sin, in crucifying every limb and member of the flesh. Still the question is not whether sin is altogether crucified, but is crucified at all? is whether we are delivered, though not completely, from its power? is whether it has ceased to *reign*, though it has not ceased to *remain* within us? It is slow work dying on a cross, but slower still dying to sin. However, take comfort, Christians; God will perfect that which concerneth us—a hope which, thanks be to God, shows the believer a Father's reconciled countenance shining on him through the darkest cloud; a hope which will enable you, while confessing with Paul, "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do," in almost the same breath to exclaim, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord . . . there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." T. G.

10. The simple yet grand truth is, that man was created "in the *image* of God," without any addi-

tional supernatural investment; "in the likeness of God," without any added *impartation* of God; what we understand by a truly and a merely perfect man. By the fall his nature became *changed* from perfect to imperfect, from holy to sinful, from the likeness of God to a loss of that likeness. And now, what Christ seeks in coming into the world, surrounded with the lights of revelation and the teachings of the Spirit, is to restore man to the state from which he is fallen; to *change* his nature with a reverse movement from imperfect to perfect, from sinful to holy, from the loss to the repossession of *likeness* to God. We do not need a mysterious reinvestiture with the *Divine* nature, but a Scriptural restoration to the perfection of our *own* nature. We need, *not* a virtually miraculous *addition*, but a spiritual though intelligible *change*; a change inscrutable in its *mode*, but most intelligible in its *effects*; wrought by the Spirit of God in the secrecy of his goings, yet distinctly cognizable by us in the results of his workings: still, a *mere* change, and not an *addition*. This change is all that we can have; and it is *enough*, as well as all that is *possible*. As the issue of our *literal* resurrection will be to "fashion our vile *bodies* into a *likeness* to Christ's glorious body"; so the issue of this *spiritual* resurrection is, to refashion our fallen *souls* into a *likeness* to his more glorious Godhead. J. S. S.—God had no rest from the creation till he had made man, and man can have no rest in the creation till he rests in God. The human spirit never rises to its original glory till carried up on the wings of faith and love to its original copy. *Charnock*.

11. For "*neither*," better "no such thing as"; and it ought to be "Greek and Jew," "circumcision and uncircumcision." The apostle says that there is no *such thing* as "Greek and Jew," i. e., the distinction between them. The last four have no copula, and should stand, "barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman." A.

Christ is all. "Christ—in the divinity of his nature; Christ—in the perfection of his atonement; Christ—in the prevalence of his intercession; and Christ—in the love of his heart, and in the power of his arm, is the rock on which I rest; and now, death, do your worst." (Thus spake John Rees on his dying-bed.)

12. For "*bowels of mercies*," read "an heart of pity." A.—**Kindness.** Instead of absorbing everything toward yourself, and making all things minister to the great Self-idol, you will become expansive and forthcoming. You will be considerate of the interests and character, the comfort and feelings of others, and to do good and communicate you will never forget. **Humbleness of mind.** This is the grace which lies prostrate at God's footstool, self-abasing and self-disparaging, amazed at God's

mercy and abhorring its own vileness. **Meekness.** The grace which, from beneath that footstool, lifts up a candid and confiding eye, accepting God's smile of Fatherly affection, and adoring those perfections which it can not comprehend. And "long-suffering, forbearance, forgiveness," those self-denying and self-conquering graces, which not only give none occasion of offense, but are not easily provoked—those magnanimous graces, which will strive to overcome evil with good, to live it down and love it down, and which, if all effort should fail, will not be lost, but come back in peace and joy to your own bosom. *Hamilton*.

13. **Forgiving.** If it is in us to forgive, in any real and properly Christian sense of the term, it will not be that we can somehow be gotten down to it, by the expostulations of brethren, nor that we only do not expressly claim a right to stay in our grudge, or the hurt feeling raised by the wrongs of our adversary, till he comes to us in a better mind. Perhaps he ought to come, or to have come long ago, but that is nothing as regards our justification. If we know how to forgive, we shall be like Christ our Master, we shall be giving ourselves for our adversary, circumventing him by our prayers, contriving ways to reach his tenderness and turn the bad will he is in, taking pains that we may get him into the right again. H. B.

15. The peace with God procured to the believer through Christ, the peace which has its life in God, of which they are assured in union with him, that peace, amid all fluctuation, is the controlling, the determining element in the Christian life. N.—We make a great mistake when we say there is strength in passion, in the exhibition of emotion. The real strength and majesty of the soul of man is calmness; "the peace of God" ruling; the word of Christ saying to the inward storms, "Peace!" and there is "a great calm." From the apostle's words we infer that peace is attainable, and within the reach of our own wills; that if there be not repose there is blame; if there be not peace, but discord in the heart, there is something wrong. There is a peace that will enter there if you do not thwart it; there is a Spirit that will take possession of your soul, provided that you do not quench it. In this world we are recipients, not creators. In obedience and in gratefulness, and the infinite peace of God in the soul of man, is alone deep rest and repose. F. W. R.

16. **The word of Christ.** The literal word of Christ is one of the most wonderful things that ever has been in the world. All at once, up in Galilee, a silent man—for he was then known only as a man—began to speak. Amid friends, and foes, and crowds of thoughtless, indifferent people, the speaker continued to speak; and as he spake the word grew

and multiplied, and became increasingly a living spiritual force in the life of the whole nation. And he did all that was done by his word. The word of Christ dwelt in this world richly before it was committed to writing. When this Epistle was written they had not the gospels. They had, as yet, little, comparatively, even of the apostolic writing; but they had the word of Christ in its newness, its energy, its vitality. A. R.—The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, and the person and work of Immanuel are the great burden of the Bible. And to regenerate souls it is this which makes the Bible dear. It is the word of Christ, concerning himself and from himself, the word of which He is the beginning and the ending, the all in all. *Hamilton.*

Dwell in you. Let it inhabit you. Let it make house and home of you. Yield yourselves up as sacred dwellings, to be occupied and filled with the word of Christ. This means that, willingly, other tenants shall not be suffered to remain unless they are in full agreement with this chief dweller. The word of Christ touches and transmutes everything else. All thoughts are ruled, all cares are hallowed by it, and all enjoyments made safe, and pure, and good. It must be this much, or it can be nothing vital. Christ's word in the morning—selfish prudence all through the day? That will not do. Christ's word for the religious service—the word of man for the mercantile transaction? Surely not. Christ's word for sickness, for sorrow, for death, for the funeral, the grave—other words than His, any that are most pleasant, for times of health and happiness? That never can be. Let the word of Christ dwell in you!

"Richly"—in great abundance and readiness; in its best forms, in its sweetest fragrance, with all its refreshing, luminous, guiding powers. Fill yourself with it. Open all the doors that it may come in. The word is nigh thee. It is in thy mouth and in thy heart, if only thou wilt, if thou wilt but let it dwell in thee richly. It is everything to have a real faith in Christ, and in his blessed gospel, and a real sense of the love of God therein, to be answered by our love and obedience for ever. Life with some has few turns and changes, inward or outward; but, with Christ and his word in the heart, it will be in the main what life ought to be, a passing from darkness into light, a growing through grace into glory. A. R.

This verse should run thus: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another" (this is the highest use of speech, as it looks toward man) "in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing thankfully in your hearts to the Lord" (this is the highest use of speech, as it looks toward God). These two ends,

then, are *edification* and *praise*. And the minstrelsy of psalms and hymns and spiritual songs has often brought the Christian out of a state of mind in which prayer seemed a labor and a drudgery, if not an impossibility, into that calm and holy frame in which he could again put forth spiritual energies, and has found himself able to renew his interrupted converse with God. E. M. G.

Hymnody actively educates, while it partially satisfies, the instinct of worship; it is a less formal and sustained act of worship than prayer; yet it may really involve transient acts of the deepest adoration. But, because it is less formal, because in using it the soul can pass, as it were, unobserved and at will from mere sympathetic states of feeling to adoration, and from adoration back to passive although reverent sympathy, hymnody has always been a popular instrument for the expression of religious feeling; and from the first years of Christianity it seems to have been especially consecrated to the honor of the Redeemer. H. P. L.—Good hymns are concentrations of the deepest experience and ripest thought, crystallized into the most beautiful forms of language. A hymn should be a concentrated sermon, a compressed force entering the mind, there to put forth expansive power, acting with holy pressure upon heart and life. *Havergal.*

17. "Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." Do all, that is to say, for the sake of the character, as revealed to you, of him whom you love; do it all, giving thanks unto God and the Father by him. And then, in the parallel passage at the close of the same chapter, "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily," that is one principle; and next, as the foundation of all real heartiness, do it "as to the Lord." If you want to *live* in this world, doing the duty of life, knowing the blessings of it, doing your work heartily, and yet not absorbed by it, remember that the one power whereby you can so act is, that all shall be consecrated to Christ and done for his sake! The burdens of life are too heavy; and its duties are too hard, for any man to bear by himself alone. No one who plunges himself into the affairs of the world without God can easily escape one of two sad alternatives. Either he is utterly wearied and disgusted with their triviality, and dawdles out a languid life of supercilious superiority to his work, or else he plunges passionately into it, and, like the ancient queen, dissolves in the cup the precious jewel of his own soul. There is but one escape, and that is to have Christ Jesus for our Lord, to make his will our law, his love our motive, his pattern our example, his glory our end. A. M.—There is no single sphere of personal, household, political, or social life which can be excepted from the influence of this highest rule of life. "To him

are all things, to him be the glory." And no one will say that a life in which everything directly or indirectly leads toward this great aim, can be very narrow, anxious, or monotonous. On the contrary, the path indicated by Paul is at once the way of true liberty and the most exalted happiness. Nothing is permitted through which his rule of life would be obliterated; but, on the other hand, all is free, in due time and measure, which really can be done in the name of Christ, and to the glory of God, so far as it is not forbidden by some higher duty. Thus this prescription breathes a spirit of liberality and gladness, by which all incongruity between God's worship and every-day life finally disappears, and even the meanest occupation is stamped with the ennobling impress of glory to God. *Van O.*

Section 312.

COLOSSIANS iii. 18-25; iv. 1-18.

18 **WIVES**, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands,
20 love *your* wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey *your* parents in all things:
21 for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to *anger*, lest
22 they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh; not
23 with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever
24 ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall
25 receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth
wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.
1 Masters, give unto *your* servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a
2 Master in heaven. Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; withal
3 praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery
4 of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.
5 Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech *be*
6 always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every
man.
7 All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, *who is* a beloved brother, and a faithful
8 minister and fellowservant in the Lord: whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose,
9 that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts; with Onesimus, a faithful and
beloved brother, who is *one* of you. They shall make known unto you all things which *are*
10 *done* here. Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barna-
bas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;)
11 and Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only *are* my fellow-
12 workers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me. Epaphras, who
is *one* of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in
13 prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. For I bear him
record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them *that are* in Laodicea, and them in Hie-
14 rapolis. Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you. Salute the brethren which
15 are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house. And when this
16 epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and
17 that ye likewise read the *epistle* from Laodicea. And say to Archippus, Take heed to the
18 ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it. The salutation by the
hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

THERE are careless minds which have no spring of thought in themselves, which are quiet and, in truth, empty till some outward objects come to engage them. This state finds exactly all that it desires in the presence or the near hope of outward objects; the mind lives in its daily pursuits and companions and amusements. What impressions have been once produced are soon worn away. There are other minds which enter keenly into everything presented to them by their outward senses, and which, when their senses cease to supply them, have an inexhaustible source of thought within, which furnishes them with abundant matter of reflection or of speculation. To such a mind doing is most delightful, whether it be outward doing or the mere exercise of thought; either supplies alike the consciousness of power. Where, then, is there room for the less obtruding things of God? Into that restless water another and another image is for ever stepping down, pushing aside and keeping at a distance the sobering reflections

of God and of Christ. In our careless state of mind the call to us is to watch ; in our over-busy state the call to us is to pray ; in our hard state there is equal need for both. And even in our best moods, when we are not hard, nor careless, nor over-busy, when we are at once sober and earnest and gentle, then not least does Christ call upon us to watch and to pray, that we may retain that than which else no gleam of April sunshine was ever more fleeting, that we may perfect that which else is of the earth, earthly, and when we lie down in the dust will wither and come to dust also. T. A.

18-25. All are to be loving, pitiful, and forgiving ; all are to praise God with the life and with the lips ; all are to consecrate their whole lives to the service of their master, Jesus. And if all, then each separate class ; each glorifying God, each serving the Master Christ, in its peculiar place and circumstances ; wives and husbands, children and parents, servants and masters. A. (See parallel passage, Eph. 5 : 22-33, 6 : 1-9, Sec. 303. B.)

19. The word "*bitter*" indicates not so much a special fault to be censured as the fundamental danger and temptation to which the relation is exposed. The reference is to that authority with which the husband is invested, and the abuse of which is his constant peril. The word "*bitter*" touches this as with the point of a needle. What is called the weakness of woman is really her strength. It springs from the more exquisite delicacy of her organization, both intellectual and physical, by which she is fitted for the more delicate and tender offices which she is called to discharge. The dependence to which all this adapts her is not her degradation, but her glory. It betrays, then, only the folly of him who is unable to distinguish betwixt *subordination* and *inferiority*, and who fails to remember that subordination in office often obtains where there is absolute equality in rank. B. M. P.

23. To be faithful in the perishable things of this world is a great thing in the eyes of our Lord. It does not matter in what material we work, whether it be mean or costly. "Do all things," saith the apostle to servants, and to us all, "*heartily*, as unto the Lord." The most common and trivial work is to be connected with the deepest. Take an interest in it ; do it with all your ability, from the deepest motive, and with the highest aim ; do it to please the Lord ; he will bless you in the labor, and he will reward you for the work. A. S.—No duties can be imagined lower in the social scale than those of a bond-servant in a heathen family—a position in which many members of the early Christian community found themselves. And therefore, if the duties of those bond-servants admitted of being done heartily, as to the Lord, much more do yours. E. M. G.

The gospel does not unduly slacken the bonds of society, but rather strengthens them ; yet over every cleft between men and men she throws the golden bridge of love, which shows its power in

cheerful obedience. How good it would be were this truth more commonly understood and grasped ! and how much clearer should our view of life be, how much holier its development, if all Christians regarded the apostle's words as personal, each one viewing them as addressed to himself ! "Ye serve the Lord Christ" ; thus ye occupy an honorable position, whether ye are placed on the height or in the shade. *I'an O.*—In order to serve Christ acceptably, we have not to revolutionize our lot, nor to seek other conditions than those Providence supplies. The place is nothing ; the heart is all. Chambers of patient invalids, beds of submissive sickness, obscurity, weakness, baffled plans—a thousand nameless limitations of faculty, of opportunity, of property—all these are witnesses of silent but victorious faith. In all of them God is glorified, for in all of them his will is done. Out of all of them gates open into heaven and the joy of the Lord. Mercifully the Father has appointed many ways in which we may walk toward his face, and run on his errands. Work is the way for strength ; lying still is the way for infirmity, if only there are trust and prayer in both. F. D. H.

1. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal. Such is the rule that Christianity lays down ; but what exactly, in any particular case, would be the just and equal thing to do—what would be the proper wages for the master to offer and the servant to receive—she leaves that to be adjusted between masters and servants, according to the varying circumstances by which the wages of all kinds of labor must be regulated. W. H.

Christianity goes to the slave, and tells him he is the Lord's freedman ; it goes to the master, and tells him he is Christ's servant. It tells both master and slave that they are brethren. It goes to the king, and tells him he is the subject of a higher power ; it goes to the subject, and tells him he may become a king and priest to God. It raises all men to the level of a common immortality ; it depresses them all to the level of a common sinfulness and exposure ; it subjects all to a common accountability ; it offers to all a common salvation ; it proposes to all a law of perfect equity and a principle of universal love ; and then it leaves these principles and motives to work their own effect, assured that, in proportion as they act, they must change

the nature, if not the name, of all visible institutions opposed to its spirit. M. H.

2. Continue in prayer. Prayer, with outstretched arm, fetches from the inexhaustible reservoir above those rich supplies of the oil of divine grace, fed by which the Christian lamp of faith will burn with a steady and increasing brightness; till, having guided the believer through the journey of life, cheered by its gladdening ray the gloom of the chamber of death, and even darted a bright gleam of heavenly light deep down into that dark valley through which he must pass to the city of his God, it will there be absorbed in the blaze of light that burns around the throne. *Kirke White.*

Watch in the same. When we pray, it is that we may not be led into temptation, that we may have the victory over the world and its allurements, that we may be kept from the evil, that God will give us grace to walk through these scenes so unfriendly to piety without being ensnared by them. And then to plunge voluntarily into the midst of them and live in them as though the soul could be satisfied with them for ever, this surely is not to watch unto prayer, it is to contradict the prayer and hinder our prayerfulness. R. S. S.—We must *watch before prayer* in order to dismiss the world from our thoughts, to gather up our minds in God, and to implore the Holy Spirit's help. We must *watch during prayer*, to guard against distraction, against the incursions of evil thoughts, against wanderings of mind and decay of fervor. We must *watch after prayer*, in order that we may act consistently with what we have been imploring of God, wait his time for answering us, and not lose the visitation of grace. *Bp. Wilson.*—**With thanksgiving.** This element in devotion, and essential charm of Christian life, Paul never forgets.

5. They are to consider the influence of their example, not only on those within the Church, but on those without. Unbelievers observe closely, perhaps suspiciously, the behavior of professed believers; and they will pay little heed to words, however wise, if unsupported in those who speak them by a discreet and upright walk. "Redeeming the time" always accompanies practical wisdom. It is meant that a Christian should seize and use well every opportunity to do good and to promote the glory of Christ. D. F.

That strange, awful thing, Time! sliding, gliding, fleeting on—on to the cataract; and then the deep, deep plunge down, bearing with it and swallowing up the world and the ages, until every interest that now seems so great and absorbing is as a straw on the mighty bosom of a flood. Let but a man possess his soul with this idea of Time, and then unworldliness will be the native atmosphere he

breathes. F. W. R.—Time is a valuable material, because what we bring out of it is our own and ours for ever. It is something that we shall carry with us when time itself is no more. The image of our life hewn out of these years is our living self, our character, our conscious being—every deed or thought that has gone to make up what we are. This is the true wealth—what a man is in himself. What unspeakable treasures are hid in these unexplored years; what inconceivable heights and degrees of blessedness; what after-memories of holy living and beneficent action; what riches of penitence, humility, and love! And, of all that we quarry out of this mine, nothing shall be lost, not a grain, not a fragment. The value of time as material is seen, too, from the fact that it is never given but once, and consequently, when lost, can never be regained. God's providence says, "Use it now or never." Thus we see time's value. It is the material of life. No mine is so rich or abundant. Its results last. They are eternal. What we draw from it is our own and ours for ever—the only thing that is, and, when lost, it can never be recovered. E. H. G.

6. Though pious speech may be rejected as cant when not sustained by corresponding conduct, it is when so supported a great instrument of good. Let it be "always with grace" as befits the utterance of men under grace; and let it be "seasoned with salt," not dull, prosy, or insipid, but having point and pertinency so as to be relished and remembered. D. F.—The secondary use of speech is to please and be entertaining to each other in conversation. This is in every respect allowable and right: it unites men closer in alliances and friendships; gives us a fellow-feeling of the prosperity and unhappiness of each other; and is in several respects serviceable to virtue, and to promote good behavior in the world. And, provided there be not too much time spent in it, if it were considered only in the way of gratification and delight, men must have strange notions of God and of religion, to think that he can be offended with it, or that it is in any way inconsistent with the strictest virtue. *Bp. Butler.*

We leave an innocent and pleasant circle, and feel more animated and cheerful; but this feeling may be true or not. If there has been nothing truly important and great, the conversation which has amused and interested us by its brilliancy and humor leaves nothing behind to strengthen us when we return to the cares, the duties, and the fatiguing troubles of life. But, if such social intercourse has given us a deeper feeling or more correct understanding of some truth of eternal importance, if it has afforded us a new insight into some department of the spiritual life, or gladdened us by the discovery

of beautiful and noble aspirations of some kindred soul who is interested in the same great purpose, then we carry away an enriched feeling of life into the hours of labor and toil. There is stirred within us a high energy, which brings to us protracted blessing. Something out of the stream of living water has flowed into our soul, and we are strengthened for the next moments of anxiety and work. *Schleiermacher*.

9. Who is one of you. Observe how it may be made out that Onesimus was a Colossian. Turn to the Epistle to Philemon, and you will find that Onesimus was the servant or slave of Philemon. The question, therefore, will be, to what city Philemon belonged. In the Epistle addressed to him this is not declared. It appears only that he was of the same place, whatever that place was, with an eminent Christian named Archippus. "Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellow-laborer; and to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellow-soldier, and to the church in thy house." Now turn to the Epistle to the Colossians, and you will find Archippus saluted by name among the Christians of that Church; "Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord that thou fulfill it" (4:17). The necessary result is, that Onesimus also was of the same city, agreeably to what is said

of him, "he is one of you." And this result is the effect either of truth which produces consistency without the writer's thought or care, or of a contexture of forgeries confirming and falling in with one another by a species of fortuity of which I know no example. *Paley*.

18. My bonds: my chains. Paul here for the third time mentions his chains, not from dejection, but that the Colossians might remember what he had been suffering for the gospel now for four years, and that his firm and undaunted constancy and full persuasion of the truth of the gospel which he had preached should confirm them in their faith, render them constant in enduring persecutions for the same cause, and induce them to pay the more affectionate regard to the whole of his Epistle. *Bp. Wilson*.

At the close the apostle gives his own salutation in autograph. Perhaps, as he rose to do so, the clanking of his chain suggested to him to add, "Remember my bonds." But there is no more of this—no whining over his unhappy lot. His great heart yearned over the Church in the love of Christ; and he hastens to add, the "Grace be with you!" The grace of the head be with all the members; the grace of the Lord with all the servants! A sweet note on which to rest as the music of this profound Epistle dies away. They who love the Lord, and wish to do all things in his name, have daily need of grace; and the Lord has for them all the grace they need to guide, to support, to console, to purify. *D. F.*

Section 313.

1 THESSALONIANS i. 1-10.

1 PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians *which is* in God the Father and *in* the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our
2 Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God always for you all, making
3 mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our
4 Father; knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto
5 you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye
6 know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy
7 Ghost: so that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from
8 you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.
9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye
10 turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, *even* Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

THE brightness of our life consists in believing, hoping, loving: in believing; that is, in feeling assured of the Father amid the manifestations of his discipline—in hoping; that is, in laying hold, amid the ruins which gather around us, of the kingdom which can not be moved—in loving; that is, in substituting for the care for our own happiness a care for the happiness of others, or, more generally, to place the center of our life without us; for, properly speaking, it is only in this that life consists. Love, which is the happiness of God himself, must also be the supreme felicity of the being whom God has made in his own image. Every other happiness is unworthy of this being, and does not satisfy him.

Selfish enjoyment requires to receive, and has never received enough; love requires to give, and has never given enough. Sacrifices exhaust the one and maintain the other, and while the first would gain nothing by gaining the world, the second grows rich upon its very losses. Faith and hope are of value only because they conduct to love, and the soul would dispense with believing and hoping, if without hoping and believing it were possible to love. A. V.

FIRST EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

THIS is the earliest of the extant writings of Paul, and it reveals as vividly as any of them the apostle's generous and affectionate nature. Along with Silas and Timothy, he first preached Jesus Christ in Thessalonica, and planted the Church there in the face of vehement opposition from the resident Jews. At that time the town was one of great importance in Macedonia; and, while the old cities of Ephesus and Colosse are now represented by mere heaps of ruins, Thessalonica exists at this day as the town of Saloniki, one of the chief places of European Turkey. It is said that one sixth of the modern population are Jews. (Read pages 118, 119, and 132.) The missionary visit of Paul to this Macedonian city was short, but the brethren there always retained a warm place in his heart. Persecution drove him to Berea, and thence by sea to Attica. At Athens he was soon rejoined by Timothy, who had remained in Macedonia. Paul sent him back to the Thessalonians, to "establish them and comfort them concerning the faith," while he himself went on to Corinth. At that city he spent a year and a half, during which period Timothy returned with a good account of the Thessalonian Church. This greatly cheered the apostle, and led him to write the letter now before us, which is one, not of argument, controversy, or reproof, but of confirmation and encouragement. D. F.—It was written because the apostle wanted to fill up by exhortation and consolation the necessary defects of a teaching which had been indeed most earnest and plain as far as it had gone, but had been broken off before it was complete. The earlier portion of the letter is spent in congratulating the Thessalonians and praising them for the simplicity and readiness with which they had received his message, and for the eminence of their faith, which had become since then matter of notoriety; in reminding them also of the whole character of his own demeanor among them; his disinterested independence of them, and gentle, even mother-like affection toward them. He next recalls to mind the hostility of the Jews, not so much to himself as to them, and draws a comparison between them and the churches of Judea in this respect. Then he touches gently his own case, showing how this same hostility had, since his departure, defeated one and another scheme which he had made for seeing them. The third chapter is occupied with a narrative of the circumstances under which the report of Timothy respecting them had reached him, and with expressions of thankfulness and affection resulting thereupon; concluding with a wish for the possibility of his visiting them, and for their increase in love and holiness, that they might be blameless before God at the Lord's coming. Then follow the practical exhortations and corrections of defects. A.

The whole aspect of the letter shows that the main body of the Thessalonian Church was not Jewish, but Gentile. The Jews are spoken of as an extraneous body, as the enemies of Christianity and

of all men, not as the elements out of which the church was composed. The ancient Jewish Scriptures are not once quoted in either of these Epistles. The converts are addressed as those who had turned, not from Hebrew fables and traditions, but from the practices of heathen idolatry. H.

The Thessalonian Epistles complete Paul's addresses to seven churches, and, though first in the date of production, may fitly be read last in the permanent order, as being specially distinguished by the eschatological element, and sustaining the conflict of faith by the preaching of "that blessed hope" and "the glorious appearing and the coming of the day of God." T. D. B.

3. If your hope prove itself by the patience that comes from it, and your faith by the work which it produces, and your love by the labor which is its result, then you may believe that the hope and faith and love are of God, and will abide for ever. Being in Christ, it is safe to forget the past, it is possible to be sure of the future, it is possible to be diligent in the present. Then how blessed such a life! A. M.—Hope will put on patience as a vestment; it will wade through a sea of blood; it will endure all things if it be of the right kind, for the joy that is set before it. Hence patience is called "patience of hope," because it is hope that makes the soul exercise patience and long-suffering under the cross, until the time comes to enjoy the crown. Bun.

4. "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God," should be "*knowing, brethren beloved of God, your election.*" A.

5. Our gospel came . . . in the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit makes use of the truth to flash light into the soul and to awaken love in the heart. Truth reveals to the man, and sets impressively before him everything it becomes him to know essential to his salvation. It unveils to him himself, sin, God, Christ, mercy, the way to the Father, the welcome awaiting him, the grace promised, the power of the cross, the "Advocate" on high, and so on. This—"the word of truth"—spiritually impressed and made influential by the divine agent that wields it, calls forth contrition, faith, hope, inspires joy and peace, with other soothing and animating results, of which the issue is love—love to God and man. T. B.

6. Received the word. They are the good hearers, the best hearers, who have had a daily experience of its truths, who have received it into themselves, of whose spiritual nature it has become part, in whom it works with an instinctive accuracy

and constancy, so that they do not need to consider what is right and wrong, or to argue about it, but know the right from the wrong with a certainty beyond the reach of logic. The word of God to them is full of meaning—full of meanings deeper and more subtle than others can see; for they have long since not only “understood” but “received” the word into their heart of hearts. *Coz.*

8. The world has more need of a great number of Christian people doing little things like Christians than it has need of one apostle preaching like an apostle, or one martyr dying like a martyr. As a means of spreading the gospel, faithfulness in doing little things is a mightier engine than all the power of the pulpit or all the eloquence of a preacher. “From you,” said an apostle once,

“from you the word of the Lord hath sounded out so that *we* need not speak anything.” A. M.

9. What wilt thou have me to *do*? is the question of the Christ-called man. The Thessalonians turned from idols to *serve* the living God. We are emancipated from the fetters of sin and the world, we are transplanted into the kingdom of God to work in the love and energy of our renewed heart. A. S.—God has so constituted our nature that a man can not be happy unless he is, or thinks he is, a means of good. Give a man what you please, surround him with all the means of gratification, and yet let the conviction come home to him clear and irresistible that there is not a being in God’s universe a whit the better or happier for his existence, and he can not but be unhappy. E. M.

Section 314.

1 THESSALONIANS ii. 1-20.

1 For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain: but
2 even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at
3 Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much conten-
4 tion. For our exhortation *was* not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: but as we
5 were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing
6 men, but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words,
7 as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God *is* witness; nor of men sought we glory,
8 neither of you, nor *yet* of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of
9 Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: so being
10 affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel
11 of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us. For ye remember,
12 brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be
13 chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

14 Ye *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved our-
15 selves among you that believe: as ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged
16 every one of you, as a father *doth* his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who
17 hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. For this cause also thank we God without
18 ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it*
19 not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh
20 also in you that believe. For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which
in Judæa are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen,
even as they *have* of the Jews: who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and
have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: forbidding us to
speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is
come upon them to the uttermost. But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short
time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great
desire. Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan
hindered us. For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Are* not even ye in the
presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy.

SLIGHT views of Christ’s atonement, and of the future glory which it purchases, may give a man cold and doubtful expectations; but let him be persuaded that these things are as real as his own existence, and straightway he rejoices in hope of the glory of God. Here is faith engendering hope. Faint apprehensions of the love of God in Christ may leave the heart void of corresponding affections, but let the

full excellency of the benignant dying Redeemer overpower the soul, and it is dissolved in tender attachment. Here is faith working by love. The same is true of all these ever busy emotions, which, like a ceaseless sea, for ever fluctuate in the soul of man. Faith rises over these waves of feeling and commands them. The cordial belief of unseen things makes the heart's pulses play with new animation. And then these moving powers give animation to the whole Christian life. The mainspring of all, however, still is "the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." J. W. A.

2. The history (Acts 16) relates that, after Paul and Silas had been beaten with many stripes at Philippi, shut up in the inner prison, and their feet made fast in the stocks, as soon as they were discharged from their confinement they departed from thence, and, when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, came to Thessalonica, where Paul opened and alleged that Jesus was the Christ. The Epistle written in the name of Paul and Silvanus (Silas), and of Timotheus, who appears to have been with them at Philippi, here accords with the history. *Paley*.

4. *In trust with the gospel.* That theme of earth and heaven, of sinner repenting and saint rejoicing, of eternity past and eternity to come, the tenor, substance, sum of revelation; that theme—"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"—is the gospel. This gospel of which we are put in *trust* is a message concerning the grace of God, but it is not the grace. And, consequently, as our trust covers only the gospel, it extends simply to the *declaration* of God's grace in Christ Jesus. We can not touch the grace itself either to give or withhold. God, the Holy Spirit, mercifully holds the bestowal of grace within his own power. We announce God's merciful purpose. We are not trustees of grace, but only of the gospel of grace. We, sinners saved by grace, are made trustees of the gospel for saving other sinners. We are exercising this trust for the kindest and gentlest and most gracious of masters. Our considerate Saviour, who has called us to the work, understands whereof we are made. He expects of us no more than we can do. He asks of us no more than he will give strength to execute. He knows that the vessel is earthen; that it can not bear all trials nor endure all shocks. He is watching. He is with us. With a simple, trusting patience we labor on, committing humbly and confidently to him to fix the place of our ministry, to surround it with such circumstances as will best forward its purpose, to sustain us in its faithful discharge, and to secure its success. *Bedell*.

It was a supreme desire to please God, who trieth the heart, without regard either to the praise or censure of men, which rendered the first Christians superior to adversity in all its frightful forms; and it is the same divine principle, which, if once it got the entire possession of our hearts, would be a constant spring of holy obedience, and enable us, by the blessing of God, to follow the cloud of witnesses who have gone before us, through the most rugged

paths of virtue, untainted with that inconstancy of behavior which is the reproach of so many professing Christians in our days. R. W.

7-13. By a rare privilege of nature, or of grace, Paul, combining opposite qualities in himself, and tempering force by gentleness, possessed one of the tenderest hearts that ever beat beneath the sky. Not merely a warm heart, but a feeling heart, with tender attachments; so far was his greatness from having any element of pride, or his energy any element of harshness. What can be more affectionate than the language of the apostle to his brethren of Thessalonica—his children in the faith? All whom he had begotten to eternal life are so many friends whom he bears on his heart before God. The churches without number founded by him contain no member who does not have his place in those prayers, the frequency of which is almost as astonishing as their fervor. One is tempted to ask where the apostle found time (to speak only of time) to pray so constantly for so many persons; and the inexhaustible tenderness of his soul assuredly enters largely into the solution of this touching problem. *Monod*.—With what a graceful mixture of majesty and meekness does he appeal to the Thessalonians! And what can attract our love, what can merit our esteem, what can excite our admiration, if such a temper doth not? A temper which, to all the magnanimity of the hero, unites all the piety and benevolence of the saint. R. W.

13. There is a revelation of God to his children which he gives them immediately by his Spirit, that is, *its own witness*. The man who has it is *sure* that he has it, and that it is of God. Not that our *feelings* alone are the test of truth in this matter; but, wherever there is this genuine illumination by God's Spirit, it will be found exactly to accord with the outward revelation given by the same Spirit in the written word. It is maintained and grows continually by meditation upon that word, in faith and prayer, and in the use of those human ministrations by which God has appointed that his children shall be nourished. *In these* God himself meets them, and teaches them by his Spirit. Hence the gospel is called, "the ministration of the Spirit"; and in this light all true believers receive it, "not as the word of man, but, as it is in truth, the word of God." *Goode*.—Our progress is real when there is advance in faith corresponding to the advance in

knowledge. And this may be going on during all our Christian course. Every perusal of the Scriptures, every hearing of the preached Word, should make us stronger and happier Christians by the energy of faith within.

19, 20. Every Gentile convert was a jewel in his crown. Again and again he asseverates that he mentions them without ceasing in his prayers. Though himself a prisoner, he exclaims, "What is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" Contemplate here the true temper of the missionary. To such a one, life will seem a rapid current, for it will be filled with the haste of fervid action. Oceans will become mere straits to such a zeal. The place, the circumstances of labor, will be mere dust on the balance. So that the gospel be preached, it will matter little in what language or amid what dangers. The preacher thus fired will hence be able to fly from the impulsive thought of his own unworthiness and the glory of the gospel. J. W. A.

It was divine love and mercy which made sacred truth so pleasant to me, that my life, under all my

infirmities, has been almost a constant recreation. How far beyond my expectation has a merciful God encouraged me in his sacred work, choosing every place of my ministry and abode to this day, without my own seeking, and never sending me to labor in vain? How many are gone to heaven, and how many are in the way, through a divine blessing on the word which in weakness I delivered? *Baz.*—My heart hath been so wrapped up in the glory of this excellent work, that I counted myself more blessed and honored of God by this, than if he had made me emperor of the Christian world or the lord of all the glory of the earth without it. *Bun.*—He who at the great day will have for his crown of rejoicing tens, or hundreds, or thousands, to whom many others were "teachers," but only he a "father"—he rises to such joy and dignity that he may look back upon the best and most honored of God's ancient servants, and feel that, in comparison with them, he has only to be thankful for his own more blessed lot. His crown and his prize are the highest to which man may aspire. How close the servant is brought to the Master! The Master is Saviour, the servant the instrument of saving! *Arthur.*

Section 315.

1 THESSALONIANS iii. 1-18.

1 WHEREFORE when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens
2 alone; and sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the
3 gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith: that no man
should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.
4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation;
5 even as it came to pass, and ye know. For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I
sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour
6 be in vain. But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings
of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly
7 to see us, as we also to see you: therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all
8 our affliction and distress by your faith: for now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord. For
9 what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your
10 sakes before our God; night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and
11 might perfect that which is lacking in your faith? Now God himself and our Father, and
12 our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you. And the Lord make you to increase and
13 abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the
end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the
coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

"STAND fast in the Lord." Christians are "saved" and "sanctified in Christ"; are "rooted, built up," and "made perfect in Christ." Their faith, hope, love, joy, their whole life, is "in Christ." They think, they speak, they walk "in Christ." They labor and suffer, they sorrow and rejoice, they conquer and triumph "in the Lord." They receive each other and love each other "in the Lord." The fundamental relations, the primal duties of life, have been drawn within this all-embracing relation. The influence of

it extends over the whole field of action, and men "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." Finally, this character of existence is not changed by that which changes all besides. Those who have entered on it depart, but they "die in the Lord," they "sleep in Jesus," they are "the dead in Christ"; and "when he shall appear," they will appear; and when he comes, "God shall bring them with him," and they shall "reign in life by one—Jesus Christ." T. D. B.

1, 2. From the moment Paul's feet touched the pier at the lower end of Athens the monuments of the dominant mythology began to lift themselves forbiddingly before him, to make him feel himself "alone." From the water-side all the way up to the Acropolis the city is one vast museum of unhallowed art, of an unclean civilization, of a Christless worship. If he turns from the world of sight to the world of thought, he finds the schools of unbelieving speculation, Porch and Academy, Stoa and Gardens, strong in great names to be sure, but distracted with debate between doubt and delusion, and full of eloquent error. What was all this to the sorrowful, earnest, straitened spirit which was there in the form of a worn and sunburnt traveler from Tarsus, secretly so absorbed in the power of a holy affection for a Personage executed long ago as a disturber of the public peace in the distant province of Judea, that he could say, "It is no more I that live; I have no life of my own; Christ liveth in me"? The round of festal novelties, the decorations of Attic taste, the splendid learning, the riches and refinements of a proud prosperity, what were they all to one whose heart was in the unseen court of the King of kings? Deeper and darker his solitude grew. And yet even there he could send away from his side the single sympathizing friend that had followed him; he could banish himself into a completer exile, and be utterly "alone at Athens," for the confirmation and comforting's sake of the little band of Christians far off at Thessalonica. Here is the test of courage, and of all *real* characters. Can you live, work, suffer, stand out, move forward alone? This settles it whether you are merely a piece of movable furniture in the halls of a worldly society, a manufacture molded by the hands of fashion, or a living and independent soul, satisfied to walk with that Man of men who had not where to lay his head while He was showing the world the truth and love of God. F. D. H.

8. Here the purest zeal for the honor of his Master and the most generous love to the souls of men are happily united, and expressed in the native

language of a warm and upright heart: the *purest* zeal and the most *generous* love, for no tincture of selfishness appears in either; if Christ is glorified, if men are saved, Paul obtains his utmost wish; his happiness is independent of everything else; he enjoys all that in his own estimation is worthy to be accounted life, if his spiritual children stand fast in the Lord. R. W.—So, in a later time, wrote Samuel Rutherford to his parishioners at Anwoth, "I long exceedingly to know if the oft-spoken match between you and Christ holdeth, and if ye follow on to know the Lord. My day thoughts and night thoughts are of you. While you sleep I am afraid for your souls that they be off the Rock."

9, 10. The disciples at Thessalonica were from the first exposed to persecution on account of their faith. The apostle had only stayed with them for a few weeks, and after a little time Silas and Timothy had also left them. They were a congregation of young untried Christians, and even their elders could have had little experience. Nevertheless, they had thus far stood firm in the Lord; and the tidings of their steadfastness regaled the spirit and strengthened the life of the missionary apostle. Again we are reminded of the fervent desires of Samuel Rutherford for his flock at Anwoth: "Oh, how rich a prisoner were I, if I could obtain of my Lord the salvation of you all! What a prey had I gotten to have you all caught in Christ's net? My witness is above; your heaven would be two heavens, and the salvation of you all as two salvations to me." D. F.

11, 13. The word "Christ" is omitted in all the most ancient manuscripts. "The Lord Jesus" seems to have been at this time Paul's constant way of naming the Saviour. And it is to be noted that he was charged at Thessalonica before the magistrates with proclaiming "*another king, one Jesus*," A.

13. This faithful servant is well content to continue his labor, run his race, and endure affliction, waiting for his full reward till his Master shall come. Then will the saints of Macedonia be to him a chaplet of victory—his glory and his joy. D. F.

Section 316.

1 THESSALONIANS iv. 1-18.

- 1 FURTHERMORE then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort *you* by the Lord Jesus, that as
 ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, *so* ye would abound more
 2 and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this
 3 is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: that
 4 every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; not
 5 in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: that no *man* go
 6 beyond and defraud his brother in *any* matter: because that the Lord *is* the avenger of all
 7 such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto un-
 8 cleanness, but unto holiness. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God,
 who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit.
- 9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are
 10 taught of God to love one another. And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are
 11 in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more; and that
 ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as
 12 we commanded you; that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and *that*
 ye may have lack of nothing.
- 13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep,
 14 that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died
 15 and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this
 we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive *and* remain unto the
 16 coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall
 descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of
 17 God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive *and* remain shall be
 caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we
 18 ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

THE final scene in the life of Neander is one most characteristic of the man, as well as one of the most striking ever witnessed in the chamber of death. His last thoughts amid the struggles of death were devoted to the great labor of his life. Beginning at the very passage of his Church History where sickness had arrested his progress, he resumed the thread of thought, and, in spite of interruptions, continued to dictate in regular periods for some time. At the close of each sentence he paused, as if his amanuensis were taking down his words, and asked, "Are you ready?" Having closed a division of his subject, he inquired the time. Being told that it was half-past nine, the patient sufferer repeated once more: "I am weary; I will now go to sleep!" Having by the aid of friendly hands stretched himself in bed for his last slumber, he whispered in a tone of inexpressible tenderness, which sent a strange thrill through every heart, "Good night!" It was his last word. He immediately fell into a sleep, which continued for hours, when his great spirit, in the quiet of a Sabbath morning, passed gently into the land of peace. What a commentary on his own exhortation so lately uttered, that "the Christian should ever remember that here all is fragmentary, nothing reaches completion; that even service in the cause of Christ on earth is but the beginning of an activity destined for eternity; that we must therefore not be so absorbed, even in labors consecrated to God, as to be unprepared to obey at any moment the summons to the higher life and service of heaven"! He was so prepared that when his ear caught the summons he could drop the great labor of his life unfinished, lay himself down quietly upon his bed, and with a childlike "Good night" to those whom he left behind, *slumber over* (as the German beautifully expresses it) into that higher life of heaven. *H. C. Conant.*

1. "To please God"—what a privilege to lie open to us day by day, and every hour of the day! The materials of an acceptable offering lie all around us, in the work of our callings, in the little calls which divine Providence daily makes to us, in the little crosses which God requires us to take up, nay, in our very recreations. The great point is to have the mind set upon seeing and seeking in all things the service of Christ and the glory of God, and, lo! every trifling incident which that mind

touches, every piece of work which it handles, every dispensation to which it submits, becomes at once a sacrifice. E. M. G.

3. The more sound our experience, the more pure our piety, the more shall we understand that "this is the will of God, even our sanctification." This is the heaven we desire. We shall love it and exult in it, in proportion as we love God and exult in God. J. W. A.—If we look to the eternal election of the Father, if we reflect upon the great work of redemption, if we by faith realize the fulfillment of the promise, and behold the new Jerusalem, everywhere we see holiness as the great object of the divine purpose and the divine acts of grace. Every privilege of the Christian points to this great end. As the children of God, the command follows naturally: "Be ye holy, for I am holy." As members of the body of which the Son of God is head, it is for us to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, and to remember that the Holy Ghost himself dwelleth in us. A. S.

3-8. The morals of the Gentiles were shockingly corrupt, and what we call sins against the seventh commandment were scarcely considered disgraceful at that period. Those of the Gentiles who were received into the Church were in some danger of relapsing into old habits; and the whole tone of Christian life was apt to be injured by the dissolute manners of surrounding society. Therefore this prominent warning against sensuality. D. F.—If we may judge of their morality by the exhortations and dehortations which they received from the apostle, Corinth and Thessalonica were but beginners in holiness. They were but just rescued from heathenism, and we need not wonder if their spirits long bore the scars of their former bondage. If we wish to know what the apostolic Churches were like, we have but to look at the communities gathered by modern missionaries. A. M.

6. The words rendered "in any matter" stand in the original "in the matter," i. e., in this matter which is now in hand, viz., the unclean lusts of the flesh. The apostle is speaking in language somewhat veiled, for decency's sake. A.

7. The law, from the moment of closing with Christ, stands as the great rule of our practical walk and conversation; seeing a true believer is "not without law" (a lawless person) "to God," but is "under the law" (within the bond of the law) "to Christ"; not exempted from his control as the standard of moral action, though delivered from its power and execration as a covenant of works. The rules and precepts of the law are very subservient unto Christ, as they adorn the life with a conversation becoming a companion of Christ, who calls us not unto uncleanness but to holiness. *Crisp.*

8. Given us. "The Holy Spirit" to be the soul of thy soul, to new-create thy moral nature in the image of God, to dwell in thee and walk in thee, making thy heart his shrine, a present stream of joy and strength and consolation springing up into everlasting life—"how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that

ask him?" Glorious promise! Free as the air of heaven to those who will but come forth and breathe it. Then come forthwith and claim this mighty boon. Come with strong desire. Let the heart speak rather than the mouth. Come in steadfast faith. And lo! your word is a word of power. Before you call, He answers; and while you are yet speaking, He hears. E. M. G.

9. Love one another. That kind of love which springs from our being all one in Him whose boundless love embraces all for the sake of redeeming them unto eternal blessedness and gladness, unworthy as they are—this is possible for us toward every child of God, the unsightliest, the most disagreeable, the least lovely, the worst. We can not reverse the inwrought laws of taste, attraction, preference, common culture, and common life, which group and distribute men; but we can merge them all in that one common charity which, in the Redeemer himself, was large enough to reach and gather up the vilest, and which in his true followers can see in every human creature this trace of nobleness and beauty—the capacity of being by repentance and faith raised to heavenly places—of wearing the likeness and the righteousness of the Lord for ever and for ever. In other words, all can be loved in him, and will be by those that have their life in him. And we must not be too fastidious about people forsaking their ugliness and correcting their faults before our charity goes out to them. Suppose a moment the grace of God had been measured to us by that thrifty rule. F. D. H.

11. No doubt some of the Thessalonian converts had lost their livelihood on account of their new faith; others, excited by their new position, by their sufferings for Christ, and by the hope of his speedy advent, may have become negligent in business, and given up steady work for daily subsistence. The apostle, therefore, with that practical sagacity which his enthusiasm never clouded, warns them not to become burdensome to others, but to maintain a proper independence. D. F.

When men were converted by the preaching of his apostles, they were not required to give up any honest occupation. If they were found idle, they were set to work, and commanded "to be quiet and mind their own business." The gospel belongs to man, and reckons nothing that is man's alien to it. Whatever is open to men that is just and right in business is open to Christians. And they are to give themselves to it, not in any half-hearted way. They are not to be spectators or dreamers, but workers. Whatever their hands find to do, they are to do it with their might. *Ker.*—God did not send us into the world merely to save our own souls, but to glorify him by our lives while we are in the world. Our lives are very different. Some work

with their heads, some with their hands; some not at all, but must serve God by patient endurance—in weakness, in darkness, in decay of vital power. And it is curious to trace how men, in assigning their religious duties, will generally manage to leave out of the account just that very range of circumstances in which those duties really lie. Thy Father's business is to be done, not only—not principally—on the Sunday, and with thy Bible open before thee; not only, nor principally, when thou removest thy thoughts from this world to another; to think so, is to yield to the devil's temptation, who is contented if he can only get men to leave their common lives out of their religion, and so to serve him in reality, while their service of God withers up into mere confessions of faith, and forms of worship, and observance of days. No; thy Father's business is where thou standest from week's end to week's end. A.—A Christian life implies a consecration to the work of God. In whatever it is engaged, it serves him. He that serves confesses that he is not his own but the creature of God, the redeemed of grace, a pensioner on the divine beneficence; and so, with holy aims, he strives to put God's will in all things in place of his own, turning life into a prayer, and making each daily blessing a note in the sweet music of adoration, each hardship a step by which he climbs up toward God. E. H. G.

13-18. This passage appears to have been written in reply to a fear of the Thessalonians lest their friends who had fallen asleep in Christ should be excluded from the triumph and glory of his second coming. They had misunderstood the apostle's words. Their enthusiasm had outran even the apostle's plain speaking; they regarded the day of the Lord as actually upon them, and its glories as something which would be missed by those who died before the Lord himself should appear. As far as we can gather, there appear to have been two distinct phases of their misapprehension: the first, concerning their deceased friends; then, when that had been removed by a plain declaration that when Christ should come they would accompany him, another mistake as to the immediate coming of the day itself, which it is Paul's aim to correct in the second Epistle. A.

13. We must not mourn for those who are released from the world by the call of the Lord, when we know they are not lost but sent before. We must, indeed, long after them, but not bewail them; we ought not, for their sakes, to put on black garments, since there *they* are already clothed in white. We must not give the heathen an opportunity justly to blame Christians by sorrowing for those whom they speak of as living with God, as if they were lost and perished men. We, who live in hope and believe in God, and are confident that Christ suf-

fered for us and rose again, we who abide in Christ, and rise again through him and in him, why do we either ourselves recoil from departing out of this life, or lament and grieve over our friends' departure, as if they were perished? This is not a passing away, but a passing over, and a transit to things eternal after this temporal journey has run its course. *Cyprian.*

We are not left to sorrow in darkness. Death is as the foreshadowing of life. We die that we may die no more. So short is our life here, and so endless the life on which we enter at death, that the consideration may well moderate our sorrow at parting. All who live must be separated by the great appointment; and, if the change is their gain, we poorly commend our love to them, more poorly our love to Christ, who came to redeem them and us for the end of taking us to his rest, if we refuse to be comforted. I would revere all grief of this kind, yet I would say there is such a thing as a *will* of cherishing it, which makes it rather hurtful than improving in its effect. This may be done under a mistaken idea of duty or gratitude to the dead. It may be done as a sacrifice to what we deem is expected of us, or as a thing becoming in the eyes of others. But that bereavement seems rather sanctified which saddens not the heart over much, and softens without withering it; which refuses no comfort or improvement we can profitably receive. H. H.

When the soul leaves the body, it passes at once to Christ, to perfection, and to heaven, thus to abide in peace and glory till the resurrection. The bodies of Christ's brethren rest in their graves till the resurrection. That union, whereby we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, still endures. They are still his; and from his heavenly throne he watches over them. J. W. A. —Think much of them that are gone before; how safe they are in the arms of Jesus. Would they be here again for a thousand worlds? What would they judge of thee if they knew thy heart began to fail thee in thy journey, or thy sins began to allure thee and to persuade thee to stop thy race? Would they not say, Oh, that he did but see what we see, feel what we feel! *Bun.*

14. "*Sleep in Jesus*" ought to be "fell asleep through Jesus," i. e., by his merits have had their death turned into sleep. "*Sleep in Jesus*" is a beautiful and true expression; but it is not the one used here. In the same verse, "*with him*" may be misunderstood. "*Him*" does not refer to God, but to Jesus: will God bring, at the same time that he brings *him*, Jesus, through whom they fell asleep. It would be better, therefore, to express it, "*together with him*," which can hardly be mistaken. A.—In the book of life, the Scriptures, the death of the saints is called a sleep. It is observable how

the apostle varies the expression, Jesus died, and the saints sleep in him ; for he sustained death with all its terrors that it might be a calm sleep to his people. They enjoy as perfect a rest in the beds of dust as even in the softest down. Stephen, in the midst of a shower of stones, fell asleep. *Bates.*—Sleep is a very impressive and appropriate Christian name for death. If we were not made indifferent by familiarity with it, natural sleep would seem a very solemn and mysterious experience. We might well be familiar with death, for we have a symbol and rehearsal of it every night. We might be familiar with the resurrection, for we have a symbol and rehearsal of it every morning. *Arnot.*

15. The coming again of the Lord is not one single act, as his resurrection, or the descent of the Spirit, or the final coming to judgment, but the great complex of all these, the result of which shall be his taking his people to himself, to be where he is. This receiving is begun in his resurrection, carried on in the spiritual life, further advanced when each by death is fetched away to be with him, fully completed at his coming in glory, when they shall for ever be with him in the perfected resurrection state. *A.*—Is it not obvious that those believers are in the wrong who allow themselves to be so repelled by extravagances on this subject that they do not make the second coming of our Lord a frequent and joyous contemplation ? It was so to the apostles ; it should be so to us, as the current language of the New Testament shows. No doubt there are many comings of Christ, many spiritual ones, which are unheralded, save in earnest hearts, some that are noiseless, like the springing of the day, and unobserved as light by blind eyes ; but all these are only parts and harbingers of the one coming, which is to be visible, like the rising of the king of day himself. And this expectation is evermore before the Church ; all the future is bright with his coming. The faithful Christian is one who “ waits for the Lord.” *W. I. B.*

17. **To meet the Lord.** Death comes to set the spirit free ; and rude though be the hand that knocks off the fetters, and painful though be the

process of liberation, what need the prisoner care for that, when it is to freedom, life, home, he is about to be emancipated ? Death strikes the hour of the soul's everlasting espousals, and, though the sound may be a harsh one, what matters that ? “ Now,” may the fainting passing soul reflect, “ now my Lord is coming, I go to meet him—to be with Jesus—to dwell with him in everlasting light and love—to be severed from him no more for ever : O Death lead thou me on !” *J. W. A.*—18. We are now tossed upon the alternate waves of time, but it is that we may arrive at the port, the blessed bosom of our Saviour, and enjoy a peaceful calm ; and “ so we shall be ever with the Lord.” Words of infinite sweetness ! This is the song of our prosperity and the charm of our adversity ; well might the apostle add immediately after, “ Therefore comfort one another with these words.” *Bates.*

To the primitive Christians all this was reality. They have left their faith and hope recorded upon the tombs which they constructed in their hiding-places in the subterranean excavations or quarries of the city of Rome. In those long galleries of catacombs, where the bodies of martyrs and persecuted saints were laid to rest, there is not one trace of despondency or gloom. It is written over one and another, “ She sleeps ” ; “ In peace ” ; “ With Christ.” The anchor, the cross, the crown, the symbols of the resurrection and immortality, make those dark galleries bright with the presence of an eternal life. This doctrine should inspire the Christian disciples with the glad consciousness of the nearness of the Lord at death. The effort to find for heaven a locality commonly results in placing it at an immense remove in space and time ; the attempt to define the features and occupations results in vague imaginings ; meantime Paradise comes floating down to us, and Jesus steps to the bedside of one whom we think *dying*, and says, “ I come to receive thee to myself ; to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.” Heaven is around us ; if we are Christ's, one step and we are there. Then why let earth trouble, delude, engross or detain us ? And why should death intimidate us ? *J. P. T.*

Section 317.

1 THESSALONIANS v. 1-28.

1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For
2 yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For
3 when they shall say, Peace and safety ; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as tra-
4 vail upon a woman with child ; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in
5 darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light,
6 and the children of the day : we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us

7 not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the
 8 night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the
 day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of
 9 salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord
 10 Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with
 11 him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.
 12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over
 13 you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's
 14 sake. And be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that
 15 are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all *men*. See
 that none render evil for evil unto any *man*; but ever follow that which is good, both
 16 among yourselves, and to all *men*. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every
 19 thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not
 20 the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.
 22 Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and
 23 *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of
 24 our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful *is* he that calleth you, who also will do *it*. Brethren, pray
 26 for us. Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord that this epis-
 28 tle be read unto all the holy brethren. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you.
 Amen.

OBEDIENCE to these precepts would make life perfect both in its relations to the outer world and in its innermost relations with God. How peaceful would be the life of one who should never render evil for evil! how beneficent the life that should ever follow toward all men that which is good! how consistent and symmetrical the life that, before committing itself to any opinion or action, should test its character, and then adopt and hold fast that which is good! how gracious and gentle would be the life that should minister comfort and support to the weak and needy, and, while decided against every wrong, should be patient under all injury or provocation! and how pure and beautiful the life that should abstain from all appearance of evil. But such outward peace, benignity, consistency, grace, beauty, purity, must spring from that communion with God in which prayer is unbroken and thanksgiving is perpetual; in which no light of the Spirit is ever quenched by earthly passions, no voice of the Spirit drowned by earthly cares, but the whole nature—body, soul, and spirit—is brought into harmony through the pervading, sanctifying presence of the God of peace. For this let us pray without ceasing. Unto this, also, let us daily live. J. P. T.

2-22. And now he goes on to speak of that great day itself in terms which doubtless they in their eagerness fastened upon, and interpreted of its too speedy coming. Now occurs the first of those afterward often-repeated exhortations to walk in light, as children of the day (see also Rom. 13 : 12, 13; Eph. 5 : 8; Col. 1 : 12, 13); now is found the first germ of that description of the armor of God, or of light, which he afterward expanded so gloriously (Eph. 6 : 10). Now, also, first we come to those short insulated admonitions which have been compared to strings of pearls, with which in after years he was in the habit of coming toward the conclusion of his Epistles. A.

2. *The day of the Lord*, yet future, is the day on which, most assuredly, all thoughts will turn to him, whether willingly or by constraint, whether in terror or in joy; the day in which his truth will silence into nothingness all human errors and guesses at truth, in which his justice will take the place of all that is named justice, rightly or wrongly, among the

sons of men; the day in which everything else but he will be lost sight of, and will be as though it were not, in which the eternal reality of his relation to the world and to man will also be the acknowledged reality. It is the day on which he will bring the vast and complex moral account between himself and his responsible creatures to a close—to a final, irreversible decision. As surely as we have seen this morning's sunlight, we shall hereafter behold the eternal Judge upon his throne, the countless multitudes before him, the division between his creatures deep and irreversible, the disciplined activities of his angels, the issues on this side and on that, as all gradually settles down into the last unchangeable award. H. P. L.

3. Usually men are most secure before their own judgment and ruin. "When they shall say, peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them." When security runs riot, and is like to degenerate into utter contempt of God, men are not likely to profit by the word, therefore God takes

the rod in hand, that by the severity of discipline he may teach men *that* which they would not learn by kinder and milder persuasions. T. M.

5. He, the Light of light, will certainly give his especial help, in no ordinary measure, to the man who, for his sake, is striving to live in the light. He will bless the open-hearted man with the highest of all blessings, the sure sense of His presence with him. F. T.—**Light . . . darkness.** The powers of light and the powers of darkness contend within us and for us. That which is imaged forth in the light of day and the darkness of the night; that which is exemplified in the intimate and central powers of attraction and repulsion, under which all nature lives and grows, is repeated in a higher sphere in the whole history of our race. As the harmonies of nature are but the equilibrium of contending agencies, and its peace is purchased by its elemental strife, so are the harmonies of history and also its peace worked out through its antagonizing forces; so that, if we would learn the rhythm of nature, of history, or of the human soul, we must learn it as the resultant of its struggling powers. Progress through conflict, antagonisms working out a higher unity, is the inmost law of our species. It is seen in the transition from the Jewish to the Christian economy; it is involved in the very genius of Christianity as a redemptive system; it is corroborated by our faith in the final victories of that system; it is read in its deepest meaning by all who are growing in knowledge or virtue in what Plato calls life's "immortal battle." H. B. S.

6. **Watch.** Temptations hover about you in ambush. They are not in great emergencies, but in the little things of your daily life, and hidden under unsuspected appearances. They lurk in the pillows of comfort on which you lay your thoughtless heads; in the emulation where you mistake the pride of excelling for the love of wisdom; in the common labor where the world gambles for your soul; in the merchandise where you are offered gain for falsehood; in the social fellowship where criminality corrupts under the name of cordiality; in the flatteries of your beauty, or your talents, or your disposition, which borrow the silver tones of friendship, and sound so like them that you listen; in the familiar pleasures that make the feet of the hours so swift, and the earth so satisfying, that you feel no need of heaven. Here are your tempters. They are disguised; they take circuitous paths; they carry gifts in their hands, and place crowns on your heads; they are clothed like angels of light. Then watch! and watch yourselves only. For the kingdom of hell, as well as the kingdom of heaven, is within us. All the mischief is there, its origin there, its power there, its fatal result there. There Satan's seat is. No harm can come nigh you, but through

the gate of your own yielding heart, set open by your own perverted will. F. D. H.

8. In a firm, good, Christian hope, sin meets its strongest antagonist. The man who possesses it has a confidence and assurance which will nerve his arm and secure the victory. The breastplate of faith and love is not sufficient without the hope of salvation for a helmet. *Homer.*

10. Christ died, in that he assumed our nature, and did not die in respect of the essence of eternal life. He suffered in that he assumed a body, that the reality of the body so assumed might be believed; and he did not suffer in respect of the impassible divinity of the Word, which is incapable of any pain. While the anguish of death took not hold of him as God, the realms of death beheld him as man. While he was hanging on the cross, he was shaking the world. While he was being executed, and was receiving wounds, he was bestowing a heavenly kingdom. While he was "made the sin" of all, he was washing away the sins of mankind. Lastly, he died—I say it a second and a third time, with exultation, with triumph—He died, that his death might become the *life of the dead*; "that we should live together with Him!" *Ambrose.*

11-15. Here are valuable directions for the collective life and internal peace of the Church. It is a brotherly society, in which every one is so far his brother's keeper that he is to seek his brother's welfare. Kindness, consideration, patience, are to mark the intercourse of Christians. Special respect also is due to those who preside over the congregation. D. F.

11. **Edify one another.** The full meaning is, "Build one another up, that you may all together grow into a temple of God." The word is frequently used by Paul in this sense. It is very difficult to express the meaning by any single word in English. C.—It is a grand, Scriptural word, and ought always to be *thoughtfully* used. *Building up* implies *establishment* upon a sure foundation, and *growth*, or steady advance heavenward. B.

16. **Rejoice.** It is remarkable with what earnestness and frequency Paul enjoins a spirit of rejoicing as an essential part of a spiritual life. and his words prove that this injunction is intimately connected with the indwelling of the blessed Spirit. He represents "joy" as one of the fruits of the Spirit, following next in order to "love." It may be dimmed or overcast by the will of God, as a chastisement, or discipline, teaching its own needful lessons of humility and trust and patient endurance. But joy is a grace to be earnestly cherished, as well as a promised blessing; a duty to be steadily fulfilled, as well as a part of our blessed inheritance. We are expected to "hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." *Keble*

17. Pray without ceasing. Prayer is the pulsation of the soul. It need not be always expressed in words. There is a prayer which the faithful offer, and which, like the pulse in the veins, never ceases its motion, not by night, not by day, and which can be heard by no human ear. In this inward silent supplication are the faithful continually exclaiming, *Abba, dear Father!* To pray, that is, to expect nothing except from God and to expect everything of God; to keep our soul incessantly open before him; to lay open before the Father, whom Jesus Christ has restored to us, our wants, our fears, our difficulties; to place ourselves continually in his hands; to accept, by anticipation, whatever it may please him to dispense; to deposit at his feet the burden of our sins; to sigh in his presence after the gift of a pure heart; to place ourselves under the rays of his light, under the dew of his grace; with all the humility of indigence to solicit an asylum under his roof, a place at his hearth; to take shelter under his mercy, and gain warmth upon his heart; such is the grace of graces. A. V. —By the most urgent prayers, uttered only at night and morning, if we did nothing more, the prayers would soon cease to be urgent; they would become formal, that is, they would be no prayers at all. For prayer lives in the heart and not in the mouth; it consists not of words, but wishes, and no man can set himself heartily to wish twice a day for things of which he never thinks at other times in the day. So that prayer requires in a manner to be fed, and its food is to be found in *reading and thinking*; in reading God's word, and in thinking about him. T. A.

In this precept there is nothing commanded which may not be fulfilled, when we understand 'of prayer as the continual desire of the soul after God; having indeed its times of intensity, but not confined to those times; since the whole life of the faithful should be, in Origen's beautiful words, one great connected prayer. "That soul," says Donne, "that is accustomed to direct herself to God upon every occasion—that as a flower at sunrise conceives a sense of God in every beam of his, and spreads and dilates itself toward him—in every small blessing that he sheds upon her, that soul who, whatever string be stricken, is ever turned toward God, that soul prays when it does not know that it prays." Thus Augustine: "Can we, indeed, without ceasing, bend the knee, bow the body, or lift up the hands, that he should say, 'Pray without ceasing'? There is another interior prayer without intermission, and that is the longing of thy heart. Whatever else thou mayest be doing, if thou longest after that Sabbath of God, thou dost not intermit to pray. If thou wishest not to intermit to pray, see that thou do not intermit to desire—thy continual desire is

thy continual voice. Thou wilt be silent if thou leave off to love. The coldness of love is the silence of the heart—the fervency of love is the cry of the heart." T.

18. In everything give thanks. A duty this which Paul never forgets, and which he considers no mere optional exercise. It is of obligation, because it is God's will concerning us in Christ Jesus. D. F.—To pray without ceasing, and in everything to give thanks, belong to each other as closely as the breath and the sound of the voice; what is more, the one is promoted by the other. There must be much prayer in order really to give thanks in all things; and, again, fervent thankfulness of itself leads to humbler prayer. Thus, in the compass of seven words, a lesson is brought before us, which the farthest advanced Christian requires to study every day. All his dealings with us must initiate us more deeply into the school of prayer; and the holy aim of redemption in Christ is only reached when in *everything* thanks and praise are rendered to God by us. This thanksgiving in everything is the infallible touchstone of a faith which, under all circumstances, rests assured of the infinite love of God. Van O.

19. The witness of the Spirit, if it were yonder in heaven, would shine like a perpetual star; the witness of the Spirit here in the heart on earth burns like a flickering flame, never to be extinguished, but still not always bright, wanting to be trimmed and needing to be guarded from rude blasts. Else what does an apostle mean when he says to you and me, "Quench not the Spirit"? what does he mean when he says to us, "Grieve not the Spirit"? You have no reason to be discouraged, still less despondent, because you find that the witness of the Spirit changes and varies in your heart. Do not despond because it does. Watch it and guard it, lest it do. Live in the contemplation of the *person* and the fact that calls it forth, *that it may not*. A. M.—These familiar exhortations not to grieve and not to quench the Spirit of God, although appropriated to another use, originally had reference to Christians. They teach that this divine influence does not forcibly retain possession of the human heart; but, if it find there no fellowship of holy action, it will leave it as an uncongenial sphere. The true disciple is sanctified and saved only in harmony with his own exertions. It is the Spirit which imparts efficiency to his strength, but, if he do not exert that strength, the Spirit will withdraw his aid. He disdains to abide in a stupid soul. He prefers rather to be the life of those that live. And, if there be one condition of unwonted melancholy, it is that of the Christian who by negligence has forfeited his title to this heavenly aid. Homer.

Draw near to God when he comes to you in the

Spirit as it operates within your heart. "There dwells," says a heathen writer, "in men a Holy Spirit, who treats us as he is treated by us." Once turned away, he comes back again the more seldom, and speaks to us with less and less power. But what can I do, you ask, if the voice within me sounds but softly, or if I have disdained it until it has become scarcely audible? Brother, it stands recorded: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you." A. T.

20, 21. The words ought to stand, "Despise not prophesyings, but prove all things"; i. e., on the one hand, do not think lightly of any utterances of the word of God by whomsoever made; on the other, do not be led by everything so spoken, but put all things to the test. **A.—Prophecyings.** These were utterances in the Spirit, more direct than the ordinary tenor of teaching, and directed to the edification of the Church. The Corinthians did not give due place to prophesying, preferring the more showy gift of tongues; and this apostle wrote to correct their ill-judged preference. "Covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues." He is anxious that the Thessalonians should not fall into the same mistake. He wishes them not to make light of prophesyings, for these tended to "edification, exhortation, and comfort." D. F.

21. To be in a state of perpetual equipoise; to be conducting an eternal examination into "evidences"; to be still vaunting what is called "the spirit of inquiry"; to be "ever learning and yet never able to come to the knowledge of the truth"; is to spend a life not only of personal discomfort, where there is any sincerity, but really of little credit or honor to him whose life it is. We are encouraged to ask questions of God and man, to read books, weigh evidence, reject fallacy, in one word, to "prove all things," but all this with a view to the ending of hesitancy, to the settlement of faith, and the holding fast of "that which is good." A. R. —Looking to the awful disclosures made by Scripture respecting the great apostasy from the faith, which shall be a feature of the latter days, and looking also at the revolutionary and lawless tendency of the age, as shown in political and social movements, *we are quite right in regarding with suspicion, and in narrowly questioning and examining, all new-fangled views whether religious or social.* And yet there should be a readiness in us, though not to abandon for one moment the old truth, yet to recognize any new form in which it may be presented. We have been brought up to regard truth—religious, and it may be political and social truth also—in one aspect. But truth is many-sided, like a cube; and we should never be so tenacious of the aspect of it which is familiar to us as not to be ready to come round and view it under another man's aspect. E. M. G.

22. Many persons have thought it to be an injunction to abstain even from that which seems evil, to avoid all chance of offense. The words mean merely this: "Abstain from every form of evil," i. e., "from every kind of evil." And they correspond with the former member of the sentence, which should be divided further by a comma only, "Hold fast that which is good, abstain from every kind of evil." A.

23. Body, soul, and spirit. The body—the

human affections and passions; the soul—according to the philosophy of that age—the rational powers; and the spirit—that on which God directly operates, and which apprehends the things of God: and the apostle prayed that not this spirit only, but the whole man, might be presented blameless. So we hear him say, "Not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon"; that the Christian should have a glorified body, a sanctified intellect, and moral sense, and a spiritual power to love and serve God. F. W. R. —The same soul with its essential powers, the same body with its natural senses, the work of the creator, remains; but in the cleansing of his stained nature, in the sanctifying his faculties that are the springs of his actions, the whole man is quickened into a divine life, and enabled to act in conformity to it. An active principle of holiness is planted in him; every faculty is renewed, and every grace infused that constitutes the divine image. Bates.

24. It is God who calls. Christ has lived, and he asks living followers. He has died a sacrifice, and he asks the spirit of self-sacrifice, the death of evil, in you. He has risen, living evermore; and whatsoever gift of his love ye shall ask, believing, ye shall receive. These are your guaranties, your commission, your grounds of action. This is your "calling of God in Christ Jesus." It is remarkable how perseveringly the New Testament clings to this particular conception of the Christian relation, setting it forward in all possible connections of phrase, and putting it in contact with each element of the Christian system, as if there were a vitality in it that must not by any means be missed. Disciples are said to be "the called of Jesus," "called out of darkness into marvelous light," "called unto liberty," "called to peace," "called to eternal life," "called" first, to be afterward "justified and glorified," "called to inherit a blessing," "called in one body" and "one hope," "called by God's grace" to "holiness," to "his kingdom and glory," with "a holy calling," "a heavenly calling." To "walk worthy of the vocation" is made the business of a careful conscience. To make our "calling and election sure" is the grand victory of our warfare. The promise that subdues all anxiety as to the result is in the words, "Faithful is he which calleth you." F. D. H.

26. An holy kiss. We find a full account of this custom, as it was practiced in the early Church, in the Apostolical Constitutions (book ii. ch. 57). The men and women were placed in separate parts of the building where they met for worship. It should be remembered by English readers that a kiss was in ancient times, as it is now in many foreign countries, the ordinary mode of salutation between friends when they met. C.

27. "I adjure you by the Lord," he says, "that this Epistle be read unto all the holy brethren." Such vehemence would ill become the writer of any mere human letter. And this remark is important considering it is the earliest among his Epistles. He wrote in full consciousness of his apostolic power. A.—This Epistle is well suited at all times to young Christians. It furnishes tests of conversion, corrects errors of inexperience, warns against vain security, and conveys, in a most compact form, wise counsels for the Christian life. It gives prominence to that which should always stand before the minds of disciples young and old—the coming of the Lord from heaven. In every respect it is an Epistle worthy to "be read unto all the holy brethren." D. F.

Section 318.

2 THESSALONIANS i. 1-12.

1 PAUL, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our
 2 Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and
 3 the Lord Jesus Christ. We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet,
 because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward
 4 each other aboundeth; so that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your
 5 patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: *which is a mani-*
fest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the king-
 6 *dom of God, for which ye also suffer: seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recom-*
 7 *pense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when*
 8 *the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking*
vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus
 9 *Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord,*
 10 *and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to*
 be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in
 11 that day. Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy
 of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *his* goodness, and the work of faith with
 12 power. that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him,
 according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

If we quite believed about heaven all that the Bible tells us of it, how humility would clothe us, and zeal inflame us, and the thought of our inheritance ennoble us, making us calm and brave as the sons of God! We should live with men now, heirs with us of a common salvation, as those who hope presently to pass eternity together. Wherever we found souls without the divine knowledge, we should endeavor to say to them with zeal, and yet with wisdom, *Come thou with us, and we will do thee good.* We should pray, believing in prayer; we should work, for *the time is short*; we should hate and resist sin in, at least, something of the spirit in which we shall look back at it out of Paradise; sloth, and self-indulgence, and covetousness, and injustice to each other, would seem even a treason against the Lord that bought us with his blood. Then let us live for this glory, and wait for it, and do all we can to earn it, for our glory is our Master's, and he is coming to *be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.* A. W. T.

THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.

It is a sequel to the previous Epistle, and probably followed it in course of a few months. It issues from the same persons, Paul, Silas, and Timothy; and the joint origin is expressed throughout the Epistle more than in any other of the apostolic letters. D. F.—Since the sending of the first letter, some one had been imposing upon the Thessalonians a letter in the apostle's name, to the effect that the day of the Lord was close upon them, exciting them, and causing them to walk disorderly, and to disregard their own business in life. On being informed of this at Corinth, where he remained for a year and a half, he sent this second Epistle, not contradicting, not even modifying, his former teaching, but filling it out and rendering it complete; informing them of those things which in the divine counsels were destined to precede the coming of the day of the Lord, and the manifestation of which was kept back by circumstances then existing. A.—He had already told them of these signs when he was with them, and this explains the extreme obscurity of his description of them in the present Epistle; for he was not giving new information, but

alluding to facts which he had already explained to them at an earlier period. It would have been well if this had been remembered by those who have extracted such numerous and discordant prophecies and anathemas from certain passages in the following Epistle. C.

6-9. The Lord's *second coming* in glory is a day of *vengeance* and a day of *recompense*. Which is not to be understood as if they were not to be punished nor we rewarded before that day; but that *then* both will be more full and complete. The wicked that are now in chains of darkness are looking for a more terrible day; and souls in the rest of paradise, in the intermediate state of glory, are looking for a more full reward. T. M.—Within the shadow of that throne of judgment we all live, and the shadow deepens fast; for every hour of our dream-like existence is bringing us nearer and nearer to the awful reality. Not death itself is more inevitable; for death is but the commissioned officer

of this tribunal; he exists only that he may lead us to its footstool. Not heaven's promised happiness is more assured; for this is the sole portal of heaven to man. Nay, the very being of our God is scarcely a more fixed truth; for even his being is not more certain than his justice, and his justice demands the judgment. Whatever is uncertain, or undecided, or controverted, this remains unquestionable: God shall "come to be glorified in his saints," He shall be "revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know him not." To this all gathers; in this all is consummated. W. A. B.

9. There are many who cherish good hope, not on the ground of avoiding sin, but of thinking that hell is milder than the threatenings describe it, and temporary instead of eternal; and on this subject they speculate at large. But that it is not temporary we may learn from Paul saying, in this passage about those "who know not God, and believe not the gospel," that they "shall be punished with eternal destruction." How then can what is eternal be temporary? *Chrys.*—When we open the word of God, it is impossible for any honest man to deny that, whether its teaching be true or false, the fact of future punishment is an essential portion of what is taught. By no conceivable perversion of the words of Christ, so often repeated on this subject, and by no interpretation of his parables, can it be denied that it was his intention to give the very impression which the universal Church has received, that there is a "wrath to come," and a state of being which to some is "cursed," and so very dreadful that, with reference to one of his own disciples, who is called "the son of perdition," the Saviour said that it would have "been good for that man had he never been born." The apostles, who express in language as strong and unhesitating the certainty and dread nature of future punishment, were men also who, more than any who have ever lived, loved their fellow-men, wept like their Divine Master for their sins, and devoted their lives, with untiring unselfishness, to rescue them from present evil and future woe. N. M.

It can not be doubted that the character of ungodliness with which the lost spirit leaves this world is perpetuated to the state of being that follows it. But much more than this is too awfully probable. The total absence of all Divine grace leaving every evil propensity to rank luxuriance, the presence of all the accused stimulants to desperate impiety, must surely combine to make the sinner, the punished sinner of this life, progressively, unceasingly, the everlasting sinner of the life that succeeds it. The sinner is to suffer for everlasting, but it is because the sin itself is as everlasting as the suffering. W. A. B.—We are *made* for the enjoyment of eternal blessedness; it is our high call-

ing and destination. To fail of such an object, to defeat the end of our existence, and in consequence of neglecting the great salvation to sink at last under the frown of the Almighty, is a calamity which words were not invented to express, nor finite minds formed to grasp. If it be lawful to indulge such a thought, what would be the funeral obsequies of a lost soul? Where shall we find the tears fit to be wept at such a spectacle? or, could we realize the calamity in all its extent, what tokens of commiseration and concern would be deemed equal to the occasion? Would it suffice for the sun to veil his light and the moon her brightness; to cover the ocean with mourning, and the heavens with sackcloth? or, were the whole fabric of Nature to become animated and vocal, would it be possible for her to utter a groan too deep, or a cry too piercing, to express the magnitude and extent of such a catastrophe? *R. Hall.*

10. He assuredly *comes* to put that glory on his saints which the Father has put upon him, for it is written, "He comes to be glorified in his saints." Not only admired in himself but "*in his saints*"; as if he counted the social glory which results to his person from the glory of his children a greater honor to him than his own personal glory! T. M.—That bright day when he shall shine forth in his royal dignity shall be to his saints the gladdest day that ever arose upon them; a day that shall never set or be benighted; the day they so much longed and looked out for, the full accomplishment of all their hopes and desires. Oh, how dark were all our days without the hope of this day! L.

11. *Fulfill all.* He who first wrought this work in the soul of his good pleasure *carries on* his grace in the same sovereignty of love and power. He refreshes the soul that is faint and weary, revives its graces, enlarges its views, and confirms its hold of divine truth; he calls into exercise the spiritual powers with which he has endowed his people, and sustains them therein, to the bringing glory to his name, and a rich treasure to them of present enjoyment and future recompense. Hence the apostle, desiring the complete salvation of his brethren, prays for it under this special view, "that God would count you worthy of this calling, and *fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness*, and the work of faith with power." Blessed be his glorious name for such a view of that great work that needs to be perfected in our souls! It is the Lord's own work; his own good pleasure. *Goode.*—Never does the believer work for God with so much confidence, and activity, and perseverance, and zeal, and success, as when he knows that all his works are wrought in God; that God is fulfilling in him all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power. J. W. A.

12. Christ may be glorified. To keep ourselves clear from the world, never to break the sweet charities that bind together the circles of our homes, to walk within our houses with perfect hearts, to be honest over the pence as well as over the pounds, never to permit the little risings of momentary anger that seem but a trifle because they pass away so quickly, to do the small duties that recur with every beat of the pendulum, and that must be done by present force and by instantly falling back upon the loftiest principle, or they can not be done at all—these are as noble ways of glorifying Christ and being glorified in him as any to which we can ever attain. A. M.

MEANING OF OLAM AND AION.

If the idea of eternity is expressed at all in the Scriptures, it is by the Hebrew word *olam* and the Greek words *aion* and *aionios*. But, if these words, which in the Hebrew and Greek are equivalent, do not carry with them the idea of duration, then there is no certainty in any conclusion as to the meaning of language. That they are used with reference to different *measures* of duration is evident, and results from the fundamental idea in these terms. *Olam* and *aion* each signify world, period, age, dispensation. The fundamental idea, out of which the terms have grown, is that of a succession of worlds or world-periods, the eternity before and after the world being broken up into great periods, in each of which there is a fixed development from a definite beginning to a definite end. So in this world-period in which we live there are lesser periods, ages, or

dispensations, and to these the same terms are applied. But, as one age is called *olam* or *aion*, so is a succession of ages or one world-period; and, as one world-period is described by the same terms, so is the whole succession of world-periods, and eternity itself is the great *olam* or *aion*. *The extent of duration, therefore, is to be inferred from the nature of that to which the terms are applied.* Now, when these terms, carrying with them the idea of duration, are applied to the life, which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ, is there any reason for limiting their significance? The eternal life of the Scriptures shall never end. Is not the *loss* of that life, to which the same term is applied, and in the same connection, unending also? Even if it were possible, therefore, to fix upon the term "everlasting" a limited signification as applied to future punishment, still the loss of eternal life must be an eternal loss. J. C. S.

Finally, if any man, after a careful perusal of what has been or may be offered on both sides of this important question, shall be in doubt on which side the truth lies, it would certainly be most prudent and safe for him to act as he would if he fully believed endless punishment; it will be most prudent and safe for him to yield a cordial compliance with the gospel in repentance, faith, and obedience. Then he will be safe on either supposition. But, if he trust to the flattering doctrine that all are finally to be saved, and in this presumption shall neglect the gospel, its invitations and requirements, and it shall finally prove that that doctrine is a mere imagination of men, alas! he is lost, irrecoverably lost; while those who receive the gospel with the "obedience of faith" shall, through the blood of atonement, "have right to the tree of life, and shall enter in through the gates into the city." *Edwards.*

Section 319.

2 THESSALONIANS ii. 1-17.

- 1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our
- 2 gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither
- 3 by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let
- 4 no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling
- 5 away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and ex-
- 6 alteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth
- 7 in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I
- 8 was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he
- 9 might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he
- 10 who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked
- 11 be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy
- 12 with the brightness of his coming: *even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan
- 13 with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness
- 14 in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be
- 15 saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe
- 16 a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in un-
- 17 righteousness.
- 18 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord,
- 19 because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the
- 20 Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of
- 21 the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions
- 22 which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ

himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

"*God hath called you.*" The word "calling," applied to a human life in the Christian sense and by a Christian authority like Paul, is a condensed confession of faith. It means the great primary truth of religion, viz., that our erring life is governed by a will above it, and is capable of receiving influences of attraction from the Spirit of God. Take up that single truth, trace it out to its legitimate results, admit all its practical obligations, let in upon your own mind both the solemn sense of duty and the clear illumination for sorrow that it brings with it, accept its necessary incidents of penitence, renewal, redemption, and you find that, including its connections and consequences, it is a majestic compendium of religious doctrine. Life, *without* this sense of a Hand guiding it, a Spirit moving it, a God in Christ calling to it, is really far more perplexing and unaccountable than with that key to its changes. For then, severed from a Father, it is not only a mystery, but a contradiction; not only a riddle to the reason, but, sooner or later, with all its failures and miseries, a painful puzzle to the heart, or even an agonizing mockery to our sense of right—an enigma that neither genius, nor stoicism, nor sensuality, nor suicide can solve. F. D. H.

2. The Thessalonians are cautioned not to be "shaken in mind nor troubled, neither by spirit (spiritual gift of prophecy), nor by word, nor by letter as by us." This would look as if some Epistle had been circulated among them purporting to come, but not really coming, from their father in the faith. And so Chrysostom takes the passage to mean: "He seems to me here to hint that some were going about with a forged Epistle pretending to be from Paul, and that showing this they affirmed the day of the Lord to be already come, that they might deceive many. And this supposition also derives confirmation from the care taken in chapter 3 : 17 to add to this Epistle, itself written by an amanuensis, an autograph salutation, and to specify such autograph salutation to be the token of genuineness which the apostle intended ever after to employ." A.

3-12. It could not be the day of the Lord, for certain events must precede the advent, which had not yet come to pass. There must first be "the apostasy"; and out of the apostasy would issue an opponent of God and of Christ, who must reveal his proud and lawless nature, and then be destroyed "by the epiphany of the Lord's coming." The passage in which this is set forth is perhaps more difficult of interpretation than any other in the apostolic letters, epitomizing, as it does, in a few sentences, the working of evil in the Church through many centuries till the advent of Christ. D. F.—It is pointed out as *the* apostasy, because it will be the greatest of all apostasies; that one to which all others will converge, and in which they will be absorbed. Such an apostasy, in its full development, the world has not yet seen. There have been many "fallings away" since the Lord was received into heaven. There were the partial revivals of paganism under Julian and others; there was the great Mohammedan imposture, drawing after it the greater portion of the East. Churches have left their faith and been extinguished; heresies have sprung up and run their course. In the Eastern and Western churches, corruption of doctrine and practice has set in. In the latter, especially, a monstrous caricature of Christianity has put itself in the place of the faith once delivered to the Church; a local bishop has set himself over churches and kingdoms; has invented new doctrines, or borrowed the cast-off abominations

of paganism. A more subtle method of undermining the gospel of Christ has never been devised; but still the Papacy is not "*the* apostasy," any more than any one of the others mentioned. The Papacy does not, which the apostasy must do, abjure and cast off Christ. A.

Out of the apostasy is to be produced and unveiled at a time undetermined the *man of sin*, the *son of perdition*, the *lawless one*, or quintessence of the whole mystery of lawlessness. This is not to be explained of the false Christs—those pseudo-Messiahs of the early ages, who led away none but Jews after them. Nor is it to be referred to the many Antichrists spoken of by John—teachers of error regarding the person of the Lord, asserting that Christ had not come in the flesh. To the Oriental Church, Mohammed, when he arose, seemed to be this man of sin. From the eleventh century, as the Papacy reached its grand climacteric, some surmised that this was no other than the pope; and the Protestant Churches at the Reformation generally accepted this view. Certain features of the man of sin are undoubtedly exhibited in the Roman Papacy—especially the overweening pretension and arrogance. But in other points the correspondence is not at all so obvious. We read of "the coming" of the man of sin—an expression which can scarcely be applied to the rise of the Papacy. Then the description is of one who is audacious in impiety, exalting himself above every one called God, or that is an object of worship, and exhibiting himself "that he is God." This does not suggest to our minds a high priest of superstition, such as the Pope of Rome. And we can scarcely say that the man of sin, as God sitting in the temple of God, means the pope seated on high at a great festival in Peter's, unless we are prepared to admit that the Basilica of the Vatican is the temple of God. In fact, nothing has occurred in the history of Christianity adequate to the fulfillment of this oracle; and therefore we fear that a terrible impersonation of arrogant impiety is yet to be revealed. D. F.—It is clear that no person, system, or event, has yet filled out the measure of this prophetic outline. Each age has its apostasy, its Antichrist, and each in turn is overwhelmed by some new manifestation of the power of God in his providence or his glory in his Church; so will it be until the final

battle of Gog and Magog shall usher in the day of judgment. Prophecy is self-repeating; and thus the Church is kept always in a state of prayerful expectation. But, whatever foes may arise, whatever conflicts come, they who stand fast in the word of Christ shall have everlasting consolation at the coming of the Lord. J. P. T.

7. "*Letieth*" should be read "hindereth"; one of the many instances in which actual usage has reversed the meaning of old English words. B.

9. Antichrist had a time to come into the world, and so must he have a time to go out again. For, although he saith that he is a god, yet he must be subject to the will of God, and must go as well as come according to that will. The Lord is still going on to make that conquest over him that is determined, in the way that is determined. *Bun.*—We of Christ's Church believe that the present course of things is the conflict, on the broad stage of the world, between our Captain, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the great foe of God and man—the conflict which in person he waged and won when he trod the earth, but which remains to be fought out by them whose souls he has redeemed, and to whom he gives the power of his finished victory for aid. They in their own persons, his Church in her collective capacity, must follow out that victory which he has won; and then, when it is about to be finally and gloriously consummated, will the power of evil culminate and do its worst. Then shall the foe himself try by his agents all his arts, and illude the world with signs and wonders, wrought by permitted power. A.

10-12. The great end of all the works of Jehovah is the manifestation of his true character to created intelligences, as the source of everlasting love, and confidence, and joy, and praise. The system of manifestation is the plan of redemption disclosed in the Bible, and carried into effect by the Spirit of God, in giving efficacy to revealed truth in the sanctification and salvation of man. Without just conceptions, then, of revealed truth, the true character of God is not manifested, and can not, of course, become an object of affection or source of joy. Erroneous conceptions of revealed truth eclipse the glory of God in its progress to enlighten and enrapture the universe. They propagate falsehood concerning God through all parts of his dominions where they prevail, undermine confidence, annihilate affection, and extinguish joy. They arrest the work of redemption; for moral influence is the influence by which God redeems from sin, and revealed truth embodies that influence. When that light has been wantonly extinguished, God will not hold those guiltless who have perpetrated the deed. He has exhibited his true character, and commanded us to love him; and, if we pervert his character, and worship other gods, he will punish the idolatry.

L. Beecher.—Thus is God's mysterious judgment to be justified when he shall arraign the guilt of that *unbelief* which at first appears so utterly removed from the sphere of voluntary and willful sin; thus is He to stand approved of men and angels when he shall unravel all the tangled mesh of our excuses, and flash upon us the tremendous conviction that we are lost only because we *would* be lost; pursuing the trembling conscience into its loneliest retreats, crushing all its unhappy devices of self-deception, and forcing it (last, worst form of judgment!) to set its own seal upon its own condemnation. W. A. B.

13. The blessed Quickener and Sanctifier at one instant breathes into the soul two influences, one respecting truth and the other respecting holiness; one is *faith*, the other is *obedience*. "Both worketh that one and the self-same Spirit." The hand which touches Christ as a Saviour or Priest does homage to him as a King. The instrument employed by the sovereign Spirit in all the acts, believings, feelings, and volitions of the soul, is *truth*. The renewed mind beholds divine objects in a new and indescribable manner, in their self-evidencing brightness, in their beauty, loveliness, and glory, so as to appreciate, taste, and relish them, and in a certain as yet imperfect degree discern them as they are. J. W. A.

15. **Stand fast.** The world, never resting, never sleeping, never wanting in definite promises, presses hard. Old habits and passions reassert their insinuating or imperious demands. The Hill Difficulty looks rather steep: is the end worth the troublesome toil after all? But, meantime, the everlasting verities have not changed their places or lost their light. Your Father is waiting for you; Jesus Christ is the same; the Holy Spirit still strives; the deep wants of your soul are not quenched; the Covenant is not dissolved; the House stands with the door open and the table spread, and all the gracious nurture of the Home is prepared; provisions are made there, not for a fickle sentiment, but for an immortal progress. F. D. H.

Traditions. The earliest writing of Paul was not written till more than half of his apostolic career was past. Previous to this, the gospel was in the Church as a tradition—or as a deposit in the hands of the apostles; or, so far as revealed, as so much common public thought. It was taught by word of mouth—it was received as reported and explained by those who preached it; its facts, doctrines, beliefs—its ideas of the divine, the spiritual, the future—all existed in the mind of the Christian community without their being formally set forth in any systematic, apostolic writing.

16. If there be a revelation in the world, it is contained in the Bible. If the Bible means what it

says, that revelation culminates in the discovery of a redemption and a Redeemer—a personal Christ, who comes not merely to teach, but to accomplish—to do something; to do that, in fact, by which salvation shall be secured to the guilty, and holiness restored to the fallen. Then, again, if words have any significance, *this* is effectuated by his death and resurrection—facts which enfold within them those central and mighty doctrinal truths which lie at the basis of that knowledge of God whence comes “everlasting consolation and good hope through grace.” T. B.—There is but one resource for any man—to grasp in faith the cross of Him who shall come on the throne. That cross disarms all the lightnings of his hand, for it finds an answer in his heart. To know it, live by it, serve under it, is true life now, and to look for its sign in the sky is the good hope, through grace, of life eternal. *Ker.*

Section 320.

2 THESSALONIANS iii. 1-18.

1 FINALLY, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be
2 glorified, even as *it is* with you: and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and
3 wicked men: for all *men* have not faith. But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you,
4 and keep *you* from evil. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both
5 do and will do the things which we command you. And the Lord direct your hearts into
6 the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. Now we command you, brethren,
7 in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that
8 walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. For yourselves
9 know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;
10 neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night
11 and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: not because we have not power,
12 but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us. For even when we were with
13 you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we
14 hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are
15 busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ,
16 that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. But ye, brethren, be not weary in
17 well doing. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have
18 no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother. Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord *be* with you all. The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

Be not weary in well-doing. The dawn brightening more and more unto the perfect day—that is the Christian's course when he is truly Christ's, when he waits and is not weary. We see Him that he is really alive; alive at God's right hand, with all power in heaven and in earth; and because he lives we live also. We begin to feel that there is a spiritual life in us also, derived from our communion with Christ; that we know what it is to forgive, what it is to be patient, what it is to deny ourselves, what it is to believe, and to hope, and to love. These are life, or the seeds of life, at any rate; they will be ripened when the sun is risen; but they are quickened, they live under the dawn. Christ's Spirit is consciously within us; we are not perfectly, but in some degree, not always, yet surely sometimes, spiritually minded. Therefore, be of good courage, as many of you as are waiting but have not yet seen the dawn; who pray, but pray with effort; who believe, yet are full of unbelief. Still pray, and still believe, and still watch; turn not back; do not give up the point whereunto you have attained, but abide there with anxious patience. Watch your lives carefully, weed out whatever sin you can observe; this is the proof that you are in earnest, and not liars to God and to yourselves; but wait and pray for Christ to appear, and to establish you with his righteousness, and to grant you to live consciously because he lives, and to know that he is in the Father, and you in him, and he in you. T. A.

2. In the first Epistle the writer's mind is almost entirely occupied with the thought of what might be happening at Thessalonica; in the second, the remembrance of his own pressing trials seems to mingle more conspicuously with the exhortations and warnings addressed to those who are absent. He particularly asks for the prayers of the Thessalonians, that he may be delivered from the perverse and wicked men around him, who were destitute of faith. It is evident that he was in a condition of fear and anxiety. This is manifest from the words which were heard by him in a vision vouchsafed at this critical period. H. (See Acts 18: 9, 10.)

5. "*The patient waiting for Christ*" ought to be "*the patience of Christ*," the patience which was in Christ. The words will not bear the other rendering. A.—It is not "*the patient waiting for Christ*," as in the authorized version, though that is good; but it is sympathy with the very patience of Christ, who, during this time of opposition to his word—when his cause is obstructed by "*unreasonable and wicked men*"—has long patience, and sits calmly in heaven expecting till his enemies are made his footstool. This patience his people are to share, that they may also have part in his victory.

10-12. With that broad, practical sense which should never be forgotten in religious instruction, the writers renew their admonition to the Thessalonians regarding honest, self-supporting industry. Probably it was an effect of the agitation among them about the day of the Lord that some of the Christians had renounced daily work, and were living in a feverish anxiety or excitement. Those who did so burdened unduly the funds of the Church, or lived at the expense of others; so the Epistle conveys to them a very terse injunction, "*that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.*" If one be duly called and appointed to undertake such work in the Church as demands all his time and strength, he is entitled to a livelihood for him-

self and his family; he may "*live of the gospel.*" But persons not so called and appointed have no right to place themselves on Church support, and call it "*living by faith.*" D. F.

God is constantly teaching us that nothing valuable is ever obtained without labor, and that no labor can be honestly expended without our getting its value in return. He is not careful to make everything easy to man. The Bible itself is no light book; human duty no holiday engagement. T. B.—Inasmuch as God has so constituted us that without work we can not eat, that if men ceased for a single day to labor the machinery of life would come to a stand, an arrest be laid on science, civilization, social progress, on everything that is conducive to the welfare of man in the present life, we may safely conclude that religion, which is also good for man, which is indeed the supreme good of man, is not inconsistent with hard work. It must undoubtedly be the design of our gracious God that all this toil for the supply of our physical necessities, this incessant occupation amid the things that perish, shall be no obstruction, but rather a help to our spiritual life. Caird.

16. "*The Lord of peace*"—He who is its author and the source from which it flows—is here called upon to bestow it: "*The Lord of peace himself give you peace.*" Quite consistently with those words of our Lord, wherein he communicates peace as his legacy to his disciples: "*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.*" E. M. G.

17, 18. This concluding benediction is used by Paul at the end of the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians (under a longer form in 2 Cor.), Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Thessalonians. And, in a shorter form, it is used also at the end of all his other Epistles. It seems, from what he says here, to have been always written with his own hand. C.

Section 321.

1 TIMOTHY i. 1-20.

1 PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord
2 Jesus Christ, *which is* our hope; unto Timothy, *my* own son in the faith: Grace, mercy,
and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

3 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou
4 mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and
endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith:
5 *so do*. Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and *of* a good
6 conscience, and *of* faith unfeigned: from which some having swerved have turned aside
7 unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they
8 say, nor whereof they affirm. But we know that the law *is* good, if a man use it lawfully;

- 9 knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and
 10 murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other
 11 thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.
- 12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful,
 13 ful, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and
 14 injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of
 15 our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a
 faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to
 16 save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me
 first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should
 17 hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible,
 the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.
- 18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went
 19 before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; holding faith, and a good
 20 conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: of
 whom is Hymenæus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may
 learn not to blaspheme.

INQUIRING why Christ came in the world, and taught that it was for this end, to save sinners, we are initiated on the instant into the true doctrine concerning our own nature. The glorious original of man, the Son of God, pure, joyous, immortal, the image of his Maker; man, an apostate from his high estate, his capacities undestroyed, his goodness dimmed, his soul grand and immortal still, but that very grandeur and immortality made a curse by sin; hope, blasted by conscious guilt, revived by the priesthood of Christ; a new life imparted to the disabled spirit through the blessedness of divine mercy; that which the weakness of human flesh never could accomplish of itself made certain by our alliance with Christ; and this degenerate and prostrate nature of ours, in Christ elevated above the angels, and promised a security from which there shall be no other falling; here in Christ and his cross have we the universal solvent, which touches and includes every real fact in man's eventful life. You can not have a cold, lifeless, or false theory concerning man, so long as you study man in Christ; his advent, his atonement, his resurrection, his redemptive work. There is not a belief, a duty, a command, a promise, a hope belonging to man, which does not range itself in proper place and order around this central fact, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Learning here at what a costly sacrifice man was redeemed, we are struck as nowhere else with the shame and sadness and woe of his fall; taught at the same time to what heights he is raised by the power and grace of the Redeemer, we see the true greatness and glory of our nature, surpassing all that ever was conceived by an infidel pride and ambition. God in Christ, God's greatness in condescension. Man in Christ, man's greatness in being recovered. Recovery implies penitence, forgiveness, new obedience, progressive sanctification, the law of the spirit of life, a heaven of holiness and blessedness, and fearless security. W. A.

THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

THE designation of *pastoral Epistles* has been commonly applied to the two Epistles to Timothy and the Epistle to Titus, because alike addressed to persons engaged in pastoral work, and chiefly discoursing of matters relating to such work. P. F.—Without doubt it was near the end of Paul's life and ministry that he wrote the pastoral Epistles. After his first imprisonment at Rome, during which he dispatched his letters to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and to Philemon, he resumed his itinerant ministry for a few years, revisited former scenes, and perhaps entered on some new ground also. On this apostolic circuit he left Timothy at Ephesus and Titus at Crete, to represent his authority and establish order in the churches. This Epistle was sent to Timothy while thus acting.

No name is more closely connected with Paul's

career than that of Timothy, a native of Lystra, a town not very remote from the apostle's birthplace at Tarsus. Though his father was a Greek and a heathen, his mother and grandmother were devout Jewesses, and trained him from childhood in a knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures. He was converted to Christ through the preaching of Paul, on his first visit to Lycaonia, and was, no doubt, baptized at the same time. On his second visit, the apostle took notice of Timothy as "a disciple well reported of by the brethren at Lystra and Iconium," and adopted him as his missionary assistant. (Read pages 102, 103, 110.) Timothy had noble qualities of piety and faithful affection; and that man must ever be honored in the Church of God who for full sixteen years possessed the love, deserved the confidence, shared the labors, and alleviated the sorrows of the great apostle Paul. D. F.

The work and difficulties that were handed over to Timothy are vividly portrayed in this Epistle. He had to rule presbyters, most of whom were older than himself, to assign to each a stipend in proportion to his work, to receive and decide on charges that might be brought against them, to regulate the alms-giving and the sisterhoods of the Church, to ordain presbyters and deacons. There was the risk of being entangled in the disputes, prejudices, covetousness, sensuality of a great city. There was the risk of injuring health and strength by an overstrained asceticism. Leaders of rival sects were there—Hymenæus, Philetus, Alexander—to oppose and thwart him. The name of his beloved teacher was no longer honored as it had been; the strong affection of former days had vanished, and "Paul the aged" had become unpopular, the object of suspicion and dislike. Only in the narrowed circle of the faithful few—Aquila, Priscilla, Mark, and others, who were still with him—was he likely to find sympathy or support. We can not wonder that the apostle, knowing these trials, and with his marvelous power of bearing another's burdens and making them his own, should be full of anxiety and fear for his disciples' steadfastness; that admonitions, appeals, warnings, should follow each other in rapid and vehement succession.

3. It is impossible to make out with complete exactness the relations between the missions of and the Epistles to Timothy and Titus. This alone is clear, that they were placed at Ephesus and Crete under similar circumstances, and about the same time; and that the Epistles to them were nearly contemporaneous. S.

5. In the spiritual life *there is an end*. The end is love—supreme love, with all the powers of the soul, to God—and such love to our brethren as we bear to ourselves—this love to be engendered by a living faith in what God has done for us, a faith which sets free the heart both from a sense of guilt and from a love of sin, and which thus sets the conscience at ease. If this love is in some measure yielded both to God and man, the object of true religion is attained. If this love is not produced and maintained in the soul we fail altogether in true religion, though we may have been very busy *about* religion, may have put up many prayers, heard many sermons, attended many sacraments, assisted in many philanthropic enterprises. E. M. G.—It is love out of a *pure heart*, hence incapable of working to ignoble ends; also out of a *good conscience*, honestly bent on following out its convictions of truth and duty; finally, out of *faith unfeigned*—a term frequently used to characterize the graces of the Christian character, applied to faith, serving to indicate its living apprehension and firm grasp of the things presented to its view; hence widely different from that lazy assent to the doctrines of the gospel, that merely formal profession of adherence to them which often goes by the name of faith. Considered with respect to practical working, the order adopted by the apostle is quite natural: far-

thest in, as the deep fountain-head of all the outgoings of Christian love, there is the purified heart; then, to regulate the actings of love, and determine their course and measure, there is the good conscience; and finally, to sustain and animate the soul in the varied works and labors proper to love, there is the faith unfeigned, embracing the glorious promises of God, and ministering strength from the things therein contained to its vital energy. P. F.

There can be no saving faith in an unseen Person except through the medium of thoughts concerning him, which thoughts put into words are a creed. The antithesis which is often eagerly urged upon us—not doctrines but Christ—is a very incomplete and misleading one. "Christ" is a mere name, empty of all significance till it be filled with definite statements of who and what Christ is. But, while we must have doctrines to make Christ a reality and an object of faith to grasp at all, when we have these doctrines, it is not the creed that saves, but the faith. You must turn your creed into a faith before it has power to bless and save. What is the use of your saying that you believe in God the Father Almighty when there is no child's love and happy confidence in your heart? What the better are you for believing in Jesus Christ, his divine nature, his death and glory, when you have no reliance on him nor any love toward him? Is your belief in the Holy Ghost of the smallest consequence if you do not yield to his hallowing power? What does it matter that you believe in the forgiveness of sins so long as you do not care whether yours are pardoned or not? And is it anything to you or to God that you believe in the life everlasting if all your work and hopes and longings are confined to "this bank and shoal of time"? Are you any more a Christian because of all that intellectual assent to these solemn verities? Your faith, not your creed, determines your religion. Thank God that the soul may be wedded to Christ even while a partial conception of Christ is in the understanding. But the more complete and adequate the creed, indeed, the mightier and more fruitful in blessing will the faith naturally be. A. M.

8-9. Law never can be abrogated. Strict rules are needed exactly in proportion as we want the power or the will to rule ourselves. It is not because the gospel has come that we are free from the law, but because and only so far as we are in a gospel state. "It is for a righteous man" that the law is not made, and thus we see the true nature of Christian liberty. The liberty to which we are called in Christ is not the liberty of doing what we will, but the blessed liberty of being on the side of the law, and therefore unrestrained by it in doing right. F. W. R.—These words explain the meaning of a great many passages in Paul's Epistles in

which he speaks of not being under the law. It is clear that he is not speaking solely or in any considerable degree of the ceremonial law; but much more of the law of moral good, the law which told men how they ought to live and how they ought not. This law, he says, is not made for good men but for evil: a thing so plain that we may well wonder how any could ever have misunderstood it. It is so manifest that strict rules are required just exactly in proportion to our inability or want of will to rule ourselves; it is so very plain that, with regard to those crimes which we are under no temptation to commit, we feel exactly as if there were no law. We are not under the law, because we do not need it; not because there is in reality no law to punish us if we do need it. And just of this kind is that general freedom from the law of which Paul speaks as the high privilege of the true Christians. It supposes that the Spirit of God, presenting to our minds the sight of God's love in Christ, sets us free from the law of sin and death; that is, that a sense of thankfulness to God, and love of God and of Christ, will be so strong a motive that we shall need no other; that it will so work upon us as to make us feel good, easy, and delightful, and thus to become dead to the law. T. A.

11. Without seeking to pursue the subject in the form of a studied contrast between the law and the gospel (he was not now writing against *direct* Judaizers), or of a declaration how the transgressors of the law were to attain righteousness, he more than implies it all in the history of his own case. In a word, the law was for the *condemnation* of sinners, the gospel of Jesus Christ was for the *saving* of sinners and the ministration of forgiveness; verily, it was a *gospel of the glory of the blessed God*. E.—The word "blessed" represents that particular word in the original which admits of being rendered by the term "happy." To call God "blessed," seeing that he is the object of all "blessing and praise"; to whom are ascribed by all holy and obedient natures "power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and *blessing*"; this seems natural and appropriate. But to call him "blessed," in the sense of expressing his personal felicity—describing him, in fact, as the "happy God"—this would appear to jar on the feelings, as if it were out of harmony with the majesty and grandeur of the divine nature. Whatever may be thought of it, however, *there it is*; the word in question stands before us in the text. He is not only the strong, the wise, the holy, the eternal, but he is also the "blessed," or *happy*, God. T. B.

13. He did not merit conversion on account of having been ignorant; but because he is ignorant he is not among those impenitent persons, those hardened ones for whom grace itself has no further

resources—all that which it possesses having been tried, exhausted, but without profit. *Monod*.—His violent procedure, however inexcusable in itself, was still not of such a kind as placed him beyond the pale of mercy; since he had not, like the worse part of the blaspheming and persecuting Pharisees, sinned against his better convictions; he had not deliberately set at nought the counsel of God, and defied heaven to its face. He stood, therefore, substantially on a footing with the Jerusalem sinners who, on and after the day of Pentecost, were charged by Peter with the awful crime of having crucified the Lord of glory, yet with the qualifying circumstance of having done it in ignorance.

14. *But the grace of our Lord superabounded*—not merely manifested itself in an act of mercy and exhibition of undeserved goodness, as in the case of ordinary sinners, but overflowed, in a manner, its wonted channels, and like a mighty flood poured its gifts of love into his bosom. And, with the wonderful grace received, the apostle couples the frame of mind awakened by it: *With faith and love that are in Christ Jesus*. P. F.

15. A text unspeakably precious to every soul born of the Spirit, which every student of his Epistles recognizes as a close yet clear condensation of them all—the very breath and life of his sanctified mind and heart; the theme of ten thousand sermons, but so full of gospel, that it continually overflows as with honey from the cleft of the rock; so profound, that a whole system of theology might be drawn from its few words. *Bethune*.—The simplicity and comprehensiveness of this saying, as a summary of the Christian creed, has been justly applauded. Said the elder Alexander, after teaching theology forty years: "The longer I live, the more I incline to sum up all my theology in the single sentence, 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.'" A thoughtful analysis of the passage develops these propositions as contained in it: 1. That men are *sinners* is the fundamental fact upon which the whole gospel proceeds, and to which it all refers. 2. They are sinners in a sense that they need, not merely reformation, cultivation, but *salvation* by a *Jesus* that *saves*, and therefore must expiate sin. 3. The Jesus that saves must needs be also *Christ* the "anointed," appointed—commissioned of God as Mediator, and therefore be divine. 4. The "Christ" must needs "*come into the world*," thereby becoming Son of man, as well as Son of God. This view, logically self-consistent and accordant with first truths, commends itself to the rational understanding as *faithful*—"reliable"—"believable"—to be confided in as truth. 5. Also, as experimental truth, it commends itself to the heart and conscience of universal humanity, as *worthy of joyful acceptance*. 7.

The practical result of its acceptance is a humility out of which springs the profoundest conviction that this gospel is able to save to the uttermost. S. R.

Christ came to save. "If my transgressions were not so great, I could venture to believe in Christ for pardon and salvation; but now I fear he will cast me out, if I come unto him." According to this reasoning, Moses, not Christ, has the pre-eminence; and, in truth, it all comes to this issue, "God will be favorable to me, or not, in proportion as I have kept or broken the law." It is certain that no man can ever view sin in too detestable a light; but, if he view it in such a manner as to eclipse his views of Christ, he can not feel any kindly, ingenuous sorrow on account of it. Sin viewed in the law begets terror and hardness; viewed in the gospel, it begets sweet relents of soul. *Hill.*

Twenty years after his conversion, Paul speaks of himself as "unworthy to be called an *apostle*." Five years later, he is "less than the least of *all saints*." And now, three or four years later still, and not long before his "time of departure," he is "*chief of sinners*." So has it ever been with true-hearted Christian souls. The more mature and rich their experience and its fruitage, the deeper their sense of unworthiness. The nearer to Christ and to Christlikeness, the clearer their perception of sin and the greater their sensitiveness to its painful effects. B.

16. This passage sums up his qualifications as a saved sinner to preach salvation to all the lost world. He was the chief of sinners. His great soul and his great light together rendered it possible that he should be this. His obstinacy in unbelief and rage in persecution confirm the fact that he was this. He was saved by the greatest of miracles of grace. Saul, the chief of sinners, was saved, and brought back to God, to appear as Paul the saint, prepared to do his grand work for the Gentile world, and to go up at the last to wear his everlasting crown of righteousness. Amazing fact, that *he*, the chief of sinners, was saved by Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ showed forth *all* long-suffering in this man's salvation! Who does not see the marvelous patience of God with Paul, the persecutor and blasphemer, the Pharisee of the Pharisees, through those long years? The greatest of sinners saved by the greatest of grace was just the man to illustrate and to preach the world-salvation to the universal man, and to push the work with resistless energy out toward the ends of the earth. D. S. G.

17. When He is spoken of as *King of the ages*, he is presented to our view as supreme Lord and Director of the successive cycles or stages of development through which this world, or creation at large, was destined to pass—the sovereign Epoch-maker, who arranges everything pertaining to them before-

hand, according to the counsel of his own will, and controls whatever takes place, so as to subordinate it to his design. The idea is presented in many other parts of Scripture, in the Old Testament as well as in the New; and in Ps. 145: 13 the kingdom of God is in the Septuagint described as a kingdom of all the ages. P. F.—"*Now unto the king eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever, Amen.*" As I read these words, there came into my soul and was diffused through it a sense of the glory of the Divine Being. Never any words of Scripture seemed to me as these words did. I thought with myself, how excellent a Being that was, and how happy I should be if I might enjoy that God, and be waft up to Him in heaven, and be, as it were, swallowed up in Him for evermore. *Edwards.*

18. It is important to observe how emphatically Paul dwells on this idea of a *charge* throughout the Epistles to Timothy and Titus—a charge for them to keep themselves, and to enforce on all the church—bishops and deacons, men and women, rich and poor, faithful disciples and factious opponents. S.

19. If the Christian was not prayerful and vigilant; if his moral tone got relaxed and lowered, either by his falling into "sins of the flesh," or being "vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind," the light within him would become darkness, his perception of truth less clear, his hold of it less firm; he would be open to influences antagonistic to it, be liable to be seduced by false teachers, or might welcome misconceptions originating in himself. This moral law, conservative of stability in "the apostles' doctrine," is strongly expressed in Paul's admonitions to Timothy: "That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost"; "holding faith and a good conscience, which" (*the good conscience*) "some having put away concerning *the faith* have made shipwreck." T. B.—The two must go together as inseparable companions; the good conscience can no more be dispensed with than the living faith; and much must ever depend on the healthful, harmonious, and concurrent action of the two for the result that is attained in the Christian warfare. **Concerning faith made shipwreck.** They resolutely stifled the monitions of conscience, or drove from them whatever it suggested in the way of moral suasion to restrain them in the course they were pursuing. They thus, in the first instance, proved false to the convictions of their better nature; and this, by a natural process of reaction, led them to make shipwreck of faith itself.

20. Satan is but a creature and an instrument—one who has a definite sphere to occupy and a power to exercise in relation to the purposes of God's moral government, but still only of a subordinate and ministerial kind. Thus Job was for a season

left to be bruised and afflicted by Satan ; only, however, for a season, and in order that he might through the fiery ordeal be raised to a higher purity and a more serene bliss. David, also, was allowed to be tempted by Satan, so as to be thereby drawn into the vortex of severe retributory judgments, yet with the ultimate design of having the flesh destroyed and the spirit raised to a nobler elevation. So that

the delivering to Satan was in the apostle's intention and desire only an expedient for accomplishing a spiritual cure. It was the most solemn form of excommunication, and betokened that those against whom it was employed were in a most perilous condition—trembling on the brink of final impenitence, and, if capable of being saved at all, saved only as by fire. P. F.

Section 322.

1 TIMOTHY ii. 1-15.

1 I EXHORT therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of
2 thanks, be made for all men ; for kings, and *for* all that are in authority ; that we may lead
3 a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this *is* good and acceptable in
4 the sight of God our Saviour ; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the
5 knowledge of the truth. For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men,
6 the man Christ Jesus ; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.
7 Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, *and* lie
8 not ;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity. I will therefore that men pray every
where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefaced-
10 ness and sobriety ; not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array ; but (which
11 becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the women learn in silence
12 with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the
13 man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not de-
14 ceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall
15 be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

THE same Divine Being, who by the voice of his Scriptures demands our whole wealth of affections, has also, in the very same Scriptures, exhibited to us a personage, distinct from the simple and unmingled Godhead, who makes and is everywhere countenanced in making the *very same demand*. The highest conceivable attributes of supremacy are combined in this Being, so as to demand our absolute submission as *a right*. Our whole spiritual life and eternal fortunes are suspended upon him so as to demand it as our *interest*. Ties more potent, more holy still, bind us to the Mediator ; and these ties (strange to say !) are found to compose the whole habit of religion ! He redeemed us, and we *love* him ; he offered us salvation, and we *believe* on him ; he is to receive us into glory, and we *hope* in him ; he is our strength and life, and we *rejoice* in him ; he is proclaimed our "King," our "Head," the vine in which we are grafted, the foundation on which we are built, and we *adore* him ! This "King on Zion" bears that within him which can stand the whole weight of our adoration ; we need not dread in our hours of deepest devotion, in all the prostration of the heart before its Lord, that we are defrauding the God when we worship Him who is also "the man Christ Jesus." W. A. B.

In the business of life, which you know is also the seed of eternity, and as such infinitely precious, three parties there are concerned, of whose existence it behooves us to be equally and intensely conscious ; three, and in the real, deep struggle for life and death, three only ; and these three are God, on the one hand, and your own individual souls on the other, and the one Mediator Jesus Christ, who alone can join the two into one. Lose sight of one of these three, and what becomes of us ? Lose sight of God, and we lose sight also of the Mediator by necessity, for there is nothing left but our own single soul, and a mediator is not a mediator of one. Lose sight of the one Mediator, and we lose sight no less surely of the one true God, for to Him there is no access for living man but only through the Mediator, his Son Jesus Christ. And lose sight of your own individual souls, try to sink their personal existence in that of other men, call their belief your belief, and surrender your conscience to their conscience, and then also we lose the one true Mediator, putting other and false mediators in his place, and they can not keep the individual soul alive as he does ; but they weaken and destroy it, and we who should be living stones in a

living temple, with our own personal life vigorous, our own faith and our own love, become dead stones in a dead building, and we lose God as we have lost Christ, for God is not a God of the dead. These, then, are the three which it becomes us to realize to ourselves most strongly all the days of our life, and hold fast to them, and let nothing obscure our sense of either of them; God, and Christ, and our own individual soul, which Christ has purchased by his blood, and by his Spirit will unite to God, that it may itself know and love God for ever. T. A.

1-7. Here our encouragement in prayer, supplication, and intercession for all men is grounded first on the clear declaration that such prayer is "good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour"—"our Saviour" giving intensity to the expression. It is further grounded on the express declaration of his will regarding others, that he "will have them to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." Here is not only the assurance that we are right in praying that they may be saved, but right in praying that the truth may be brought to all, and that they may be saved through its instrumentality; praying, in fact, for the universal diffusion of Christ's gospel and the universal salvation of men. It is further supported on the ground of the unity of God, the unity of the Mediator between God and men, and the unity of man as regarded by His mediating atonement. We have, then, the clear example of the first preachers, the express declaration that the early conversions were as a pattern for the ages to come, the statement that trust in God as the Saviour of all men was the animating strength under apostolic toil and shame, the command to pray for all, and the most formally stated warrant for such prayers boldly to lay hold upon the promises of God. *Arthur.*

1. The variety of expression is perhaps chiefly to be regarded as indicating the large place the subject of intercessory prayer had in the apostle's mind, and the diverse forms he thought should be given to it, according to the circumstances in which, relatively to others, the people of God might be placed. Hence, *thanksgivings* were to be added, when the conduct of the parties in question was such as to favor the cause of righteousness and truth—a fit occasion being thereby presented for grateful acknowledgments to God, who had so inclined their hearts. P. F.

2. Public prayer should have a large scope, and cover the interests of all mankind. Special emphasis is laid on the duty of intercession in behalf of the kings of the earth, for whom, while they were heathen and hostile to the gospel, the early Christians may have hesitated to pray. There must be no narrowness in the spirit of the praying assembly. God cares for all men; Christ is provided for all men. Therefore let the prayer of the Church ascend to God through Christ in behalf of "all men." D. F.—Imitate God. If he is willing that all

men should be saved, it is meet to pray for all. If he willed that all should be saved, do thou also will it; but, if thou wilt, pray; for it is the part of such to pray. *Chrys.*—You may have many to commend, parents, brothers, sisters, help-mates, friends, children, pastors, parishioners, and may commend them all by the simple, quiet, devout recitation of their names. Yes, thou mystical Aaron, forget not to wear thy breastplate, when thou goest in to offer up a spiritual sacrifice; neglect not to exhibit silently before God, graven upon thy heart, the names of all thou lovest; yea, be an intercessor, as far as in thee lies, for all the people; for of what member of the human family can it be said that he has no claim whatever upon thy sympathy and kind offices? E. M. G.

4. All unto the knowledge of the truth. The gospel is no system of high and abstract truth. The salvation it offers is not the prize of a lofty intellect, but of a lowly heart. The mirror in which its grand truths are reflected is not a mind of calm and philosophic abstraction, but a heart of earnest purity. Its light shines best and fullest, not on a life undisturbed by business, but on a soul unstained by sin. The religion of Christ, while it affords scope for the loftiest intellect in the contemplation and development of its glorious truths, is yet, in the exquisite simplicity of its essential facts and principles, patent to the simplest mind. Rude, untutored, toil-worn you may be, but, if you have wit enough to guide you in the commonest round of daily toil, you have wit enough to learn the way to be saved. The truth as it is in Jesus, while in one view of it so profound that the highest archangel's intellect may be lost in the contemplation of its mysterious depths, is yet in another so simple that the lisping babe at a mother's knee may learn its meaning. *Caird.*

5. For "the man, Christ Jesus," a more accurate rendering would be, "Christ Jesus, himself man." A.—The center of Christian divinity is not in God, nor in man, but in the Godman. Christian theology is essentially a Christology, centering in facts, not deduced from metaphysical or ethical abstractions. Neither God's agency nor man's will can give us the whole system; but, as Calvin says, "Christ is the mirror in whom we may without deception contemplate our own election." Above the strife of the schools rises in serene and untroubled majesty the

radiant form of the Son of God, the embodiment and reconciliation of divinity and humanity. H. B. S.

Mediator. Jesus is the Mediator of the New Testament, who takes from us all that we have given to ourselves, and gives us all that we have taken away from ourselves. He takes from us our sins and gives us his grace. He who has experienced the power of his sin-effacing, grace-dispensing blood, knows that there is but one Mediator between God and man, namely, Jesus Christ the Crucified One. **Man.** My Mediator is of my flesh and blood. My Mediator is God of God. Thus God stands, clothed in my flesh and blood, between God and man. Oh, exalted humanity! Oh, humbled Godhead! A. C.—The Judge is judged, and is silent; the Invisible is beheld, and is not confounded; the Infinite is seized, and is not wrathful; the Immeasurable is circumscribed, and resists not; the Impassible suffers, and avenges not himself; the Immortal dies, and complains not; the Celestial is buried, and calmly bears it. For the Lord Incarnate was condemned, in order to bestow mercy on us; bound, in order to loose us; seized, in order to free us; he suffered, to heal our sufferings; he died, to restore life to us; he was buried, to raise us up again. One, in truth, was condemned, thousands were set free; One was buried, thousands rose again. This is the Mediator between God and men; this is the resurrection and salvation of all; this is the Guide of the erring, the Shepherd of rescued men, the Life of the dead, the Leader of angels, and the King of kings; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. *Alexander of Alexandria.*

6. Gave himself. Man is separated from God as a criminal; the communion is restored by free pardon on God's part, and the acceptance of that pardon upon man's. Man is separated from God as unholy; the communion is restored by accepting the sacrifice of Christ instead of the absolute sinlessness of man, and by that perpetual and progressive process of sanctification which makes a lost and ruined soul at length "meet for the inheritance of the saints." Christ, the great conduit of mercy between God and man, arrayed in all the attributes of the two natures he came to reconcile, in his one single person effects the whole; justifying as we are in Christ, sanctifying as Christ is in us. And *thus* it is that Christianity restores the race of man by restoring the communion with God. Thus it is that humanity once more meets its counterpart in Deity, and the harmony of the universe becomes complete! W. A. B.

8. Lifting up holy hands. The lifting up of the hands in their more formal exercises of devotion appears to have been common among the nations of antiquity, Jew as well as Gentile; and from the Jewish it naturally passed into the Chris-

tian assemblies. The hands so employed might fitly be regarded as bearing the petitions of the suppliants heavenward, and, in accordance with the action, should themselves possess a character of holiness. P. F.—They whose hands are stretched toward heaven procure protection to a world which perhaps misrepresents them, or at most knows them not. It is by them that the kingdom of God, trampled by so many obstacles, gradually makes way upon the earth which it will one day completely overrun. To this obscure power, to this unknown influence, are due the numerous blessings of which a restless and turbulent activity appropriates all the glory. Such is the efficacy of prayer; and, if the number of these benevolent petitioners were increased, what evils would be removed from the earth, what errors eradicated, what abuses spontaneously reformed! **Without wrath and doubting.** He means that a disposition which is natural to all persons, and habitual to some, and which opposition tends always to awaken in the calmest and most moderate minds, that this disposition to wrath and disputation ought to be watched over and repressed with the greatest care, in order that, when the moment for prayer arrives, we may be able to lift up pure hands to heaven. Contrast the ordinary fruits of wrath with the results of prayer. In yielding to the former, not only do you place yourself in opposition to the holy law of God, but you destroy the peace of your life and the peace of your soul; you aggravate the evils of a situation already deplorable; you kindle up hatred in the heart of your enemy; you render reconciliation on his part, as well as on yours, always more difficult; you run from sin to sin in order to lull your pride, and this pride gives you only a bitter, poisoned, and criminal enjoyment. How much better, then, is prayer than wrath and strife! A. V.—Prayer is the issue of a quiet mind; 'tis the daughter of charity and the sister of meekness; and he that prays to God with an angry, troubled, and discomposed spirit, is like one that retires into a battle to meditate, and sets up his closet in the out-quarters of an army. J. T.

9-13. In order that woman may hold her just position in society and in the Church, the gospel would have her guard with sacred jealousy the proprieties of her sex; and by the modesty and quietness of her manners, the discreetness of her behavior in public assemblies, and the abundance of her good works, wield a redeeming and refining influence over men and affairs. The influence which proved so destructive in the beginning of the race may, through the gospel, be exerted for the noblest purposes of good. That these counsels were not intended merely for a local and temporary condition of society is plain from the fact that they are based upon the order of creation and the unchanging qualities of sex. The gospel, which carries grace, modesty, and purity into the family, would also maintain order

and integrity in government, and peace, good-will, and godliness in society at large. J. P. T.

9, 10. By the women in question must be understood those who make profession of godliness by taking up the Christian name, submitting to Christian teaching and ordinances, and mingling in the assemblies of Christian worshipers. And, as making this profession, the apostle would have them to understand, first, that the kind of dress which becomes them is of a neat and plain as contradistinguished from a luxurious or costly one; and, second, that the distinction which women of gay and worldly dispositions seek to acquire by their splendid ornaments and fine apparel they should endeavor to reach through their good works—a distinction of a far nobler kind, and the only one that fitly accords with their calling.

11, 12. *Let a woman learn in silence in all subjection*—spoken primarily and mainly with reference to the public assemblies of the Church, and only an abbreviated reinforcement of the instruction previously issued to the Church at Corinth (1 Cor. 14 : 34). The *all subjection*, however, can only be understood to reach as far as the authoritative teaching is of the right stamp. Woman does not lose her rational power of thought and responsibility by abiding in the place assigned her by the gospel; and she also has a right to prove all things—only in a manner suited to her position—in order that she may hold fast that which is good, and reject what is otherwise. *But to teach I permit not a woman*—namely, in public; she is not to act the part of a teacher in the meetings of the faithful, *nor to lord it over the man, but to be in silence*. P. F.—Whatever might be allowed in regard to prophecy and prayer, the rule is absolute that a woman may not teach or rule in the Church. Of

course she may preach or publish the gospel to “them that are without,” under those conditions of feminine propriety which nature itself suggests; she may also teach her own sex, and have authority over them and over children; but she may not teach publicly in the assembly of saints, or “usurp authority over the man.” D. F.

14. The case is referred to as a grand though mournful example, at the commencement of the world's history, of the evil sure to arise if in the general management of affairs woman should quit her proper position as the handmaid of man, and man should concede to her the ascendancy. She wants, by the very constitution of nature, the qualities necessary for such a task. Her very excellences in other respects—excellences connected with the finer sensibilities and stronger impulses of her emotional and loving nature—tend in a measure to disqualify her here.

15. Let her be content, he virtually says, with this, that through her as the mother of a seed, given by the God of grace and blessing, she herself, as well as others, are to find salvation. But he couples certain spiritual qualifications as indispensable to the result: *if they abide in faith, and love, and holiness, with discretion* (or sober-mindedness). In short, they must fall in here (as Eve should have done in Paradise, but did not) with the spiritual provisions and requirements of the plan of God; in *faith*, resting upon God's word of promise; in *love*, yielding themselves to the duties of their special calling, as well as consenting to live and act within its appointed limits; in *holiness*, wakeful and striving against occasions of sin; and all tempered and controlled by that spirit of meek and wise *discretion* which instinctively shrinks from whatever is unbecoming, heady, or high-minded. P. F.

Section 323.

1 TIMOTHY iii. 1-16.

1 THIS is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.
2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good be-
3 haviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of
4 filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; one that ruleth well his own house,
5 having his children in subjection with all gravity; (for if a man know not how to rule his
6 own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted
7 up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good
8 report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.
9 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not
10 greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let
11 these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.
12 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the
13 deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.
14 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree,
15 and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. These things write I unto thee,
16 hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou
oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the
pillar and ground of the truth. And without controversy great is the mystery of godli-
ness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto
the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

In chapter 3 : 1 and following, we may perhaps retain the word "bishop," if it be clearly understood that the office here mentioned has really nothing in common with our "bishopricks." These "bishops" were simply presbyters. A.—By comparing what is written here with the passage in Tit. 1 : 5-7, it is clear that Paul uses the terms *episcopos* and *presbyteros* of the same office; for in Titus the words are interchanged, as of one import. There were two designations, but one office; and the designations were two because they were derived from two different quarters. *Presbyteros* was of Jewish origin, and was undoubtedly the earlier of the two, having been in use as a term of office in the synagogue for generations before the Christian era, whence it passed over, with little variation, into the Christian Church. The term originally had doubtless some respect to the age of the persons who were called to preside over the religious community; they were its seniors, its more experienced and venerated members; but in course of time the etymological was lost sight of in the current official meaning, and the presbyters (elders), whatever might be their relative age, were simply the presiding heads of the synagogal communities in the first instance, and then of the Christian Church. Partaking, however, as it did so distinctly, of a Jewish impress, it was natural that, in the churches where the Greek or Gentile element predominated, a properly Greek word, of equivalent import as a designation of office, should come into use. Such a term was *episcopos*, overseer, the specific or official designation among the Athenians of those whom they sent forth to take the oversight of their subject cities; so that, by an easy transference from the civil to the spiritual sphere, the *episcopoi* of the Church were those who had the pastoral oversight of the several churches. Quite naturally, therefore, it is the term employed here, where immediate respect is had to Ephesus, and such like churches in Asia Minor, which were largely made up of converted Greeks. P. F.—Of the offices concerned with Church government, the next in rank to that of the apostles was the office of overseers or elders, more usually known (by their Greek designations) as bishops or presbyters. These terms are used in the New Testament as equivalent, the former, *episcopos*, denoting (as its meaning of *overseer* implies) the duties, the latter, *presbyteros*, the rank of the office. The office of the presbyters was to watch over the particular church in which they ministered in all that regarded its external order and internal purity; they were to instruct the ignorant, to exhort the faithful, to confute the gainsayers, to "warn the unruly, to comfort the feeble-minded, to support the weak, to be patient toward all." They were "to take heed to the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, to feed the Church of God which he had purchased with his own blood." In one word, it was their duty (as it has been the duty of all who have been called to the same office during the nineteen centuries which have succeeded) to promote to the utmost of their ability, and by every means within their reach, the spiritual good of all those committed to their care. C.

2. The married state is usually that in which we can best surmount hardships, and attain the happy end of life, with many refreshments by the way. God often teaches us more by our domestic experiences, family illnesses, deaths of children, and the like, than we can learn by any independent speculations, however spiritual these may seem. It is in

the married life that I have had my most serious afflictions, but with them my strongest consolations. Therefore I consider it more than a mere permission that a pastor should be "the husband of one wife." Beng.—"Sober-minded" is better than "sober"; it is a quality of mind, not a habit of life, that is meant. A.—It is the possession of what may be called *sanctified common sense*; and for this the godly pastor should earnestly strive and pray, under the conviction that for him not open transgression merely but imprudence also, indiscretion, is sin, since it throws a stumbling-block in the way of his usefulness, and in a manner robs him of his talents and opportunities. P. F.

Apt to teach. Men who have no gift to teach ought to betake themselves to whatever honest calling their Maker has fitted them to fulfill, and not pule about the Lord delighting to use foolish instruments, while every day proves that he is in no way using them, unless it be as an example to all not to assume an office without having proved their fitness. The men whom God sends may be without the accomplishments of scholars, but never without sense and utterance. Arthur.

3. Covetous. There are three words which in our version are rendered "covetous" or "covetousness." One signifies a *man greedy of gain*. Another signifies a *man who always desires more* (Luke 12 : 15). The last signifies simply a *lover of money* (Luke 16 : 14; 1 Tim. 3 : 3; Heb. 13 : 5; 2 Tim. 3 : 2-4), a friend of self, friend of money, friend of pleasure, more than friend of God. Monod.

4, 5. He should, it is true, be apt to teach in the pulpit; but Paul sends us for the character and credentials of a bishop to the bishop's own family, to his wife and his children. Is he one that ruleth well his own house? R. T.—Families are the principles or seeds of a commonwealth. A family is a commonwealth in a little volume, and the rules of it are an epitome of all laws by which whole nations are governed. The apostle makes it a special character of his bishop that he must be one who rules his own house well, and subjoins the reason: "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" And therein wraps up this truth, that he who knows how to rule his own house well is in good posture of spirit for public rule. Caryl.

6. The supposed neophyte, through his inexperience and undue elation of spirit, first falls into the sin of the old aspiring apostate, and then shares in his condemnation, passing from the sphere of a minister of light into the doomed condition of an instrument of darkness. The lesson, with its attendant warning, is for all times. 7. The most natural explanation of the apostle's fear regarding the appointment of pastors who were not in good repute with the world is, that they would in such a case be exposed to the taunts of ungodly men, disparaged as unworthy of their position, and, conscious of this, would probably be tempted to do things which would entangle them in Satan's net of unseemly wranglings or dangerous relationships. Thus ends the apostle's list of qualifications, which he desired to see meeting in every one who might be placed in the responsible position of an overseer of Christ's flock. They are predominantly moral, and consist of attributes of character rather than of gifts and endowments of mind. P. F.

8. The word *diaconos* occurs thirty times in the New Testament, and only three times (or at most

four) is it used as an official designation; in all the other passages it is used in its simple etymological sense of a *ministering servant*. C.—We have express mention of deacons at Rome (Rom. 12: 7), Philippi (Phil. 1: 1), and Corinth; for the existence of a deaconess, Phebe, at Cenchrea (Rom. 16: 1) certainly leads us to infer that there were deacons there also. The business of these deacons consisted primarily and mainly, according to the account of their institution, in the *care of the poor and the sick*. This external charge, however, naturally came to associate with itself a sort of pastoral care; for poverty and sickness offer the very best opportunities for instruction, exhortation, and consolation, and according to the spirit of Christianity the relief of bodily wants should serve only as a bridge or channel for the communication of the far more precious benefits of the gospel. Hence, in the appointment of deacons, men were looked for of strong faith and exemplary piety (Acts 6: 3, comp. 5: 8); and Paul here requires that deacons be of good report, upright, temperate, free from covetousness, and instructed in the faith. P. S.—At Ephesus, and in the larger towns of Asia Minor, the churches had already grown into large communities, and inferior as well as superior officers were required (as previously in the Church at Jerusalem) for the proper distribution and management of their affairs. The distinct place, therefore, assigned to deacons here is perfectly in keeping with the historical circumstances of the time. It is the only occasion on which they are formally discoursed of in Paul's writings. P. F.

8-13. The deacons must be men of fair character, serious, temperate, candid; men who hold to the doctrines of the gospel with a pure conscience; men who have been proved, and who have shown that they are qualified to serve the Church; men whose wives are of such a character that their example will contribute to the promotion of the common cause; men who exercise exemplary family government. A. B.

11. Possibly the matter was so put here as intentionally to include at once wives to the deacons who occasionally shared with their husbands in diaconal ministrations, and women who were themselves charged by the Church with such ministrations. But it ought to be understood of women who, in the one character or the other, were actively engaged in the kind of work which was proper to deacons. And, considering the greater separation which then existed between the sexes, and the extreme jealousy which guarded the approaches to female society, it was in a manner indispensable that women, with some sort of delegated authority, should often be intrusted with various kinds of diaconal service. For those so intrusted, the following simple requisites are mentioned: that they be *grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things*; the same substantially as those required of the deacons, only delivered with more brevity.

15. *God's house, which indeed is the church of the living God*; the latter clause defining more exactly what is meant by God's house. Thus, in Eph. 2: 20-22, the Church, as composed of believing Jews and Gentiles, is represented as a glorious building, raised on Christ as the foundation; a holy temple in the Lord, or habitation of God through the Spirit. A quite similar representation is given in Heb. 3: 6, where, with reference to Christ as a Son in his own house, it is added: "Whose

house are we." In these passages, the house, temple, or habitation of God is plainly associated with individuals, the individuals addressed by the apostle, contemplated as in living union with Christ; and in the strict sense it can only be predicated of such that they are God's house; for in their case alone is there the real link that connects the human with the divine, the spiritual habitation with the glorious inhabitant. It is the Church as the *ecclesia* of God, his elect, whom he has called out of the world and gathered into his fold, that he may sustain and keep them unto life eternal. **Pillar of the truth.** If it was worthy of the name, it was God's house, a living community of saints pervaded by the presence of the living God, and hence *the pillar and basement of the truth*; for, as so connected with God, it necessarily holds and bears up in the world that with which his name and glory are peculiarly identified—the truth as it is in Jesus. P. F.

16. **The mystery.** All that the Scripture tells is for our use and nothing is for our curiosity. It awakens our minds to higher spiritual knowledge, but refuses to answer a thousand questions that we ask. It gives glimpses, but holds up no broad light reaching from the beginning to the end. T. D. W.—The reasons for mystery are first, because religion, in the prime institution of it, was designed to make impressions of awe and reverential fear upon men's minds; secondly, to humble the pride and haughtiness of man's reason; thirdly, to engage us in a closer and more diligent search into them; and fourthly, that the full and entire knowledge of divine things may be one principal part of our felicity hereafter. R. S.—Mystery there must be wherever an infinite Creator and his finite creature embrace; and it is, therefore, your glory that you are thus robed and shrouded in mystery. When you think of God in Christ, of what he has done, and what he still does, and what he will do, be well assured that in all his dealings there must be much you can never expect to fathom; before which, therefore, you can but bow in prostrate humility of adoration; knowing—simply knowing—that all he will do he can do, such is his power; all he can rightly do he will, such is his love! W. A. B.

Without saying that the mystery is *in fact* Christ, he passes from the mystery to the person of Christ as being one and the same. Then, thus passing, he is naturally led to a summary of those particulars wherein Christ has been revealed as a ground for the godliness of his Church. And, the idea of mystery being prominent before him, he selects especially those events in and by which Christ was manifested forth—came forth from that secrecy in which he had beforetime been hidden in the counsels of God, and shone out to men and angels as the Lord of life and glory. A.

Manifest in the flesh. The Christian faith alone shows God one and eternal—the God of Abraham and of Moses making himself man, and the divine nature uniting itself to the human nature in the person of Jesus. And in this union it is the divine nature that shines forth, that speaks, that sets in movement. And this incarnation is unparalleled like the God its author. And why did God make himself man? What is the object of this unparalleled, this mysterious incarnation? It is God's purpose to rescue man from the evil and the peril which have continued to weigh upon him since the fault committed by his first progenitor. It is

God's purpose to ransom the human race from the sin of Adam, the heritage of Adam's children, and to bring it back to the ways of eternal life. These are the designs, loudly proclaimed, of the divine incarnation in Jesus, and the price of all the sufferings and agonies which he endured in its accomplishment. And how does this sublime fact exalt man's dignity at the same time that it illustrates the value that all men have in the eyes of God! *Guizot.*

Christ is "God manifest." He is the *Word*, God heard; the *Light*, God seen; the *Life*, God felt. *Wolfe.*—Oh, high, inconceivable mystery of godliness! *God manifested in the flesh!* Nothing in this world so strange and sweet as that conjuncture, *God man.* What a strong foundation of friendship and union betwixt the person of man and God, that their natures met in so close embraces in one person! *L.*

Section 324.

1 TIMOTHY iv. 1-16.

1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the
2 faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy;
3 having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, *and commanding to*
4 *abstain from meats*, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them
5 which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing to be
6 refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the word of God and
7 prayer. If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good
8 minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, where-
9 *rather* unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto
10 all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. This *is* a
11 faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation. For therefore we both labour and suffer
12 'reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of
13 those that believe. These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth; but
14 be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith,
15 in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect
16 not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the
17 hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that
18 thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue
19 in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

Be thou an example! Your example is every day and every hour at work, blessing or cursing in your family, among your associates, in your daily intercourse, among all that know you. It is working where you are and where you are not; it is multiplying itself, reproducing through others its own image; it is preaching from the pulpit of your life a sermon mightier than your mere words. Many a eye looks to you to know what you will do and how you will live, and the current of your life determines that of others. What a blessed treasure for you would be that of holy example! Your journey through the world would be a path of light. The treasure of a useful life would be stored up for you in heaven, and on your track to the spirit-world would follow those whom your example had attracted, and who would join you in the music of the new song. *E. H. G.*

Meditate on these things! The man of meditation makes the Scriptures his own, draws from them their treasures, and incorporates them into his religious life. Divine truth has a lodgment in his soul. It is linked in with his trains of thought, as he sits, or works, or walks. It fills him with thoughts while other men are filled with projects and restless desires. It supplies the wants both of his intellectual and his practical powers, and connects itself through his hopes and fears, desires and conscience, with all the conduct of life. The nature of divine truth is such that its fullness of meaning and of bearing upon life only reveals itself by degrees to a mind open for its reception. The thoughtful mind discovers this richness of the word; text after text opens and gathers power before the eye; truth after truth puts on new glory. Such being the effect of meditation, *it must plainly tend to keep the believer closer to the doctrines of the Scriptures.* When a believer studies the word with thoughtfulness, he becomes imbued with

its spirit, its parts and truths assume their true relations to one another in his mind, and thus, without his being aware, there has a system of Biblical doctrine grown up within him. Such a believer, it may be, is unable to explain or to defend the truth, but in the main it is with him, and he is shielded against the plausibilities of error. T. D. W.

1-3. While the apostles wrote, the actual state and the visible tendencies of things showed too plainly what Church history would be; and, at the same time, prophetic intimations made the prospect still more dark. T. D. B.—The apostle predicts that there should soon appear such extravagances as we actually find afterward in the Gnostic and Manichean systems—the prohibition of marriage and of certain kinds of food (probably animal) which God had created to be eaten with thanksgiving. He describes such precepts as “doctrines of devils”; in other words, he attributes them to the suggestion of evil spirits, in antithesis with the suggestion of the Spirit of God mentioned in the beginning of the verse. P. S.

2. Persons living in hypocrisy as their natural element, speaking lies as their proper vocation, men who had no relish for the pure gospel, and assumed the profession of a regard to it only that they might the more advantageously propagate their views and practices. P. F.—Hypocrisy is a sin that dares it with God. It is a sin that saith God is ignorant, or that he delighteth in iniquity. It is a sin that flattereth, that dissembleth, that offereth to hold God, as it were, fair in hand about that which is neither purposed nor intended. It will make a man preach for a place and praise, rather than to glorify God and save souls; it will put a man upon talking that he may be commended; it will make a man show zeal in duties when his heart is as cold, as senseless, and as much without savor as a clod; it will make a man pretend to experience and sanctification when he has none, and to faith and sincerity when he knows not what they are. There are opposed to this sin simplicity, innocence, and godly sincerity. Believe that a hypocrite, with all the cunning that shrouds his hypocrisy, can go unseen no farther than the grave; nor can he longer flatter himself with thoughts of life. *Bun.*—**Their conscience seared.** As a clean conscience is its own reward, so an offended conscience is its own punishment. Conscience frequently offended soon becomes “seared”—mark, not destroyed; quick and raw enough underneath, ready to be probed and fretted by the worm that dieth not, and scorched by the fire that never goes out—but seared on the surface, of no use for present service; numbed, dark, useless. People with their consciences in this state often tell us they do not feel condemned for dispositions and practices which are evidently forbidden by the word of God, nor for things which they once would have trembled to do. They do not see that their consciences are seared. *An.*

3. The prohibition of marriage and of the use of certain kinds of food, by which more especially animal food must be understood, was among the commoner forms of that ascetic tendency which had already taken root in the East, and, the apostle foresaw, was presently going to win for itself a place within the pale of the Christian Church. The Therapeutæ of Egypt, and the Essenes in the south of Palestine, were examples of the tendency in question; since, not only at the gospel era, but for generations before it, they had in considerable num-

bers been systematically carrying out their ascetic principles in the manner indicated by the apostle. P. F.—The New Testament recognizes in marriage the normal relation in which the human character fully develops itself and answers its great end—a relation instituted by God and sanctified by Christ. The depreciation of conjugal life by an asceticism which can not rise above its physical and natural basis to the view of its higher moral and religious significance, contradicts the spirit of the gospel, and is in reality of heathen origin. Here the apostle numbers it among the doctrines of the evil spirits which rule the world of idolatry, that they forbid marriage, as some Gnostic sects and the Manicheans did—looking on the body, which was created by God and designed for the organ of the Holy Ghost, as a part of the intrinsically evil matter, and consequently regarding all contact with it as sinful. P. S.

5. The apostle had plainly, in the preceding verse, referred to the divine testimony recorded in the history of creation respecting the goodness of all that God had created and made, coupled also with the express and authoritative permission granted to man there, and still more fully at Gen. 9: 3, 4, freely to use whatever was fit for food in the vegetable and animal kingdoms. The word of God in those passages for ever sanctified all for man's use; and if man on his part, taking God's word for his warrant, gratefully acknowledges God's hand in the gifts bestowed, and entreats his blessing on them, the sanctification is complete both ways—objectively by the word of God, subjectively by prayer. P. F.—A man *may* take food with the view of tasting, and thereby bringing home to his heart a more lively sense of, the bounty of our heavenly Father, who daily spreads a table for all his creatures, and by each meal that he provides answers the Christian's prayer, “Give us this day our daily bread.” He may also take it with the view of making his body a fitter and more efficient instrument of the divine service, a view which would effectually preclude all intemperate use of God's gifts, and make a man's real need the law of his appetite. We may say of the whole compass of earthly blessings what here he says of food. It is not mere enjoyment of the creature, *but trust in the creature to satisfy all the deep cravings of the soul*, which excludes God and Christ from the heart. Nay; a moderate and chastened enjoyment of the creature actually contributes to our sanctification, inasmuch as it acts as a stimulant to gratitude. E. M. G.—Do not undervalue the gifts of God—wealth, and all that wealth can buy; pleasures that come to the soul through the eye, the ear, the taste; the delights of social life, refined by culture, learn-

ing, beauty, grace, and sweetened by the charms of friendship and love. It is cant and sin to affect to despise the delights of social and domestic life, as if God were not to be enjoyed in the blessings with which he crowns our days. These are his mercies, and are to be received with gratitude. But they are not enough, and they are only the efflorescence of the source itself of infinite good. They are God's, but they are not God. He is in himself wealth, pleasure, love; and to long for them alone and not to pant after him, is to be satisfied with the flower when the fruit is to be had, to drink the morning dew when the fountain of living water is at your feet. *Prime.*

7. Exercise thyself. The more our gifts and graces are exercised, the more they are strengthened and increased. *All acts strengthen habits.* Not he who knows most, nor he who hears most, nor yet he who talks most, but he who exercises grace most, has most communion with God, has the clearest visions of God, and the sweetest discoveries and manifestations of his Lord and Master. *Brooks.*—The life of active service may be so conducted as to secure fresh supplies of grace. If in every part of his active work for God the Christian sets God before him; if he is very jealous of the purity of his motives and the rectitude of his intentions; if he is diligent in ejaculatory prayer; if, even in the little crosses and annoyances of the day, he regards the will of God who sends them, and takes them accordingly with sweetness and buoyancy of spirit; if he cultivates the habit of allowing the objects of nature, and passing events, to remind him of spiritual truth, and lead his mind upward; if, in short, he turns each incident of life into a spiritual exercise, and extracts from each a spiritual good—then he is cultivating the internal life, while he engages in the external; and while, on the one hand, he is expending the oil of grace, he is, on the other, laying in a fresh stock of it in his oil-vessels. *E. M. G.*

Unto godliness. Holiness was meant, our New Testament tells us, for every-day use. It is home-made and home-worn. Its exercise hardens the bone and strengthens the muscle in the body of character. Holiness is religion shining. It is the candle lighted, and not hid under a bushel, but lighting the house. It is religious principle put into motion. It is the love of God sent forth into circulation, on the feet, and with the hands, of love to man. It is faith gone to work. It is charity coined into actions. *F. D. H.*—Exercise thy patience, that thou mayest be able to bear ever more and more lovingly the weaknesses of others. Exercise thy faith, that the better thou mayest be able to overcome the world. Exercise thy love, that the easier thou mayest find self-denial. Exercise thy

hope, that the oftener thou hast to pass through tribulation the easier it may be to do so. Exercise thyself in knowing God, that the better thou mayest understand his ways. Exercise thyself in humility, that thou mayest become more and more like Jesus, thy lowly Lord. Have no self-will, but exercise thyself in trusting to the guidance of God. Fear God—the longer, the more childlike. Trust God—the longer, the more confidently. *A. C.*

8. Instead of "*profiteth little*," read "profiteth for a little," i. e., is of some use. The authorized version gives a sense implying the contrary: "*profiteth little*," meaning, "is of no (or hardly any) use." *A.*—He takes occasion to commend that higher kind of energetic striving which became the spiritual athletes of the gospel. The gymnastic training had a measure of good attending it; it was profitable within a certain limited sphere, since it contributed to the healthfulness and agility of the bodily frame, and brought its successful cultivator a present recompense of honor or reward. But the sincere and strenuous cultivation of vital godliness rises immensely above this; it carries in its train the highest good of which man is capable, and *that* not merely for time but throughout eternity. For such is the explanation the apostle himself gives, in the words that follow, of the *all things* unto which godliness is profitable. *P. F.*

While the holiness of man is the grand and ultimate end of God's promises, there is no sensibility or interest of man to which they do not appeal, and aim to render subservient to that end. They create no interference, but insure a perfect coincidence between man's temporal and eternal well-being. "Godliness" has the "promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." There is no interest of man in time which they disregard or fail to promote; no wants to which they do not furnish the adequate and the best supplies. There are no temptations, nor trials, nor afflictions, for which support and deliverance are not provided; no affections, no relations, no duties which pertain to man's present state, to which their provisions do not fully extend, which they do not consult and regulate in a manner worthy of God. By precepts he regulates all, and by the promises engages to give grace and glory. *N. W. T.*

10. They felt that their grand interest, alike for time and eternity, lay in the service and blessing of God; and without disparaging anything naturally pleasant or advantageous which the course of divine providence might place within their reach, or shunning as unclean what God had given to be used, they still showed that they were prepared to undergo any sacrifice of fleshly ease or worldly honor that might be required by their devotion to the cause of Christ, assured that thereby they gained more than they lost—that they advanced their interest in what alone is of supreme and imperishable moment. *P. F.*

There is an inner and an outer circle of redemption, if we may say so, both having a common center in the cross. The larger describes the limits of a possible and provisional salvation; the smaller those of an actual and realized salvation. The whole world is comprehended in the one; only those who believe are included in the other: "God who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those who believe." A. J. G.

11. Charge these things, and teach; the things, namely, which had been mentioned in the immediately preceding verses, and which concerned the whole Church of Christ—involving serious dangers to be guarded against, and lines of duty to be resolutely pursued. On Timothy's part, therefore, there were both charges to be given respecting them, and principles as to truth and error to be taught.

12. Thy youth. The youth of Timothy must be understood relatively: though a person in the full vigor of manhood, he still was young for such a charge as had been devolved on him—much younger, in all probability, than some on whom he had to exercise disciplinary treatment. The natural disposition of Timothy, also, formed rather for helping and obeying than commanding, could scarcely fail to aggravate the danger; so that against this, as a weak point in his position, he was fitly called by the apostle to guard. Respect for the sacred interests intrusted to him required that he should be manly and firm. P. F.

12. An example. In all cases in which formal instruction or advice is precluded, how invaluable that other mode of access to the minds of men—the silent, unobtrusive, inoffensive, yet most potent and persuasive teaching of the life! The counsel you may not speak you may yet embody in action. To the faults and sins you can not notice in words, you may hold up the mirror of a life bright with purity and goodness and grace. The mind which no force of rebuke could drive from sin may yet be insensibly drawn from it by the attractive power of holiness ever acting in its presence. *Caird.*

13. Give attention to reading. The word itself should be read. It carries its own lights, evidences, defenses. The best answer to some of the doubts that arise about it is—to read it. Some never do thoroughly read the Bible; and, as a consequence, they do not perceive its continuities, its harmonies, its grandeur. "The Word of God" is a great building—an historical, moral structure, growing through the ages into a very temple—coherent, symmetrical, grand. A. R.—Read, not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. *Bacon.*

14. The prophecy is to be viewed as the distinct enunciation of God's will in respect to Timothy's qualifications—his spiritual as well as natural qualifications for the evangelistic office; and the formal designation of him by the presbytery was the Church's response to the declared mind of God, and appropriate action to carry it into effect. P. F.—The practice of ordination in the primitive Church

supposes that it was instituted by Christ. The "laying on of hands," we are required to consider a part of Christianity (Heb. 6: 2). Ordination consists in the transmission of ecclesiastical power by the solemn and appropriate form of the laying on of the hands of presbyters. The laying on of hands in ordination is distinctly recognized both by apostolical example and precept. Not that anything is actually conveyed by the mere imposition of hands from the persons engaged in the act to the person who is the object of it. It is the appropriate mode by which it hath pleased the Head of the Church to express the communication of official power to those by whom it is to be exercised. The act of ordination belongs to persons previously ordained. If it is significant of the conveyance of office-power, it can only be performed by those who possess such power. The power, it is true, is not *derived from* men, but from Christ, the fountain-head of all authority. But it is *transmitted through* men; and there seems to be an obvious propriety, if not necessity, that the medium of transmission should be such as to bring to view the thing transmitted. W. S.

15. Meditate. It is good to read, mark, learn; but it is better to inwardly digest. It is good to read, better to think—better to think one hour than to read ten hours without thinking. Thinking is to reading what rain and sunshine are to the seed cast into the ground—the influence which maketh it bear and bring forth thirty-, forty-, or a hundred-fold. To read is to gather into the barn or storehouse of the mind; to think is to cast seed-corn into the ground to make it productive. To read is to collect information; to think is to evolve power. *Cameron.*—Interest in a subject depends very much on our knowledge of it; and so it is with the things of Christ. As long as the life and death of Christ are strange to us, how can we be interested about them? but read them, thinking of what they were, and what were their ends, and who can help being interested about them? Read them carefully, and read them often, and they will bring before our minds the very thoughts which we need, and which the world keeps continually from us, the thoughts which naturally feed our prayers; thoughts not of self, nor selfishness, nor pleasure, nor passion, nor folly, but of such things as are truly God's—love, and self-denial, and purity, and wisdom. These thoughts come by reading the Scriptures; and strangely do they mingle at first with the common evil thoughts of our evil nature. But they soon find a home within us, and more good thoughts gather round them, and there comes a time when daily life with its various business, which once seemed to shut them out altogether, now ministers to their nourishment. Thoughtfulness, which is at the bottom of all religious knowledge, is one of the greatest softeners of the human mind, not in itself indeed the same as love, yet naturally preparing the way for love. And thoughtfulness, blessed be God for it, does not depend on learning, nor is the particular

portion of those who have read many books and have much leisure. Even in the busiest life, he who has no other book than his Bible may enjoy the blessedness of thought; of such thought as leads to the highest wisdom; thought upon life and death, sin and holiness, God's promises and Christ's love. T. A.

Thy profiting may appear. Whatever enriches the thoughts of men, or refines and exalts these, or puts a higher energy upon them, while leaving the principle of faith undisturbed, makes them just so much better ministers of Christianity; the more appropriate and powerful agents in achieving its advance. The splendid genius of the apostle to the Gentiles, cultivated by Greek training, and disciplined by the masculine regimen of the Pharisean schools, to whom travel was a teacher, and many cities the halls of his university—this is the great example of the fact, from the primitive time, for all after ages. And every illustrious champion of the truth, who has preached Paul's doctrine, with his spirit reproduced, till the nations paused at his feet to hear it, and listening centuries clasped hands around his pulpit, has shown the same. R. S. S.

16. Take heed to thyself. That soul will doubtless be very wary in its walk that takes daily account of itself and renders up that account unto God. It will not live by guess, but naturally examine each step beforehand, because it is resolved

to examine all after; will consider well what it should do, because it means to ask over again what it hath done; and not only to answer itself but to make a faithful report of all unto God; to lay all before him continually upon trial made; to tell him what is in any measure well done as his own work, and bless him for that, and tell him, too, all the slips and miscarriages of the day as our own; complaining of ourselves in his presence, and still entreating free pardon, and more wisdom to walk more holily and exactly; and gaining, even by our failings, more humility and more watchfulness. L.

The one reason for being zealous for Christian doctrine, which so far surpasses all others that beside it they become as nothing, is that here given by Paul to Timothy: "For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Saving, first, ourselves; then those that hear us: the sublime can go no further! Here we have set before our hearts, soliciting us onward, motives which we acknowledge have already moved the very heart of the Godhead. To save! as an instrument it is true; but oh, how infinitely glorious, even as an instrument, to save! and that not only ourselves but others! While, on the one hand, guarding "the doctrine" is the only means of retaining saving power in the Church, on the other, no guard upon the doctrine will ever be effectual unless we can raise up a succession of saved men. *Arthur.*

Section 325.

1 TIMOTHY v. 1-25.

- 1 REBUKE not an elder, but entreat *him* as a father; and the younger men as brethren;
- 2 the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity. Honour widows that
- 3 are widows indeed. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew
- 4 piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.
- 5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplica-
- 6 tions and prayers night and day. But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.
- 7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless. But if any provide not for his
- 8 own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than
- an infidel.
- 9 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife
- 10 of one man. Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have
- lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she
- 11 have diligently followed every good work. But the younger widows refuse: for when they
- 12 have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; having damnation, because
- 13 they have cast off their first faith. And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from
- house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which
- 14 they ought not. I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the
- 15 house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already
- 16 turned aside after Satan. If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them re-
- lieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows
- 17 indeed. Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they
- 18 who labour in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the

ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward. Against an-
 19 elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke
 20 before all, that others also may fear. I charge *thee* before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ,
 21 and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another,
 22 doing nothing by partiality. Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other
 23 men's sins: keep thyself pure. Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stom-
 24 ach's sake and thine often infirmities. Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before
 25 to judgment; and some *men* they follow after. Likewise also the good works of *some* are
 manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

Show piety at home. The home came from heaven. Modeled on the Father's house and the many
 mansions, and meant the one to be a training-place for the other, the home is one of the gifts of the Lord
 Jesus—a special creation of Christianity. It is to Jesus Christ we owe the truth, the tenderness, the
 purity, the warm affection, the holy aspiration, which go together in that endearing word; for it is he who
 has made obedience so beautiful and affection so holy, it is he who has brought the Father's house so
 near, and who has taught us that love is of God. Keep the home near heaven. Let it face toward the
 Father's house. Not only let the day begin and end with God, with mercies acknowledged and forgive-
 nesses sought, but let it be seen and felt that God is your chiefest joy, his will in all you do the absolute
 and sufficient reason. Life is a passover which must be eaten with bitter herbs, and if you have faith in
 God he will never be nearer than when grief is near; nor is aught so assuring, so hallowing, as the com-
 fort his presence imparts in the moment of panic, in the long days of sickness, in the dark days of sorrow;
 and the saintliest characters, the sweetest, meekest spirits, are those who have had some signal experience
 of the Saviour's sympathy. *Hamilton.*

4. To *show piety* at home points back to the fifth
 commandment, in which the honoring of parents is
 placed in immediate connection with the reverence
 and homage due to God, and the things which most
 nearly concern his glory; *that* in youthful bosoms is
 the germ of fealty to God, and so its becoming exer-
 cise is reckoned a department of piety. The
 homes in which such reverential feelings are cher-
 ished and such acts of loving-kindness are reciproc-
 ated are the best nurseries of the Church—churches
 themselves, indeed, in embryo, because the homes of
 Christian tenderness, holy affection, self-denying
 love, and fruitfulness in well-doing. P. F.—A
 man's duties, his love, his kindness, his patience, his
 faith, his hope, his every grace, which united con-
 stitute the perfect man, should, the moment they
 leave his own soul, meet first with his wife and bless
 her, and meet with his children and bless them.
 The good Christian is a good Christian especially in
 the closet and about the hearth. The poor Chris-
 tian, the almost Christian, appears best out of doors,
 abroad. The reason is, true religion is a burning
 light, a constantly operating force. Upon those
 nearest to it, and with it, it must shine and act most
 frequently, constantly, and salutarily. R. T.

6. *Dead while she liveth.* If you wish to
 know what hollowness and heartlessness are, you
 must seek for them in the world of light, elegant,
 superficial fashion, where frivolity has turned the
 heart into a rock-bed of selfishness. Say what men
 will of the heartlessness of trade, it is nothing com-
 pared with the heartlessness of fashion. Say what
 they will of the atheism of science, it is nothing to

the atheism of that round of pleasure in which the
 heart lives—dead while it lives. F. W. R.—This
 life without a true present is in reality death. What
 the world calls enjoying life is enjoying death.
 Worse than pain and care, more exhausting than
 suffering and anxiety, is this empty and dreary exis-
 tence, in which the soul has no bread, no water, no
 sunshine, no love; in which the immortal and God-
 breathed spirit knows only time-life. A. S.—I
 have always been regarded as exceptionally favored
 by fortune, and I do not wish to complain or find
 fault with the course of my life. But, after all, it is
 nothing but labor and toil; and I may truly say that
 during my seventy-five years I have not had four
 weeks of real comfort. It is the never-ceasing roll-
 ing of a stone, which must always be lifted anew.
Goethe.

God is the soul of our soul and the life of our
 life; and Christ must dwell in our heart by faith,
 and be the heart of our heart, to enable us to say
 with Paul, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in
 me." The ungodly man is a living corpse; the
 worm of sinful desire consumes his conscience; he
 is an abomination in the eyes of the Saviour, and
 offensive to God and the holy angels. *Gotthold.*—
 Even now we are alive unto God or dead unto God;
 and to be dead unto God or to be alive to him are
 things perceptibly different. The coldness and lone-
 liness of the world without God must be felt more
 and more as life wears on; in every change of our
 own state, in every separation from or loss of a
 friend, in every more sensible weakness of our own
 bodies, in every additional experience of the uncer-

tainty of our own counsels, the deathlike feeling will come upon us more and more strongly. And that were indeed awful if, being dead to God and yet little feeling it because of the enjoyments of our worldly life, those enjoyments were on a sudden to be struck away from us, and we should find then that to be dead to God was death indeed, a death from which there is no waking, and in which there is no sleeping for ever. T. A.

8. The declaration itself is quite general. It asserts in the most emphatic manner the obligations springing out of family relationships as grounded in the constitution of nature, and, so far from being annulled or relaxed by the gospel, only thereby rendered the more sacred and imperatively binding. The parent who refuses (if he is able) to support his children while from youth or infirmity they are dependent on his care and help, or the children who refuse to minister to the sustenance and comfort of aged parents, both alike act an unfeeling and unnatural part; they are not true to the moral instincts of their own nature, and fall beneath the standard which has been recognized and acted on by the better class of heathens. For one, therefore, bearing the Christian name to disregard such claims is utterly inexcusable; it is not simply dishonoring to Christ, it is to bring reproach on our common humanity. P. F.

11. *But younger widows decline*, namely, to put on the list of widows entitled to special guardianship and sustenance on the part of the Church. They might have remarried, as he presently states, without incurring any blame, yea, with his own approval and advice. But, as contemplated by him, the remarrying was the fruit of a growing insensibility to spiritual things, the result of a light, frivolous, sensual tone of mind, fretting under the yoke of Christ, and seeking to break loose from the restraints imposed by it upon the heart and conduct. So that nothing less than an utter shipwreck of the spiritual life was supposed to be involved in the new and backward direction taken by the parties in question. 12. *First faith*. Their simple faith in Christ and consecration to his service when they first assumed the Christian name. It is not the simple question of adherence to a state of widowhood, or of departure from it, but such a course of defection from the decorum and purity becoming the gospel of Christ as argued a virtual abandonment of the faith. 13. Other proofs are here given of their tendency in that direction, and such as would naturally grow by the comparative ease in which they might be enabled to live in consequence of the pecuniary support ministered to them by the Church.

16. *Relieve them that are widows indeed*. A return is here made to the principle of *private* beneficence with respect to young or widowed relatives, and *that* for the purpose of extending it somewhat beyond the line indicated in verses 4 and 8. In these earlier verses, the children and widows spoken of were relatives of the nearer kind; they belonged to the believer's household, and had

consequently the strongest claim on the means and resources of the house. But now a wider circle is embraced. There might be widows, the apostle suggests, who were not constituent members of a believer's family, such as a sister, or step-daughter, or niece; and, in cases of that description, the home resources (if adequate) should, according to the apostle, be charged with the maintenance of the bereaved, so as to allow the benefactions of the Church to be applied to the support of those who were widows in the stronger sense, destitute in themselves, and without the sympathy of any near Christian relative to fall back upon. P. F.

17. Much controversy has revolved round these words. The question is whether this sentence sanctions lay-elders (so called) to rule and a clerical elder for preaching and teaching. It seems to us that to found on these words a separation of elders into two entirely different classes is to put more strain on the sentence than it will fairly bear. The distinctive function of all the elders in any congregation is to rule in truth and love, to superintend and supervise the flock. In the discharge of this duty, they are to teach and so "feed the flock" according to their opportunity and ability. But it is in harmony both with Scripture and with common sense, and it is found in practice most expedient, that one of the elders, by natural adaptation, by special training, and by spiritual endowment more fitted than others to teach, should be charged with the public instruction of the people, and occupy the Christian pulpit. D. F.—In an exegetical point of view, the closing portion of the note of Ellicott gives, so far, what must be regarded as the fair and natural import of the apostle's language: "The concluding words certainly seem to imply two kinds of ruling presbyters—those who preached and taught, and those who did not; and, though it has been plausibly urged that the *differentia* lies in 'labor,' and that the apostle does not so much distinguish between the functions as the execution of them, it yet seems more natural to suppose the existence, in the large community at Ephesus, of a clerical college of governing elders, some of whom might have the gift of teaching more eminently than others." But it must in fairness be added that this teaching qualification appears here rather as a separable adjunct than an essential attribute of the presbyteral function—a gift which, in so far as possessed and faithfully exercised, would materially contribute to the efficiency of the office, and entitle him who so held it to special honor, yet not so as to disqualify those who wanted it from discharging, and even discharging with credit, its primary duties. Seeing it was a spiritual community which was here under consideration, a certain didactic power must be understood to have belonged to every one who could rightly take part in the government of its members; for it belonged to his office that he should at least be able to discern between carnal and spiritual in the characters of men, be capable of testing their knowledge in divine things, and by private fellowship and friendly admonition, if not otherwise, subserve the interests of truth and righteousness among them. So much must be supposed inseparable from the office of presbyter as held by every qualified person; but the gift of teaching in the more distinctive sense, or, in modern phrase, of preaching the gospel with intelligence to the edification of others, is not represented as indispensable. A man might as a presbyter govern, and even govern well,

without it. And indeed, as Lightfoot remarks, having respect to the actual state of things in most of the early churches, "*government* was probably the first conception of the office"—hence, also, in this passage *governing* is the distinctive epithet coupled with presbyters; yet he justly adds that "the work of *teaching* must have fallen to the presbyters from the very first, and have assumed greater prominence as time went on."

18. Or, as it might be expressed, Thou shalt not muzzle an ox when threshing. The form of expression points to the peculiar mode of threshing in the East, by driving oxen over heaps of corn lying on the barn-floor, and, either by their feet or by means of a hurdle drawn after them, bruising the mass so as to separate the grain from the straw and chaff. The passage respecting it is taken from Deut. 25: 4, and is one of a series of directions enjoining kind and considerate behavior. It is the only one that has immediate respect to the lower animals; all the rest bear on the conduct that should be maintained toward one's fellow-creatures, and especially toward those who might be in the unhappy position of bondmen; so that we can scarcely suppose this somewhat exceptional instruction could have been designed for the exclusive benefit of oxen. We may rather suppose it was intended, by carrying the injunction to cultivate a tender and beneficent disposition so low, to make it all the more sure that such a disposition should be exercised toward brethren of one's own flesh, most especially toward those who were laying themselves out in self-denying labors for the public good. It is therefore a perfectly legitimate application which is made of the passage here, and in 1 Cor. 9: 9, to the laborers in the Christian ministry. This prudential maxim, it should be added, is introduced, like the legal prescription before it, merely for the sake of the general principle embodied in it. P. F.

20. Closely connected with its government is the *discipline* of the Church. The purity, peace, and order of the Church depend much on this institution of Christ being properly administered in all its legitimate objects. That he has made provision for these appears from the power with which he has invested office-bearers in the Church to receive qualified persons into communion; to exercise a watchful inspection; to take cognoscence of offenses against the laws of Christ's house; to cite and examine offenders; to administer censure according to the nature and degree of the offense; and either to restore to or finally eject from the fellowship of the body as the person may appear to have profited or not by the censure administered. The authority of Christ in this, as in the other institutions of his house, is a merciful authority. It is a proof of his love, designed to promote the best interests of the offenders themselves, as well as of the body at large to which they belong, and, if rightly improved, a manifest and decided blessing. "If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church; but, if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others may fear. A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject." W. S.

22. Paul had just been speaking of offenses, and of the importance of dealing with them in an impartial and faithful manner. It was in perfect keeping with this that an exhortation should be given Timothy to beware of making rash appoint-

ments to the ministerial office—to take pains beforehand to ascertain the godly life of the persons who should receive the appointment, lest he should be found stamping with his formal approval and raising to the government of the Church men who were themselves, perhaps, of doubtful character, or amenable to discipline. Hence it is added: *neither participate in other men's sins*. He would virtually have done so, if he was remiss in his appointments to the higher offices in the Church, and did not carefully distinguish between the worthy and the unworthy. And further: *keep thyself pure*. The emphasis is on *thyself*, which is hence placed first in the original. Not only beware, by hasty ordinations or otherwise, of coming into improper alliance with the sins of others, but see that thine own conduct is free from any marked blemishes. P. F.

23. Imagine an impostor sitting down to forge an epistle in the name of Paul. Is it credible that it should come into his head to give such a direction as this; so remote from everything of doctrine or discipline, everything of public concern to the religion or the Church, or to any sect, order, or party in it, and from every purpose with which such an epistle could be written? It seems to me that nothing but reality—that is, the real valetudinary situation of a real person—could have suggested a thought of so domestic a nature. But, if the peculiarity of the advice be observable, the place in which it stands is more so. The train of thought seems to be broken to let it in. Now when does this happen? It happens when a man writes as he remembers; when he puts down an article that occurs the moment it occurs, lest he should afterward forget it. *Paley*.—Timothy had a great, and in many respects irksome, work to do, with the disadvantage of a delicate and often ailing frame; and, if care were not taken to place it under proper dietary treatment, he would inevitably become more or less incapacitated for duty. And, as regards the specific means recommended for this end, the taking of a little wine, the apostle is to be contemplated merely in the light of a friend, exhorting to the use of what was then understood to belong to the proper regimen for such infirmities as Timothy was laboring under. He necessarily wrote from the point of view common to him and his contemporaries, having regard to what was *then* believed to be best; and possibly, if we knew more fully the circumstances of the case, it might even still be deemed such. On every account, we ought to take the advice tendered by the apostle in its simplest and most obvious import. P. F.

24. Some sins are so plain, so glaring, that they carry the thoughts at once to the bar of God, and spectators are led irresistibly to speak of the fearful account that must be rendered; and such sins are as swift reporting messengers sent onward to the judgment. Other sins are not fully completed till after the author of them has gone to his grave; the results of them are not developed, the purposes of them not accomplished; but, as fast as they are, so fast the witnesses of them travel on after the author, to overtake him in the eternal world. The witnesses against some men, we have reason to believe, will thus be crowding into the eternal world to the end of time, the indictment against them not being filled up till the last result of their iniquity is developed. A man, for example, who writes an immoral but immortal book, may be tracked into eternity by a procession of lost souls from every generation, every one of them to be a witness against him at the judg-

ment, to show to him and to the universe the immeasurable dreadfulness of his iniquity. But the good works of good men are as immortal as the bad works of evil men. They, too, are swift messengers, but bright celestial ones, before the throne of God in judgment. They, too, come trooping into the eternal world as witnesses long after the authors of them have entered on their reward. And who can tell the blessedness of such men as Baxter, Bunyan,

Doddridge, Flavel, and others, when they see, generation after generation, the results and marks of their own earthly labors, in souls that follow after them to glory? Not a cup of cold water given to a disciple, nor a widow's mite put into Christ's treasury, nor a penitent tear, nor a fervent, faithful prayer, nor any thought or deed of self-denying love, but is recorded in the book of life and sends on its witness for the great day. G. B. C.

Section 326.

1 TIMOTHY vi. 1-21.

1 LET as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and *his* doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise *them*, because they are brethren; but rather do *them* service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but dotting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into *this* world, and *it is* certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be there-with content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and *before* Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep *this* commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: which in his times he shall shew, *who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen. Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.

The good fight is the fight with sin—sin within and sin without—whatever would overcome us or keep our souls from God. This implies opposition to all evils that come properly within the sphere of our effort—the chronic depravity of the world, the phases of iniquity which corrupt morals, and make gain godliness, and blight the influences of the gospel, and sometimes we must come to a hand-to-hand fight with these. And yet we are to fight our way through with the patience of Job and the charity of Jesus, so that abuse shall leave no scar on our even temper, and disappointment shall generate no bitterness of spirit, and our zeal shall not prove a sword on which we fall ourselves. The real battle of life is in a man's own soul. There, with no eye on it but God's, the fight begins and goes on. As there is success or defeat there, the issue of life itself is decided for good or evil. The conqueror within will be the conqueror without. Yet the revolution within that throws off the usurped authority of Satan and the powers

of darkness can be carried forward only by a divine energy. He that would fight successfully the great conflict of life must first of all recognize his dependence on a higher power. He must place himself under the shadow of the Almighty. He must call mightily on him who by the gift of the Spirit can change the nature of the soul and transform it into his own image. E. H. G.

1. To an English reader the term *servants* may or may not mean bondmen. But in the Greek *douloi* there is no such ambiguity; its proper meaning was *slave*, and, as ordinarily used, the *douloi* were those under yoke. The tendency and purport of the exhortation manifestly is, to caution this part of the Christian community to beware of imagining that their spiritual calling and privileges entitled them to spurn the outward restraints under which they lay, and disregard the duties of their station. They were rather, on this very account, to behave toward their masters with becoming regard and submission, lest otherwise, as Chrysostom puts it, "if the master should see them carrying themselves loftily because of their faith, he should blasphemize, as if the doctrine were the ground of their insubordination; whereas, if he should see them obedient, he may the more readily believe, and attend to the things that are spoken." Hence the special reason given by the apostle for the dutiful behavior of the Christian bondmen is, *that the name of God and his doctrine* (or the teaching, namely, of the gospel) *may not be blasphemed.*

[It must be noted, however, that, while the meaning here and in many other passages is plain enough, the usage of the New Testament in regard to *doulos* is of some latitude. The usage, indeed, is derived from the Septuagint, in which the Hebrew word is sometimes rendered by *doulos*, even in the case of persons whose service was entirely free. It is, moreover, applied there to the relation and service of God's more peculiar instruments of working, very often by David to himself with reference to God, to whom he felt bound to render the fullest obedience. This naturally led to a more extended and honorable use of the word by the New Testament writers than is found with classical. It is applied there to true Christians generally; to apostles, prophets, and ministers of the New Testament Church; to Moses, the highest authority in the old dispensation (Rev. 15 : 3); and even to Christ, the highest in the new (Phil. 2 : 7). In all such cases, the rendering *slave*, or *bondman*, would convey an entirely false impression; for, while there is implied in the relation a binding or constraining element, it is that of willing, devoted love, not of legal or outward compulsion. In some cases, also, when the relation is simply human, the term denotes plainly the higher class of dependents—stewards or overseers, not bondmen of any sort.]

5. *Godliness is gain*; not as our translators have put it, "that gain is godliness," for no one scarcely would think of identifying gain absolutely with godliness. But there have never been wanting those who suppose godliness to be gain, consider it as a lucrative concern, and profess it only in so far as they find it serviceable to their worldly interests. P. F.

6. Devotion is the life of religion, the very soul of piety, the highest employment of grace, and no other than the prepossession of heaven by the saints

of God here upon earth, every improvement whereof is of more advantage and value to the Christian than all the profit and contentment which this world can afford. Bp. H.

7. All that we receive in this world, from the hour of our birth to the hour of our death, in food, drink, raiment, and lodging, is the bread of grace and sorrow, and is necessary to life. But we must leave all behind us in the hour of death, and depart hence even poorer than when we came. For a man, when he cometh into the world, bringeth body and soul with him, and he hath forthwith his raiment, food, and lodging. But, when he dieth, he must leave not only these behind, but his body and life likewise. Who, then, is poorer than man is when he dieth? Arnd.

9. *That will be rich.* Preach to the conscience of a covetous person (if he may be said to have any) with the tongue of men and angels, and tell him of the vanity of the world, of treasure in heaven, and of the necessity of being "rich toward God" and liberal to his poor brother, and it is all but flat, insipid, and ridiculous stuff to him who neither sees, nor feels, nor suffers anything to pass into his heart but through his hands. R. S.—A covetous man serveth his riches, and not they him; and he is said to have goods as he hath a fever, which holdeth and tyrannizeth over a man, not he over it. Charron.—The price which the rich man pays for his wealth is the temptation to be selfish. If you *will* be rich, you must be content to pay the price of falling into temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts. If that price be too high to pay, then you must be content with the quiet valleys of existence, where alone it is well with us; kept out of an inheritance, but having instead God for your portion, peace and quietness, and rest with Christ. F. W. R.

Into many hurtful lusts. So hard is it for the corruption of man's nature not to work where it has such plenty of materials to work upon. For who so strongly tempted to pride as he who has riches to bear it out? Who so prone to be luxurious as he who has wealth to feed and maintain his luxury? Who so apt to besot himself with idleness as he who can command and have all things, and yet do nothing? What sin so costly which the rich man may not venture upon, if he can but stretch his conscience to the measures of his purse? It is a miracle almost for a rich man not to be over-run with vice, having both such strong inclinations

to it from within, and such inducements and opportunities to it from without. R. S.—And these are *foolish lusts*, too, unreasonable, childish desires; after one bargain, such another; and after one sin, another; to make even, and somewhat then to keep that whole; and so on without end. If their hearts are set upon purchase and land, still some house or neighbor-field, some *Naboth-vineyard* is in their eyes, and all the rest is nothing without that, which discovers the madness of this humor, this drosy-thirst. L.

Drown men in perdition. When a man has no other object than simply to make money when he has more than he can or, which is the same thing, is willing to apply to useful purposes; when he has no ultimate purpose in view, but his desires terminate upon property for its own sake, it matters not who he may be, what his outward exhibitions of character, or what his visible relations, he is under the influence of the same spirit which, as it controlled a false disciple, led the Redeemer to the ignominy and death of the cross; and we can say of him without hesitation, if he lives and dies under its power, "it had been better for him if he had never been born." E. M.—There is no sphere so humble and contracted as to secure a man against the intrusion of cupidity. He need not plunge into the ocean in order to drown himself—a very shallow stream will suffice, if he chooses to lie prostrate in it; and the desire of the smallest gain, if his heart be immersed in pursuit, will as certainly "drown him in perdition" as if the object of his cupidity were the wealth of a Croesus. J. H.

10. *For a root of all evils is the love of money.* The sentiment is, that there is no kind of evil to which the love of money may not lead men, when it once fairly takes hold of them. The passion is obviously identified by the apostle with its object—money as a thing loved and sought after; and some, he says, reaching forth in their desires after this, made a twofold shipwreck: first, of their Christian principles, departing from the faith; and second, of their happiness, piercing themselves through (trans-fixed) with many pangs. P. F.—The passion ("the love of money") exists under various modifications. In some few of its subjects, it appears to be pure, unmixed, exclusive; terminates and is concentrated upon just the *money itself*, the delight of being the owner of so much. The whole soul is absorbed in this one sentiment. This is plain, genuine *idolatry*. But, in much the greater number of instances, the passion involves a regard to some *relative* objects. In some it is combined with vanity; a stimulating desire of the *reputation* of being rich—to be talked of, admired, envied. We have even heard of such a thing as a desire of the *fame* of *dying* rich! In some it has very much a refer-

ence to that authority, weight, prevailing influence in society which property confers; here it is *ambition* rather than *avarice*. In some the passion has its incitement in an exorbitant calculation for competence. So much and so much they shall want; so much more they *may* want, for themselves or their descendants.

Root of all evil. One of the evil effects of this passion is that it tends to arrogate and narrow and impel the whole action and passion of the soul toward one exclusive object, and that an ignoble one. Almost every thought that starts is to go that way. This passion, too, when thus predominant, throws a mean character into the estimate of all things, as they are all estimated according to a standard of *money-value* and in *reference to gain*. It places a man in a very *selfish* relation to other men around him. He can not *sell* them, but the constant question in his mind is, "*What and how can I gain by them?*" When this principle has the full ascendancy, it creates a settled *hardness* of character. The man lives, as to the kinder affections, in the region of perpetual ice. He is little accessible to the touches and emotions of sympathy, can not give himself out in any generous expansion of the affections. And the disposition in question operates with a slow but continual effect to pervert the judgment and conscience. It is constantly pressing the line that divides right from wrong; it removes it, bends it away, by slight degrees. The distinction becomes less positive to the judgment. Self-interested casuistry is put in operation. Unsound pleas and reasons and excuses are called in. There is a constant tendency to *equivocate with conscience*, and this often ends in at once satisfying it and defrauding it. As a final point, we need not do more than advert to the enormous account of *absolute and flagrant wrongs* which have been perpetrated from the love of money—the frauds, the taking advantage of *law* in despite of moral justice, the plunders and murders, and the black list of other iniquitous expedients. What a legion of violences and villainies this passion can boast to have brought upon mankind! J. F.

Many sorrows. Sorrows not of the lighter and more transient sort, which give the mind but feeble touches and short visits, and quickly go off again; but they are such as enter into the innermost parts and powers of it, and, in a word, pierce it through and through, and draw out the very life and spirit through the wound they make. These are the peculiar and extraordinary sorrows which go before, accompany, and follow riches, thus "coveted after," and there is no man, though in never so low a station, who sets his heart upon growing rich, but shall, in his proportion, be sure to have his share of them. R. S.

11. We hear the apostle Paul warning even Timothy. He had seen so many apparent proficients in piety drawn in by this moral *maelstrom* and "drowned in perdition," that he called on his "dearly beloved Timothy, his own son in the faith"—called on him with more than his usual earnestness—to flee to the greatest distance from this fatal vortex. "O man of God," said he, "flee these things." As if, by a special appointment of Heaven, the monitory strain addressed to a *man of God*—to *such* a man of God—and echoing through the Church in all ages, should make it inexcusable for all inferior piety ever to doubt its liability to the sin. J. H.

Follow after. The two most general ideas go first—righteousness and godliness; then follow faith and love as the fundamental principles of the Christian life; and finally, patience and meekness of spirit, which denote the conduct proper to a Christian amid the enmity and opposition of the world to Christ's gospel. *Hulher*.

12. It is the *good*, literally the beautiful, fight to which the soldier of Christ addresses himself; beautiful and good, because it is not merely lawful but holy. The leader who summons us to fight, and who goes before us to battle, is no other than he who himself strove even unto blood, and dying overcame all the powers of hell, and who stands pledged for the victory of all who follow his triumphal car. The legion along with whom we fight are the noblest of our race in all ages and peoples; our companions in arms are the children of God, the redeemed of Christ, the temples of the Holy Ghost, spread everywhere over the earth; and never has any one had cause to regret who, with fixed choice, has joined the ever-growing camp. *Van O.*—There are difficulties placed in our path to give us opportunities of evincing what faith, courage, perseverance, wisdom, energy, prayerfulness, devotedness are in us. God withholds some things from us with a prohibition; it is treason to go on seeking them. He withholds other things by way of incitation; that we may be stirred up to engage with all faith and assiduity in the search for them, and that the conquest of them may be the reward of valiant endeavor. G. B.—Thy foils, through the wisdom and love of thy God, may be ordered to advance the victory; to put courage and holy anger into thee against thine enemies; to humble thee, and drive thee from thine own imagined strength to make use of his real strength. And be not hasty; think not at the very first to conquer; many a hard conflict must thou resolve upon, and often be brought very low, almost to a desperate point, that to thy sense it is past recovery; then it is his time to step in, even in the midst of their prevailing. *Let God but arise, and his enemies shall be scattered.* Thus the Church hath

found it in her greatest extremities, and thus likewise the believing soul. L.

Lay hold on eternal life. Is it not as if we saw in these words before us the combatant putting forth his utmost energy to the last struggle, but now at the end of the course grasping the crown of honor? Eternal life, which completes all and compensates for all; the highest aim of such as are not yet deeply enough sunk to choose death rather than life; the end of all strife, the source of all peace: what can be imagined more sublime? *Van O.*

13, 14. Not from *beneath* does Christ's kingdom spring, but from *above*. The weapon of his kingdom is not the sword, but the word and the Holy Ghost, and his combatants conquer not by blows and violence, but by sufferings and endurance—even as he did; his kingdom's palaces are no castles but the hearts of men, in whom he dwells through faith; the good things of his kingdom consist not of gold, nor of outward peace and prosperity, but of forgiveness of sins, of peace with God, of righteousness and eternal life. His kingdom embraces the whole circle of the world; its term of duration is not thousands of years, but to all eternity. When Paul is exhorting Timothy to fight the good fight of faith, and to hold fast by sound doctrine, he reminds him of the *good confession which Jesus Christ witnessed before Pontius Pilate*; with that confession shall Timothy comfort himself, and feel sure of victory in every conflict. *Besser*.

15. God's eternal thought moves on, moves onward, and moves *all*, by the sweet impulses of that law, supreme, regulative, protecting, of which it hath been said that "her seat is the bosom of God and her voice the harmony of the world. All things in heaven and earth do her homage; the very least as feeling her care, the greatest as not exempted from her power. Both angels and men, though each in different sort and manner, with uniform consent admire her as the mother of their peace and joy." Much more might such words be used in relation to God himself. He sits enthroned on the riches of the universe; all holy and obedient natures adore and worship, ceaselessly hymning his infinite attributes, rejoicing that he lives and reigns. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true are all thy ways, thou King of saints." And this anthem of adoration, perpetually rising toward the divine throne, expressive of the happiness he has *imparted*, is but the echo and reverberation of that which he possesses, as the "blessed and only potentate," the holy and happy God. T. B.

17. God is no respecter of "them that are rich in this world." He regards them as of the common material of humanity; does not mistake their wealth for a part of them; does not concentrate the cares

of his Providence peculiarly on them—not less requires a sense of entire dependence; does not, if they pray, give a precedence to their applications; does not hold them less guilty in their sins; does not give them sounder or more lasting bodies, or an exemption from the worst evils of the mortal state; does not adopt an instant change of sentiment respecting them if they fall from affluence to poverty; does not insure them that in the other world they shall be glad they have been rich in this! J. F.

The apostle here again reverts to the subject of riches, but now under a different aspect, with reference, not to those who made wealth their idol and were ready to sacrifice principle and character for its attainment, but to such as having acquired riches still retain their Christianity, and are willing to use what they possess in accordance with the truth of God and their own best interests. *Charge them that are rich in this world not to be high-minded nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who ministers to us all things richly for enjoyment.* To trust in riches, the apostle would have it understood, is virtually to make uncertainty one's confidence, since both their continuance with us and our possession of them may at any moment come to a termination. The contrast to such an insecure foundation is God, the eternal, the all-sufficient, who ministers richly to his people's necessities and just desires, and who, as a source of enjoyment to those who trust in Him, can never fail.

18. *Free in distributing, ready to communicate;* not merely imparting of their substance to the relief of the needy and the promotion of good objects, but doing it with a frank generosity and a liberal hand. To act thus is nobly to realize the stewardship of wealth, and, according to the word of our Lord, to make to one's self friends of what, taken merely by itself, is the *mammon of unrighteousness*.

19. *Treasuring up for themselves a good foundation for the future, in order that they may lay hold of what is life indeed.* Two points are here forcibly presented. The first is the doctrine of a future recompense, the proper employment of one's means in charitable and pious uses, and consequently the doing of good deeds generally, being said to constitute a treasure for the world to come; a treasure which is not an uncertainty, like riches when contemplated by themselves and sought for their own sake, but a *foundation* or well-grounded basis of hope for the great future. The other point here presented is the emphasis laid on *life* in the higher sense—life that really may be called such; rich Christians are exhorted to deal with their earthly means in the manner prescribed, in order that they may *lay hold* of this. P. F.—Estimate the value of money in the kindly and honoring thoughts of the benefited; in the blessings of those “ready to perish”; the present recollections of sorrows relieved and sins and sicknesses cured; in memories of self-sacrifices that shall come as good angels to your dark hours; in the honor of Christ, the salvation of souls, and the everlasting love of God. More beautiful than all the miracles of art shall be the vision of faces from which tears have been wiped away, sweeter than all music the voices whose sighing has changed to song, that shall come to you from the years that are gone. Look on your children and families as soon being alone without you in this time-field of trials, dangers, deaths; as soon beyond this Vanity-Fair, standing with you before the awful Judge; as soon with you far away on the courses that never return. Then think what provision best befits this life for yourself or your families. With such thoughts answer to yourselves the questions, How, and what, and when, and to what, shall I give, in fulfillment of my stewardship of my Lord's money? *Post.*

Section 327.

2 TIMOTHY i. 1-18.

1 PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life
2 which is in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, *my* dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, *and* peace,
3 from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God, whom I serve from *my*
4 forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in *my*
5 prayers night and day; greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may
6 be filled with joy; when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which
7 dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that
8 in thee also. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God,
9 which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. For God hath not given us the spirit of
10 fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of

the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions
 9 of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy
 calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was
 10 given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appear-
 ing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and im-
 11 mortality to light through the gospel: whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apos-
 12 tle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things: never-
 theless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is
 13 able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. Hold fast the form
 of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.
 14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth
 15 in us. This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of
 16 whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Ones-
 17 phorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: but, when he was in
 18 Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found *me*. The Lord grant unto him that he
 may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me
 at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

THE friendship between Paul and Timothy is one of the most suggestive episodes in the early history of the gospel. It was apparently the one mellowing affection that toned down the impassioned vigor of Paul; that mingled a constant human image with his prayers and brought them trembling on his voice: that, homeless as he was, made him feel amid his wanderings the sadness of absence and of loneliness. The traveled ambassador of Christ, who snatched Christianity from the hands of a local faction and turned it to a universal faith; who turned the tide of history and thought, giving us the organization of Christendom for the legions of Rome, and for Zeno and Epicurus, Augustine, Eckhart, and Luther—he, with his indomitable soul, was conquered by a Lycaonian youth; and now in Rome sat, with his chained hands upon his knee, musing, as he says, with joy on the tears and embraces of their last parting. And then he writes to say he can not do without him. All have deserted him but one; at his hearing in the palace, he had to meet his accusers almost alone; and now he waits his sentence, and, ere the imperial sword can fall upon his neck, he must see Timothy again. What is the tone of the letter written at a crisis like that? Does he indite a threnody of disappointment? Does he caution Timothy against sacrificing himself to impetuous hopes, and tell him that zeal is well enough, but that, after all, we must take men as we find them? On the contrary, his words fan every noble fire in the young man's heart; like the voice of the retired victor, looking on and feeling the blood glow at sight of the race again, they spur the dear athlete to fresher effort, and bid him mark the goal. The spirit of *fear*—'tis no gift of God's; only the spirit of love and power! Let the good soldier of Jesus press on in hope, heedless of any shame and hardship that may befall a faithful man; stir up the gift that is in him; be instant in season and out of season; keep a patience never spent by failure; and in the last extremity remember in whom he has believed. Glorious apostle! Would that every leader's voice could burst, as he falls, in such a trumpet-sound, thrilling the young hearts that pant in the good fight, and must never despair of victory! *Martineau*.

SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

SINCE he last communicated with Timothy, Paul had been at Miletus and Troas, and probably also at Corinth (see 2 Tim. 4: 13, 20). It is probable that his journey was from Crete by Miletus, Ephesus, Troas, perhaps to Corinth, and thence to Nicopolis. There it is not improbable that he was arrested, as implicated in the charges made against the Christians after the fire in 64 A. D., and sent to Rome. Arrived there, he is treated no longer, as before, with courtesy, but as a common criminal (2 Tim. 2: 9). All his Asiatic friends avoided him except Onesiphorus, who sought him out, and was not ashamed of his chain. Demas, Crescens, and Titus had left him. Tychicus he had sent to Ephesus. Only Luke was with him. Thus circumstanced, he

writes the Second Epistle to Timothy, most likely to Ephesus (2 Tim. 2: 17; 4: 13), earnestly begging him to come before winter. He writes from prison, in expectation of his execution. He was conscious that his own death could not be long delayed; he was uncertain whether he should live to see his "child in the faith." Therefore he sends him fatherly instructions and exhortations, and enforces them by the consideration of his own approaching removal. A.

This Epistle, which bears plain marks of being the last letter of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, allows us at least a glimpse of his state of mind shortly before his martyrdom. For nearly thirty years had he now served his heavenly Lord and Master with unexampled fidelity and self-denial. Innu-

merable perils, conflicts, and persecutions, on land and sea, in city and desert, among Jews, heathens, and false brethren, he had borne with a heroism possible only by help from above, and mightier than any arguments of reason to prove the divinity of the Christian religion. And now, as he nears the goal of his noble career, he leaves behind him a most beautiful memorial of his paternal love for his disciple Timothy; of his unwearied care for the Church and for the purity of saving doctrine; of his exalted tranquillity of soul; and of his unshaken trust in the almighty and faithful God, and in the final triumph of his gospel over all its foes. P. S.—Universal tradition relates that he was beheaded under Nero. If so, it can not well have been before the last year of that emperor's reign, 67-68 A. D., and probably this Second Epistle to Timothy was written but a few months before his death. A.

1. The promise of life which is in Christ Jesus. This promise of life, or, as it is expressed in Tit. 1:2, "hope of eternal life, which God, that can not lie, promised before eternal times," is presented as the primary ground out of which the specific acts and arrangements of God proceeded in reference to the work of salvation in the world, and among others, Paul's own calling to the apostleship, which formed an important link of connection between the promise and its actual realization among men.

3-5. It was that he had, and still continued to have, such an image upon his mind of Timothy's affection to himself and his faith in God, that he could unceasingly bring him into remembrance before God for an interest in the divine favor and blessing, being assured that in so doing he might look for acceptance with heaven. The apostle's longing, he goes on to state, was much increased by the remembrance of Timothy's tears—the tears, doubtless, which he shed at parting with his beloved father in Christ, and shed afresh, we can well suppose, as the perils deepened around the apostle. P. F.

4. Here we have a fair, unforced example of coincidence. In the history, Timothy was the "son of a Jewess that believed"; in the Epistle, Paul applauds "the faith which dwelt in his mother Eunice." In the history, it is said of the mother, "that she was a Jewess, and believed"; of the father, "that he was a Greek." Now, when it is said of the mother *alone* "that she believed," the father being nevertheless mentioned in the same sentence, we are led to suppose of the father that he did not believe, i. e., either that he was dead, or that he remained unconverted. Agreeably hereunto, while praise is bestowed in the Epistle upon one parent, and upon her sincerity in the faith, no notice is taken of the other. The mention of the grandmother is the addition of a circumstance not found in the history; but it is a circumstance which, as well as the names of the parties, might naturally be expected to be known to the apostle, though overlooked by his historian. *Paley.*

6. The gift itself is undoubtedly the special endowment or gift of grace qualifying him for the evangelistic work to which he was appointed. It was referred to in the former Epistle, and is there connected instrumentally with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, as here with the laying on of Paul's own hands. Both parties, no doubt, took part in the ordination service; but here it was natural and proper that the apostle should have re-

minded Timothy of his own act of imposition, as now more than ever Timothy was likely to be called to stand to a certain extent in the apostle's room, and enter into his labors. It was of great importance, therefore, that he should now feel his increased responsibility, and apply himself to the cultivation of the grace which had been conferred upon him, undeterred by any discouragements or dangers which might stand in the way. P. F.

Faith is invigorated by acting. Neglect of our graces is the ground of their decrease and decay. The noblest faculties are imbedded when not improved by exercise. The apostle Paul wishes Timothy to excite and enliven his gifts. The passage alludes to the fire of the Temple, which was always to be kept burning. Be, then, *much in duty—draw out the acts of your graces.* Many live but are not lively: decays insensibly make way for deadness! T. M.—There is no lack of gifts, and there is no superfluity. All are needed for all, and the Church is only equipped for doing the great work assigned it, when it can command for its use all the gifts of its members; when it can bring them all into active service for its own blessed objects. Thousands in the Church are weary and despondent because they are not stirring up their gifts, or else are using them for selfish ends. The Church is languishing because she can not command for her high uses the gifts of her members. J. D.—Having, then, a gift granted to you, whatever it be, whether of preaching, or of instructing children, or of superintending, or of private counseling, or simply of influence, go forth to exercise it with the single aim of glorifying the Giver and extending his kingdom. See that ye stir it up; for, as a limb never exerted withers, as a flame never roused collapses, as a treasure of gold or silver never thrown into currency rusts, so, assuredly, we lose our gifts if we never exercise them. Be good stewards, then, of the manifold grace of God. Let all your thought and energy be expended on making it bring in the largest revenue to the glory of our divine Master. E. M. G.

7. It is also shown to Timothy that the spirit given to the servants of Christ is not one of "cowardice," shrinking from the duty of testimony because of the risk or contempt which it may incur. It is the spirit of *power* from on high; sufficiency which is of God, power to speak or be silent, as duty to the Lord may require; power of endurance and power of resistance; power for fighting the battle and for running the race. It is the spirit of *love*, seeking not its own; love which tends to cast out fear, and, more than any other influence, nerves to arduous toils and perilous enterprises; love in the truth, which makes the Christian calm and strong. And it is a *sound mind*, represented in the Greek original by one word which occurs nowhere else in

the New Testament. It denotes sobriety of mind, capable of self-correction and self-control; a well-schooled and well-balanced mind that sees things in their just proportions and relations, and, avoiding narrowness, feverishness, and exaggeration, moves on with vigor in the paths of duty. D. F.—It is a good, sound constitution of mind not to feel every blast, either of seeming reason to be taken with it, or of cross opinion to be offended at it. L.

8. Than shame, or the fear of man's opinion, no snare ever invented by the adversary of man has secured a larger array of recruits to the army of evil. Disbelief is blind to the gospel; indolence evades it; but shame alone deserts and degrades it. "Be not thou," says the apostle, "*ashamed* of the testimony of the Lord." Chosen as a minister of the gospel, exult in your high commission, and let the world perceive that you value the reproach of Christ above all *that* world can offer! For my own part, I, Paul, "am not ashamed, for I know in whom I have believed." W. A. B.

But suffer hardship with me for the gospel, according to the power of God. We have a similar mode of expression in Phil. 1: 27: "Striving together for the faith of the gospel." When the apostle exhorts Timothy to share with him in this readiness to suffer for the gospel *according to the power of God*, he points (v. 9) to the great things done by God in the matter of salvation as a ground and motive for something corresponding being done by us. 9. The work itself, with this individual application of it, is ascribed as to its origin simply and exclusively to the sovereign goodness and electing love of God, projecting themselves into the future before it could properly be said there was either a past or a future; the fountain-head of all was *His own purpose and grace*, and that not waiting to be evoked by the events and circumstances of human life, but *given in Christ Jesus before eternal times*. How carefully is the doctrine of God's saving grace here guarded from dependence on anything external or creaturely! It is traced up to the infinite depths of the Father's loving-kindness, not merely as regards the general idea and principal lineaments of the plan, but also in respect to the glorious gift it secures for the individual believer. The grace was *given* us by Him—given before eternal times; for, as even De Wette puts it, "what God determines in eternity is as good as done in time." And given in Christ, who, as sponsor for his own in the everlasting covenant, could then also receive for them what the Father in his good pleasure gave; so that, as regards those who shall ultimately share in the blessings of the covenant, all from the first is well ordered and sure. P. F.

10. With respect to the word rendered "brought to light," it does not so much mean to discover or

make known as a new thing—which is the ordinary import of the English phrase—but to illustrate, clear up, or cast light *upon* a thing; it thus assumes the previous existence of that which is illustrated, but it asserts the fact of its fuller manifestation. Thus explained, the meaning of the text would amount to this: Previous to the coming of Christ, the idea of immortal life stood before the Hebrew mind like some vast object in the morning twilight; it was dimly descried and imperfectly apprehended. In like manner, Death, seen through that same darkness (for "the light was as darkness"), was something that appeared "very terrible," and made many "all their lifetime subject to bondage." The advent of the Messiah, including the whole of his teaching and work—the "appearing" of our Lord Jesus Christ as "the light of the world" and "the sun of righteousness"—was, to these spiritual objects, like the rising on the natural world of that luminary whose power and splendor symbolized His glory in prophetic song! To those who received him, whose reason and heart he alike illuminated, the outward became clear and the inward calm; the shadows departed and fear was subdued; objective truth had light cast upon it that made it manifest, and "the king of terrors," seen in the sunlight, was discovered to have an aspect that did not terrify! T. B.

We read our evidences for heaven by the light of God's countenance; his image is made visible in our souls by the illustration of his Spirit; and he exercises prerogative in the dispensation of his comforts. It is his pleasure to bestow extraordinary favors on some, and deny them to others that are as holy. But every penitent believer has just cause of joy in death; for Jesus Christ has reconciled God, destroyed Satan, and conquered death; and the last day of his life is the first of his glory. *Bates.*—We are far too much the creatures of sense, and the accompaniments of dissolution and departure fill up our hearts and our eyes. Think them all away, believe them all away, love them all away. Stand in the light of Christ's life, and Christ's death, and Christ's rising, till you feel that death is a shadow, not a substance. Yes, a shadow; and, where a shadow falls, there must be sunlight above to cast it. Look up, then, above the shadow death, above the sin and separation from God, of which it is the shadow! Look up to the unsetting light of the Eternal Life on the throne of the universe, and see bathed in it the living dead in Christ! God has taken them to himself, and we ought not to think (if we would think as the Bible speaks) of death as being anything else than the transitory thing which breaks down the brazen walls and lets us into liberty. A. M.—This is the glory of the heaven of Jesus, that it is a human nature heaven. Jesus tells us of an existence

beyond death that is not severed at all from anything that is pure and holy and beautiful in the present life; of an eternal manhood, of which this is the infancy; of an eternal harvest, of which this is the seed-time; of a family embracing patriarchs and prophets and apostles, and the noble army of the martyrs, and all the holy and good who have ever lived, with all the good and pure and dear of the friends we have ever known! Then, then the immortality is attractive and to be longed for. For it enables us to follow our departed in thought to the assembly with Abraham, and to feel that, instead of wandering lonely through an illimitable desert of eternal existence, they are with friends who care for them, and with Jesus who loves them. S. R.

11. Appointed a preacher. Suppose God had commissioned us to go from graveyard to graveyard to awaken the dead. How inspiring and sublime would have been our office! Our God has actually employed us in a sublimer work than even this. There can be no hesitation in affirming that it is not possible for man or angel to conceive another work equal in glory with that with which we stand commissioned. *Pulsford.*

12. Not ashamed, for I know. When he thought of Him who had sent him on such a warfare, and had put him in trust with so precious a treasure, he felt there was no room for shame, and scorned the temporizing policy which shame would dictate. The all-powerful Guardian and Protector in whom he confided, and who had borne him through so many troubles in the past, would assuredly uphold him still, and enable him to preserve his calling, with all its sacred prerogatives and gifts, unimpaired to the end. So that, in the great day of account, nothing properly belonging to it should be found wanting—nothing forfeited or lost. P. F.—The soul that strongly believes and loves may confidently hope to see what it believeth and enjoy what it loves, and in that rejoice. It may say, Whatsoever hazards, whether outward or inward, whatsoever afflictions and temptations I endure, yet this one thing puts me out of hazard and in this I will rejoice, the salvation of my soul depends not upon my own strength, but is in my Saviour's hand. The childish world is hunting shadows, gaping and hoping after they know not what; but the believer can say, I know whom I have trusted, and

am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day. L.

13, 14. Grand, profound, comprehensive rule of independence and of life! Dependence only on the Holy Ghost and on the truth as the Holy Ghost reveals it in God's word and keeps it in the heart by dwelling in us. The Holy Ghost can teach the truth to the Church, can keep the truth in the Church and sanctify the Church by it, only by teaching the truth to individuals, keeping the truth in individuals, and sanctifying individuals by it. And so the Holy Ghost increases and builds up the Church by bringing in continually new living stones into the Temple, new regenerated souls into the Church, through the door of the Church, which is Christ. G. B. C.

16, 17. *The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, because he oftentimes refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain*—that, namely, which bound him as a felon to the soldier who guarded him. It implies that others were ashamed, and, shrinking from the ignominious treatment which his unflinching zeal had brought on him, turned away. He oftentimes did it, says the apostle—even after the chain had turned to imprisonment in the capital; for it is added, *when he had arrived in Rome he sought me out with greater diligence, and found me.* The expression is striking, as showing that what led others to turn away from the apostle was the very thing which prompted the friendly search and beneficent ministrations of Onesiphorus. P. F.—The good works of this man were all before Paul at this time—his boldness in Christ's cause, his steadfastness, his kindness; yet what does he say? The Lord recompense him after his works? The Lord reward and bless him? No; he sees in this devoted Christian of Ephesus a sinner like himself, one going soon to Christ's judgment-seat, and his only prayer for him is, that he may find mercy there. **That day.** He does not even tell us what day he means; but there is no misunderstanding him. He means the last great day, the day when God will raise the dead and judge the world. And this mode of referring to this day is common in his writings. *The apostle's thoughts were often dwelling on this day.* "That day," he says, as though he believed that Timothy also, as well as himself, had his eyes constantly fixed on it; that no one could possibly at any time forget it; that every one who should read his writings would have his soul full of it. C. B.

Section 328.

2 TIMOTHY ii. 1-26.

1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things
 2 that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men,
 3 who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier
 4 of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that
 5 he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for
 6 masteries, *yet* is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. The husbandman that labour-
 7 eth must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee un-
 8 derstanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised
 9 from the dead, according to my gospel: wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, *even* unto
 10 bonds; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's
 11 sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.
 12 *It is* a faithful saying: For if we be dead with *him*, we shall also live with *him*: if we
 13 suffer, we shall also reign with *him*: if we deny *him*, he also will deny us: if we believe
 14 not, *yet* he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.
 15 Of these things put *them* in remembrance, charging *them* before the Lord that they strive
 16 not about words to no profit, *but* to the subverting of the hearers. Study to shew thyself
 17 approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word
 18 of truth. But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodli-
 19 ness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus; who
 20 concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is passed already; and over-
 21 throw the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this
 22 seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of
 23 Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and
 24 of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.
 25 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified,
 26 and meet for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work. Flee also youthful lusts:
 but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a
 pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender
 strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to
 teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure
 will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and *that* they may recover
 themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

God is faithful, faithful to his *warnings* as he is to his promises! A few years more (to many far fewer years than they have already past), and the crisis shall at last arrive which shall determine, by terrible proofs, the awful faithfulness of God. Then that inflexible faithfulness, which forms the rock of his salvation to the redeemed one's heart, shall assume to the God-despiser the terrible form of an inflexible curse. The permanence of God's character is the very warrant of his doom and the seal of its eternity. It is a profound and impressive remark of Bishop Butler that the most formidable of all God's attributes to the wicked is his goodness: "Malice may be wearied or satiated, caprice may change, but goodness is a steady, inflexible principle of action." The very same attributes which (like the pillar in the wilderness) present to the saved a side of light and protection, shall present (themselves unchanged) to the lost a gloomy apparition of clouds and darkness. The justice that acquits the believer in the blood of the sacrifice shall condemn the despiser of that blood. The goodness that shelters the beloved children in the bowers of Paradise shall abandon to his punishment the guilty for the benefit of the universe. The wisdom that is shown in contriving salvation shall be "justified of her children" in condemnation also. The power that framed a heaven for the blessed shall be revealed more awfully still in the structure of the abodes of misery. What is to be gained by a contest with such a being as this? Can we expect to sway his eternal purpose, or bend to our caprices his eternal laws? Will he forget his faithfulness because we forget our faith? Never! *We must alter, for God will not.* W. A. B.

2. Here, as all through the word of God, the spiritual qualification is set as a consideration antecedent to that of gifts: first of all "faithful." But not merely faithful, "who *shall be able to teach others also.*" The steward is to be not only "faithful," but "wise," able to distribute to every one in due season. He who is not apt to teach ought never to be commissioned as a teacher. *Arthur.*

3. *Suffer hardship with me*, or "take thy share in suffering," intimating that the disciple in this must not expect to be above his Master. If he would do his work faithfully, he must lay his account to experiences of trouble. P. F.—All things else almost have changed in the external aspect of religion since Christ was on earth; but in and above all change Christ appears, pressing himself upon our notice, demanding that we adhere to him in personal devotion, and putting it to the proof, oftentimes, by tests hard to be endured, whether we will forsake all and follow him. We may think him severe, but he repeats the old message, he cleaves to the old principle. He wants disciples, but he wants such only as have counted the cost, and have determined to forsake everything else but him, such as are ready to love parents and all nearest kinsmen with a love that may be called hatred, so far does it fall below the height of love to him. He tries us perhaps at the very point where we are most tender, most likely to estimate his service a hardship. T. D. W.—They are *his servants*, and shall they, or would they, think to be *greater than their Master*, to be exempt from his lot in the world? They are *his soldiers*, and will they refuse to follow him and to endure with him? Will not a word from him put a vigor in them to go after him, whether upon any march or service, when he calls them friends? L.

4. This *moral discipline* of the soul is grounded on the same reasons, and justifiable on the same principles, as that strict *military discipline* to which it is frequently compared in Scripture, and which every wise commander finds it necessary to maintain among his soldiers. It may appear to them sometimes harsh and severe, but it leads to order, ease, security, and victory. P.—Christ's soldiers must take every man his part under the great Leader, throwing nothing over upon others which is given them to do, and they must take the peril of it as being kindled for it in the glorious common passion of the common cause. Patience, endurance, courage, fidelity, and even a kind of celestial impassivity, must be set in their otherwise inconstant, misgiving, self-indulgent nature. And the only tonic force equal to this must be found in devotion to the Master, carried to the pitch of soldierhood in his cause. H. B.—In our soldiery we have the blessed truth to stimulate us, that the Captain of our salvation goes before us. Come prosperity or come

pain, come wealth or bereavement, come health or sickness, come temptation or labor, if CHRIST be with us, all shall be well! And with us he is, and will be, if we are his people, and if his promise is true. We greatly err by making a sort of merit of our misgivings, and groaning over our weakness, as if this were pleasing to God; when, indeed, a high aspiring faith and unwavering confidence in God's aid for the future is more welcome to him, and unspeakably more productive of obedience in us. J. W. A.

5. For "*strive for masteries*" read "strive in the games"; and for "*lawfully*," "according to the rules." A.—He is not crowned unless adhering with whatever self-sacrifice to the prescribed rules. The inference is plain: if so in the lower sphere, and with respect to a perishable distinction, how much more in regard to the great struggle between righteousness and sin, light and darkness in ourselves and in the world, which carries with it issues of eternal moment!

6. The object of the apostle in using the illustration was not, seemingly, to mark the distinction between the active and the idle husbandman. He assumes that Timothy would be a worker in the Lord's vineyard; but he would have him to be like the husbandman who labors *hard*, who *toils* at his employment, and so reaps the *first* and *fullest* recompense. We must keep hold of the great principle which the statement is brought to establish—that *the most willing and hard laborer is the most speedily and richly blessed*. This holds good in the spiritual as in the natural sphere. P. F.

7, 8. In verse 7, for "*consider*" read "understand"; and for "*and the Lord give thee understanding*," "for the Lord shall give thee clear apprehension." In verse 8, read "keep in remembrance Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel." A.—The more immediate point is how to endure hardship, to brave persecution, for the truth of Christ; and, surely, holding fast by Christ's royal lineage, which was essential to his being the Messiah promised to the fathers, and by his resurrection from the dead, which was equally essential to his right to reign over the house of God, could not but form the best preparation, as it was indeed the indispensable condition, of steadfastness.

9. *But* (though I am in chains) *the word of God is not bound*: this still ran, and was glorified. It did so partly through the apostle himself testifying of it, even in his bonds, before rulers and kings, so that his gospel as well as his bonds came to be known in Cesar's household, and in his letters sounding it forth far and wide; but partly also through the instrumentality of others who gave themselves to the same blessed work, and some of

whom, he intimates, waxed bold through his bonds to speak more abundantly the word of God. Thus, when an arrest is laid on one, freedom and boldness are given to others to spread abroad the good seed of the kingdom. P. F.

10. He did not say simply, for the sake of some persons, but for the sake of the elect. If God chose them, we ought to suffer all things for them, in order that they also may obtain salvation. When he says, *that they also*, he means to say, *as also we*; for God chose us also; and, as for us God suffered, so also we for them. *Chrys.*

11-13. *For if we died with him* (namely, when by a living faith we embraced Christ as our Saviour, entering into the fellowship of his sufferings and death), *we shall also live with him*, sharing at last in his resurrection-power and blessedness of life, as spiritually we do in a measure now. *If we endure* (patiently undergo trial and hardship, namely, *with him*, or in his cause and service), *we shall also reign with him*; as our Lord himself repeatedly testified (Mat. 16 : 24-27; 19 : 28, 29), and as is stated also in other passages. *If we shall deny (him)*—put contingently, as a thing that might possibly happen in the future—*he also will deny us*; a virtual repetition of our Lord's solemn words: "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven." Finally, *if we are unbelieving*—not merely prove unfaithful in times of trial, shrink from confessing what we inwardly feel to be the truth concerning him, but, rejecting or quitting our hold of the truth, pass over entirely into the region of unbelief—if we should thus estrange ourselves from the common ground of faith, still *he abides faithful*—remaining perpetually true to his declarations and promises, whether we accredit them or not. And the reason follows: *For he can not deny himself*. This implies that the word given as the ground of our faith in Scripture is the expression of his own essential nature; it reveals what, as possessed of that nature, he is in his relation to us, what he purposes toward us, or has done in the execution of his purposes. To disown this, therefore, were to deny himself; and that it is impossible he should ever do, seeing he is the unchangeable Jehovah; and so, his word, like himself, "liveth and abideth for ever." P. F.

12. The gospel is plain and peremptory in this, if we will "reign with Christ, we must suffer with him," when we are called forth to give a noble testimony to his truth. It is no extraordinary elevation, no point of perfection, but the duty of every Christian to be always ready in the disposition and resolution of his mind, to sacrifice his life when the honor of Christ requires it. But it is no hard condition to suffer transient afflictions for the obtaining a happy immortality, to be conformable to the image

of our suffering Redeemer, that we may be crowned with his glory. *Bates.*

15. To divide rightly refers to a fair and conscientious or straightforward handling of the word itself. This, as opposed to all kinds of tortuous interpretations or by-plays of ingenuity, is preëminently what becomes the teacher who would stand approved in the judgment of God: like a sincere and honest workman, he must go right on in his use of the word, maintaining it in its integrity, and applying it to the great spiritual ends for which it has been given. P. F.—Divine truth is both the instrument with which the Spirit quickens the soul and the light through which the soul sees God and all eternal things; and he who best knows how to divide this truth, to separate it into its several offices, and to point the arrows of its power with greatest wisdom and skill, is the *ablest* minister of the New Testament, and the *best* instructed scribe in the kingdom. He will be the means of convincing most men of sin, and of bringing most to the Saviour. J. S. S.—When you preach, be real; say to yourself: "Now I must get into these hearts some truth from God"; strike as those who would make dints upon their shield of hardness, yea, and smite through them to their heart of hearts; speak straight to them, as you would beg your life, or counsel your son, or call your dearest friend from a burning house, in plain, strong, earnest words. *Bp. Wilberforce.*

17, 18. The denial of a resurrection of the body was no new error in the Church, but was the natural result of Sadducean corruption. The famous argument of the apostle seems to imply that in the Church of Corinth it did not go beyond the simple negation, "*that there is no resurrection of the dead.*" But these pretenders to a higher spiritual philosophy than the gospel held that *it was already accomplished*; no doubt in the sense soon after taught by the Gnostics, that the only resurrection was the rising of the soul from the death of ignorance to the life and light of knowledge. S.

19. *The firm foundation of God stands*, not "The foundation of God standeth sure," which is grammatically untenable. The apostle's assertion is, that, notwithstanding the existence of such cases as he had just mentioned of defection from the truth and the consequent loss of salvation, there is a firm or strong foundation of God which remains steadfast. Those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and who are prepared and kept by omnipotent grace for the glory to which from the first they were destined—in a word, the members of the true or invisible as contrasted with the simply outward or professing Church: these are what we may here most naturally understand by the foundation of God. They constitute His *firm* founda-

tion, which stands amid both the assaults of adversaries and the defection of unstable souls, because held fast by his own eternal purpose and efficacious grace. This accords with what follows about the sealing, which has immediate respect to Christ's true people. Genuine believers are God's firm foundation, because they have their place and calling under this certification: "*The Lord knoweth them that are His.*" P. F.—The sure laid foundation of God's work in them makes them stand. God's free love and grace brought them to Christ, keeps them in Christ, and lets them not fall into deadly errors. The apostle propounds here the doctrine of election to fortify them who are not departed from the faith. It is because God has ta'en pleasure in thee, to make thee confirmed to his Son Christ. Let it be an encouragement for further well-doing, yea, a confirmation of thee in the way, and a thing to make thee bless God that thou standest when others fall.

The seal of the elect has two sides, the one is read of God, the other toward us is read of us. The side toward God is that he knows who are his: he knows whom he has loved and foreordained for heaven; and the side of the seal which is toward us is, "Let every one that names the name of Jesus depart from iniquity." D. D.—It is as if divine calling, endowment, and help were on one side; self-discipline, watching, mortified lusting, and steady resolve on the other. Liberty and discipline, movement from God's center and movement from our own, sanctified inclination and self-compelling will, are the two great faciors thus of Christian life and experience. H. B.

Knoweth his. He knows them from his first purpose about them to the last perfecting of them in glory; he knows them by loving them, approving them, keeping them that they fall not, and when they fall, to raise them up again. All is concluded with him from his first foresight and love; and he still keeps and preserves them, for he is stronger than all, and none shall be able to reave them out of his hand. D. D.—**Depart from iniquity.** All unwary walking in Christians wrongs their communion with heaven, and casts a damp upon their prayers, so as to clog the wings of it. These two mutually help one another, *prayer and holy conversation*. the more exactly we walk the more fit are we for prayer; and the more we pray the more are we enabled to walk exactly; and it is a happy life to find the correspondence of these two, *calling on the Lord and departing from iniquity*. Therefore, that you may pray much live holily, and that you may live holily be much in prayer; surely such are the heirs of glory, and this is their way to it. L.

20. Here the apostle passes from the Church viewed as God's firm foundation to the Church as a house composed of various and to a certain extent

heterogeneous materials. The distinction is simply that of the real and the professing, or the invisible and the visible Church: the one God's true elect, his jewels, as he elsewhere calls them, or peculiar treasure, preserved by his faithful guardianship, and destined to his eternal glory; the other, those who have but an outward standing in the household.

21. If any one shall by purifying himself have gone out of their number, those, namely, represented by the vessels associated with dishonor—he shall be a vessel for honor, sanctified, serviceable to the Master, prepared for every good work. He contents himself with putting before men a plain practical issue; moving no question about election, or about adoption into the family of God; but simply teaching, as Calvin well puts it, "that all who would consecrate themselves to the Lord must purge themselves from the filthiness of the ungodly—the same, indeed, that God everywhere teaches." P. F.—Art thou then purging thyself from thy old deeds? crying with David, "Purge me with hyssop, cleanse me from my sins"? breaking thy heart for grieving the Holy One of Israel? thou carriest the mark of a vessel of honor. **For the Master's use.** If they be not for God's use, they are for dishonest uses: following of their lawful calling, working, plowing, making merchandise, are all dishonest uses with them, for they do these to make themselves rich and honorable. They are not done as service to God, therefore they are unclean; their eating, drinking, working, not being for God's use, are turned into sin. But the vessel of honor goes to the plow, and makes merchandise, for God's use. He goes to the kirk, not to see and be seen, but to meet God in the assembly. D. D.

22. Follow righteousness, faith, love, peace. The lesson here comes out again, so often already and in so many ways presented in these pastoral Epistles, that a sound moral condition is above all things essential to fitness for effective ministerial service in the divine kingdom. Other things may more or less be helpful, but this is indispensable. The peace spoken of is undoubtedly to be understood of peace in the closer sense—a state of inner harmony and agreeable fellowship; because it is such as is to be maintained with them that call upon the Lord out of a pure heart. This connection obviously reflects upon the nature of the peace intended.

24-26. The whole passage might be read, pointed, and slightly paraphrased thus: *In meekness correcting those who oppose themselves, if peradventure God may give them repentance [to come] unto the full knowledge of the truth; and that they may return to soberness [and so escape] out of the snare of the devil (by whom they had been taken captive), according to the will of him (God), who for this end seconds the efforts of his servant, by giving the spirit of repentance and true enlightenment.* P. F.

25. In meekness instructing. If, in Christian or social intercourse, we wish to deliver any man from what we think error, we must do so by

putting him in the way of convincing himself. To beat him down by unreasoning opposition, or even by an irresistible argument, may please us, but is not likely to gain him. There is a great chasm between achieving a victory and making a conquest, and the completeness of the first often prevents the last. To respect a man's freedom, never to press him so hard as to humiliate him, to give him the clew that may help him to guide himself to the right, is according to the divine model, and would aid us in serving at the same time both our fellow-men and the truth. *Ker.*

The living ministry is a ministry that never loses sight of its original and spiritual purposes in the dull round of a mechanical or perfunctory discharge of the external duty; it will be in itself, on its practical side, an example of its doctrine; it will set that doctrine forth in a spirit at once transparent and fearless, unpretending and scholarlike; it will have its frank and independent word on every

matter that affects the hopes or the integrity of mankind without the folly of running about to proclaim its independence, and saying bold things only to show that it dares to; it will free itself from all prejudices that impair its single-mindedness; it will place itself among men as a genuine helper of humanity in all its garbs and all its trials, brave as a prophet, devoted as an apostle, tender as John, fearless as Paul, ardent as Peter, blameless as James, a learner of the Christ, a workman whose errand is from heaven to persuade and lead men's souls thither. When such a ministry is realized, be sure not only that it will not have to dispute its title to honor, will not have to plead for a hearing, will not complain of a decline of its prestige; be sure not only that the eager heart of the community will reverence it, will leap to listen to it, but be sure also that the reign of irreligious worldliness will be broken up, and the fairer kingdom of spiritual truth and life will be established on its ruins. F. D. H.

Section 329.

2 TIMOTHY iii. 1 17.

1 THIS know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers
2 of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthank-
3 ful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, de-
4 spisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than
5 lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn
6 away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women
7 laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the
8 knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also
9 resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall
10 proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.
11 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering,
12 charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at
13 Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of *them* all the Lord delivered me. Yea,
14 and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and se-
15 ducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in
16 the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast
17 learned *them*; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able
18 to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture *is*
19 given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for
20 instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished
21 unto all good works.

It is *the truth* which by the Spirit is made to penetrate as light into the intellect, revealing its objects to faith; and to purify and change the current of the affections, directing them toward all that is comprehended in duty. The apprehension of truth, spiritually discerned, and the energy of love divinely evoked, constitute the essential elements of the inner life. Both processes depend for continued action on the influences of that divine agent, who at first reached, through the Word, the reason and the heart. If, then, you would grow in the divine life, if you would secure the necessary renewing of the Holy Ghost day by day, the first rule is, that you must keep the mind in contact with the truth, and keep the channel of divine influence open by prayer. Contact with the world, conversation and intercourse with different minds in various states of opinion and feeling, books, newspapers, magazines, reviews, business distractions, political excitement, social dissipation—these, and a thousand other things in the doings and details of daily life, may obscure the light of truth, shade spiritual objects, pervert the moral judgment, sophisticate the conscience, and thus create a necessity for a fresh infusion of that element in which all divine things stand fully revealed! Go, then, and seek for that in the way through which it was obtained by

psalmists and apostles—"meditating in the law of the Lord," letting in the light of the "Word of Christ," thus reviving the forms and images of spiritual truth that had got eclipsed. But as truth itself needs to be wielded by a divine hand; as the heart gets cold when the head gets dark; as the affections are wounded and chilled by error, as well as estranged or perverted through the insidious influence of the world; and as for this deeper element of the inward life you need the action of the Spirit *with* the truth, *pray for that*; for it is to be obtained by prayer. Time may press, and toil may call, or toil may have fatigued, but, thanks be to God, you are not to be heard for your much speaking, but for your earnest speech. The only way, perhaps, by which the calls of daily duty can be met now as Christians ought to meet them, is by throwing into brief but frequent spiritual exercises the energy and earnestness with which they lay hold of their ordinary occupations. In this way, the busiest man may be able habitually and successfully to seek for "the renewing of the Holy Ghost," by the mind being constantly kept in contact with the truth by which he works, and by that "prayer of faith" being habitually offered by which his effective agency is secured. A single text, fastened on the mind of a morning, may animate and guide during a whole day. An ejaculatory aspiration thrown out on entering the counting-house, or when passing along a street, may strengthen the hands to lay hold of work, and steady and "keep the feet" in the way—"the way of God's commandments." T. B.

2. Lovers of their own selves. Selfishness is contrary to the habitual temper of our Lord Jesus Christ, "who pleased not himself." It is the cause of all sin, the opposite of all holiness and virtue; is the source of innumerable other sins, and is placed by the apostle as the head and leader of the eighteen vices which he enumerates as the marks of perilous times. J. A. J.—But, in proportion as the spirit of selfishness should at any time prevail, the others might be expected in a corresponding ratio to follow. That spirit fitly stands at the head of this black catalogue of moral evils, being in a manner the root-cause out of which the rest will, as circumstances admit, inevitably spring, and being that also which more almost than any other bespeaks the disregard of Christian verities and the absence of their influence on the heart. P. F.

Covetous. If selfishness be the prevailing form of sin, covetousness may be regarded as the prevailing form of selfishness. Entering with the first transgression, and violating the spirit of the whole law, it has polluted and threatened the existence of each dispensation of religion; infected all classes and relations of society; and shown itself capable of the foulest acts. J. H.—Commerce is covetous: competition is without bounds; rapid fortunes, sudden falls, speculations without end, hazards, excitements for gaming under all forms; such is the new mode of satisfying the old thirst for gold. Industry is covetous: those admirable inventions which are continually succeeding one another aim less at the progress of art than at the making of money; produced by the hope of gain, they hasten toward gain. Ambition is covetous; that solicitation for office which crowds all the avenues to authority aims less than formerly at honor, and more at money. The struggle of parties is covetous. Legislation is covetous: in it, money is the chief corner-stone; money chooses the arbiters of our social and political destinies. Marriage is sometimes

covetous: the union of man and woman becomes a secondary matter. Literature is covetous: impatient of producing, and more impatient of acquiring, the literature of the present day spends its strength in unfinished, defective, extravagant works, perhaps immoral and impious, which cater for the tastes of the multitude, and pour into the hands of their authors streams of gold unaccompanied by glory. *Monod.*

4. You may be *lovers of pleasure*; it is natural, it is reasonable, for you to be so; but you must not be *lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God*. This is the true line that separates *harmless gayety* from *criminal dissipation*. It is a line drawn by the hand of God himself, and he will never suffer it to be passed with impunity. He claims on the justest grounds the first place in your hearts. His laws and precepts are to be the first object of your regard. And be assured that, by suffering them to be so, you will be no losers even in present felicity. P.—A man in whose soul the earnestness created by the thought of death and judgment has found place can never be frivolous in his recreations; questionable amusements, if they once had a hold upon him, will drop off when that new life circulates and stirs within him. And a man who has really tasted the peace and pleasantness of communion with God would sooner deprive himself of natural repose than desecrate holy seasons. Plant by God's grace the faith and love of Christ in any man's soul, and you have then a perfect security for the innocence of his recreations, and for the devout consecration of a just proportion of his time to God. E. M. G.

5. To quiet and pacify a natural conscience, many who deny the power of godliness submit to the drudgery of maintaining the form thereof. Some do it to impose upon the world, that they may gratify their ambitious or covetous desires; and others do it to impose upon themselves, that they

may not be "tormented before the time." R. W. —The hypocrite seeks the credit of qualities which he not only does not possess, but knows he does not possess; it is a conscious deception. To complete the idea of hypocrisy, there must be a reference to some selfish advantage. The pretension is not only fraudulent, but the fraud of meanness, the grossest of all forms of insincerity; "the lie," as Bacon says, "that sinketh in." The common instincts of honor accord with the Bible in declaring it the guiltiest of all sins that are not crimes. It is the most fatal enemy that Religion has to confront, and tearing off its mask is her most unwelcome task. Yet superficial critics persist in making her chargeable for the very insults it heaps upon her. F. D. H.

8. An old tradition among the Jews had handed down the two names here mentioned as those of the leading magicians who endeavored to rival the miracles of Moses, and foil him in his mission. The conflict now, as of old, was essentially one between God's truth on the one side and the devil's lie on the other; between the one grand remedy of heaven for the ills of humanity and the wretched devices of self-seeking, fraudulent men—*men*, it is added by the apostle, *corrupted in their mind, reprobate* (or worthless) *concerning the faith*. Such was generally the condition of the class of persons who assumed the delusive pretensions referred to, and plied the infamous traffic connected with them. From the very nature of things, their consciences must have been entirely sophisticated, and a moral state induced strongly repellent to the faith of the gospel. 9. *But* (such is the conclusion of the matter) *they shall not make progress; for their folly shall become manifest to all, as theirs also came to be*. The triumph of truth over error, of reality over presumption, should now, as of old, become apparent. P. F.

13. "Evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." They deceive themselves, and are deceived by themselves as well as deceive others. Thus they cut off the power of motives. We can not reach truth by the experience of sin any more than we can make good legislators out of law-breakers and culprits. The blindness of the mind is the worst hindrance against reformation. T. D. W.

15. In youth rich stores of divine knowledge are most easily acquired. Deep and saving impressions are then most easily made. It is young recruits that become the best soldiers, and young apprentices the best mechanics; and the best Christians are those of whom, trained by a Lois or a Eunice, a saintly mother or mother's mother, we can say, in Paul's words to Timothy, "From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures." T. G.

Through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Faith in Christ is the key which will unlock and give access to the treasures of saving wisdom which are laid up in the Old Testament. The Bible is an organized whole, and Christ and the Cross of Christ are wrought into the structure of it, although they do not always meet the eye. He who by faith sees "Christ and him crucified" in the Scriptures is in immediate possession of the ground-plan of the holy volume. He will observe how the original promise respecting "the seed of the woman" was a germ of hope planted in the earth, which, by constant accretions from new prophecies and new types, had expanded itself into full blossom, when the virgin-born appeared to fulfill it. He will observe how, as the ages rolled away, the light of revelation grew brighter, and how the prophets, in the greater spirituality of their religious precepts, and the greater explicitness of their predictions, were many steps in advance of the law. He will observe how, from the sacrifice of Abel downward, every victim which fell at the altar of Jehovah prefigured the great sacrifice of the death of Christ. And, in reciting the Psalms, he will feel that the Spirit of Christ, which was in those sweet psalmists of Israel, testified darkly beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow. Thus the whole of Scripture is welded together in the counsel and design of God; and we know that, as regards man, that counsel and design is all bound up in one word, "Christ." He was "the Lamb slain" in the counsels of eternity "from the foundation of the world"; and accordingly in every chant of God's holy prophets, which have been since the world began, there has always been an undersong of him—an undersong which may be caught by every spiritual ear. E. M. G.

16. The Scriptures give Divine, and therefore infallible direction, *for doctrine*—the didactic teaching of the truth concerning God; "for reproof"—the refutation by proof of error concerning God; "for correction"—the setting right or rectifying the wrong principles of practical ethics; "for instruction in righteousness"—the positive nurture of the soul in experimental knowledge of the way in which a sinner may be accounted righteous before God. And this, it will be perceived on a little reflection, is a marvelously logical classification of their uses; and it is *exhaustive*, as covering all the possible wants that man can desire to have met by a revelation. As a being endowed with reason, and capable of believing only what he conceives to be truth, his religion must embrace a *doctrine* of God and his relation to God. As a creature liable to be deceived, by error and unbelief concerning God and his relations to God, his religion must have a guide to warn against and expose the wiles of error, that are ever tampering with his "evil heart of unbelief." As a

being whose passions are ever blinding his conscience in reference to duty toward God and man, his religion must supply him with a rule of right, by which to correct his crooked judgments and amend his crooked ways. As a being capable of a birth to a new and everlasting life, his religion must supply him with a *nurture* under the new law of righteousness which the faith that is unto salvation teaches him. So that it may be affirmed with truth, that no want of the human soul can be conceived which is not provided for under one or other of these four heads. S. R.

The Holy Scriptures have God for their author, salvation for their end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for their matter. *Locke*.—Were we deprived of the entire testamentary evidence of miracles and the external evidence of prophecy, still the internal constitution of the Scriptures themselves is sufficient to command our assent. No human historian could, as they do, tell all the truth; no human legislator could enact the Ten Commandments; no human genius could conceive the character of Christ; no human morality could ascend to gospel holiness; no human devotion could dictate the Lord's Prayer; no human mercy could provide gospel grace; no human skill could so search and discover the secrets of the human heart, and at once provide the means of proving its guilt and of cleansing it from all sin. But all these things are done by the Scriptures: they are, therefore, not of man—they must be of God. *Cooke*.—Not being like man, which knows man's thoughts by his words, but knowing man's thoughts immediately, Christ never answered their words, but their thoughts:

much in the like manner it is with the Scriptures, which, being written to the thoughts of men, and to the succession of all ages, *with a foresight of all heresies, contradictions, differing estates of the Church, yea, and particularly of the elect*, are not to be interpreted only according to the latitude of the proper sense of the place, and respectively toward that present occasion whereupon the words were uttered, or in precise congruity or contexture with the words before or after, or in contemplation of the principal scope of the place; but have in themselves, not only totally or collectively, but distributively in clauses and words, infinite springs and streams of doctrine to water the Church in every part. *Bacon*.

In the Bible there is more that *finds* me than I have experienced in all other books put together: the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being; and whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit. S. T. C.—Think, when you read the Scriptures, that the word of God himself falls upon your ears; reflect that you are performing a duty, which is an essential part of communion with him. Regard yourself as seeking an oracle for your direction in the very shrine of heaven—an oracle which can not misguide, deceive, or lie. Be assured that, since God had before him when he inspired the Holy Scriptures the knowledge of future events and of all emergencies which should arise to his people, there is some utterance in that holy book which is designed to meet the deepest needs of thy heart. And read it with all the reverence, simplicity, and awe which this thought, if duly weighed, will inspire. E. M. G.

Section 330.

2 TIMOTHY iv. 1-22.

1 I CHARGE *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick
2 and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out
3 of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will
come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap
4 to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away *their* ears from the
5 truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do
6 the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be
7 offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have fin-
8 ished *my* course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of right-
eousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me
only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: for Demas hath forsaken me, having loved
10 this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dal-
11 matia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable
12 to me for the ministry. And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. The cloke that I left at
13 Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring *with thee*, and the books, *but* especially the

14 parchments. Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.

16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: *I pray God* that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

19 Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren. The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

Or that great Roman Emperor, Augustus Cesar, it is related that, on the morning of his death, sensible of his approaching end, he called for a mirror, and desired his gray hairs and beard to be decently arranged. Then, asking of his friends whether he had played well his part in the drama of life, he muttered a verse from a comic epilogue, inviting them to greet his last exit with applause. Who does not gaze in pity on that—an emperor's deathbed? Who does not feel a painful contrast between his last hours, and the exultant triumph of "such an one as Paul the aged," writing with manacled hand from his chill prison, on the eve of martyrdom—"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness"? One wants the voice of praise and flattery to cheer his dying hour. The other is looking forward to the "well done" of the great Judge. One feels that his jeweled crown will no longer cover that gray head, ripe for the sickle of the great Reaper. The other is assured of an everlasting crown, such as senates can not grant, nor death take away. One looks back on a life of successful but selfish ambition. The other has the testimony of a good conscience that he has lived to serve God. One has climbed the heights of power and surrounded himself with the pageants of wealth and feasts and splendor, only to die like a play-actor. The other has deliberately chosen a path which, through mobs, and prisons, and scorn, and hardships unnumbered, leads him to a martyr's death, but a martyr's triumph. Both wrought with rare ability and rare energy. Both exerted a powerful influence on the history of the world. Each in a measure attained his end. But in the final result the sceptered hand grasped a bubble, and the manacled hand grasped a crown. E. H. G.

1. *I solemnly charge thee before God, and Christ Jesus, who is going to judge living and dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom.* This is the apostle's last charge to Timothy—the last in this Epistle, and not improbably the last absolutely; and he therefore puts it in the most solemn form, not only delivering it as in the presence of God and of Jesus Christ, but also the appearing of Christ and his kingdom. These are obviously added for the purpose of bringing before Timothy the great realities of the future world, which should infinitely outweigh all the present: Christ's appearing, when everything in the past shall be brought into judgment, and his kingdom, when his faithful servants shall reign with him in glory. P. F.—For the coming of that kingdom all believing souls are praying and toiling. And the appeal has therefore an unlimited application. But with emphasis should it be ever pondered by the called teacher of truth and exemplar of duty, ordained and unordained, in the pulpit, in the class, and in the household. "If such," says Burkitt, "in the last judgment, who neglected to feed the poor with material bread, shall be placed at Christ's left

hand, how can they who are called to dispense spiritual bread, if they neglect to do it, escape condemnation"? B.

The charge: Proclaim the tidings, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, exhort, with all forbearance and perseverance in teaching (v. 2). In all things be sober, endure affliction, do the work of an evangelist, accomplish thy ministry in full measure (v. 5). C.—*Proclaim*, as a herald, the word of God, the glad tidings disclosed in the Old Testament and the New. (In the New, Timothy had been fully instructed by Paul.) The urgency refers to the utterer of the word. The *in season and out of season* refers to both utterer and hearer; and respect such points as personal comfort, convenience, or safety. It is not meant that the urgency should be rude, or in any wise unfitting as to time or circumstances. Paul was always courteous; he timed and suited his words most wisely. Yet who than he ever exemplified this injunction more admirably? B.—Have no definite time; let it be always time for thee: not in peace alone, or in quietness, or when sitting in the church

And if you should be in perils, if in prison, if compassed about with chains, if even going forth to death, at that very time convince, withhold not the word of rebuke. For then even rebuking is in season, when the work meets with success. *Chrys.*—Reprove, or *convince*: show them their errors. *Rebuke*: show them their sin. *Exhort*: show the truth as opposed to their error, the right as opposed to their sin. *Riddle.*—And all this showing, of error, of sin, of truth and right, is to be performed with all forbearance and perseverance in teaching. Patiently, forbearingly, persevere in instructing men upon these vital matters, whether they hear or forbear.

3, 4. The reason is here assigned for this faithful ministry; one that has always been in force, since human nature has always been the same. Men's own inclinations will become the guide of their conduct concerning truth and duty. Because sound or salutary teaching about their own errors and sins is abasing to their pride and crucifying to their selfish passions, it will not be endured. Yet their minds crave stimulus, and even their moral natures demand some opiate. Hence they will resort to various so-called teachers, in order to obtain fancies that please and rules of life that suit their native tastes. And the effect of this will be that they turn themselves away from truth to falsehood, and are at last given up of God to the fixed delusion of believing a lie, to their own perdition. The picture is sad indeed, and common as sad, in this as in every century and land. None believe so wildly, and none are so hopelessly hardened as those who finally reject the saving truth of God. B.

5. Do the work of an evangelist—much the same as a preacher or missionary of the gospel, a carrier of its good tidings, without, as in the case of a pastor, being fixed to any definite locality. In the apostolic age, persons recognized as evangelists seem to have occupied a position between apostles and pastors, and to have stood in a certain relation to the former with regard to the diffusion of the gospel and the planting of churches. In some respects, therefore, "they were nearest to the apostles, and had an office cognate to these; in respect to dignity alone they were inferior. For at the command of the apostles [sometimes, indeed, without this; Acts 8 : 5, 40] they went forth to various churches in order to preach the gospel, and to perfect the work which had been begun by the apostles" (Suicer). Or it might be in the inverse order, the apostles came to perfect what the evangelists had begun; for the relations so far do not seem to have been exactly determined. P. F.

6-8. Faith's Triumphant Expectation of an Eternal Reward to Faithfulness.—A death-pean of matchless sublimity, as covering the retrospect and

prospect of a Christlike life—a life of loyal love to God and man. B.—He saw before him, at a little distance, the doom of an unrighteous magistrate, and the sword of a blood-stained executioner; but he appealed to the sentence of a juster Judge, who would soon change the fetters of the criminal into the wreath of the conqueror; he looked beyond the transitory present; the tribunal of Nero faded from his sight, and the vista was closed by the judgment-seat of Christ. C.

I am already being poured out as a sacrificial offering, and my departing time is near. Thus he intimates that Timothy is soon to take up his work for Christ. To prepare him and his successors for like fidelity and success, Paul had written these Epistles. And then for the encouragement, not of Timothy only, but of all who serve the Lord in any sphere or measure, and who love his appearing, he calmly affirms his truth and fidelity, and his absolute assurance of triumph and reward at the hand of his sovereign Saviour. And not to me only, he adds, to the end setting himself forth merely as "a pattern for them that should hereafter believe on Christ," but unto all those that love his appearing. B.

7. It is not strictly correct to render the two Greek words, "I have fought the fight." The metaphor is taken from the Greek foot-races. I have run the good race would be more exact. The literal English is, I have completed the glorious contest. He adds, I have gone over the whole course marked out for the race. C.

The battle fought, the victory won, nothing remains but to die—and that he accounted nothing. He has no quarrel with death; no fear of it; no battle to fight with it; "I have fought a good fight," he says—fought it out. It is done and over; and never were silent night and soft couch more welcome at the close of a long day's journey or of a hard day's fighting than death and the grave to him who exclaimed, "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." T. G.

8. And, throughout, his faith and fealty had never faltered. His trust in Christ, and the trust reposed in him by Christ, had alike been kept inviolate. No boasting words are these, but truthful utterances, "which the Lord, the righteous judge" who gives the crown, now inspires him to affirm, as he is privileged to stand almost within the veil. Now, while he sees at hand the prize toward which he has been so long pressing, he recognizes it as the gracious reward of divinely prompted and aided service—a gift of grace, and striven for successfully through given grace! And, as if to emphasize all this, to exalt the grace of God alone, we read his very last words (v. 18), expounding even this sublime pean, and fitly crowning and concluding his matchless teachings: *The Lord shall deliver me from every*

evil, and shall preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory unto the ages of ages. Amen. B.

The Lord is the righteous Judge: for his judgment is according to truth. The crown of believers is a crown of righteousness, purchased by the righteousness of Christ, and bestowed as the reward of the saints' righteousness. This crown, which believers shall wear, is laid up for them; they have it not at present, for here they are but heirs; they have it not in possession, and yet it is sure, for it is laid up for them. The righteous Judge will give it to all who love, prepare, and long for his appearing. *Henry.*—The reward which God has in hand for his faithful servants is no less than a crown of glory. The time when this reward shall be fully and finally dispensed is the great day. It is the property of the godly to look, love, and long for that day. *Burkitt.*

10. The particular form under which "this present world" seduced Demas from the apostle's company is not mentioned. It may have been lawful business or unlawful pleasure, an office or emolument, luxury or ease, the solicitations of his family or friends. Enough that the love so interfered with his fidelity to the gospel and its apostle. *O. E. D.*—When he had to choose between fellowship with the bonds of Paul and the freedom of the world he did not hesitate; he felt then more attracted to the pleasure or profit of Thessalonica than to the dungeon at Rome. He has not asked if it were wise, faithful, Christian, to abandon such a prisoner at such a moment; and when he disappears finally from our view, there is reason to fear that his parting from Paul was and remained a falling away from a faith which, indeed more than aught else, desires from its professors self-denial and crucifying of the flesh. How great *the danger of the love of the world* even to such as seem to be on the road to the possession of a treasure in heaven! *Van O.*—He had been a preacher, but he never preached a sermon such as he preaches now—himself the sermon, and these words his text, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. *T. G.*

11. It is with an ever-deepening sense of wonder we find, as we study his life, that the man lives in the apostle, that none of the most refined fears, cares, joys, cravings, tendernesses of the most passionate human friendship are unknown to him. Nothing, indeed, in the whole range of his writings is more striking or more prophetic than the friendly phrases which constantly recur, and which breathe the very spirit of tender yearning and desire. As we accumulate such phrases as, "*Only Luke* is with me," "*No man* stood by me," "I thought it good to be left at Athens *alone*," and "I have no man like-

minded with *him*," we feel that we are permitted to look into one of the most sensitive of human hearts, a heart ever craving sympathy and love. Such phrases, and the scenes to which they refer us, reveal *the man* to us and make him dear to us. *Cox.*

13. He bids Timothy bring the cloak which he left at Troas, in anticipation of an approaching winter, "and the books, but especially the parchments." These particulars have seemed to some too frivolous for inspiration, but they have a real purpose and subserve a real end, if they show that even inspiration did not destroy the perfect simplicity and naturalness of those who were the subjects of it. *E. M. G.*

14. *The Lord will requite him according to his works* seems clearly the correct reading. The future, as compared with the optative, may be called popularly the milder sense; and Theodoret seems to lay some stress on so explaining: "It is a prediction, not an imprecation; and it was given forth for the purpose of consoling the blessed Timothy, and teaching him not to be disconcerted by the assaults of the adversaries." In a theological respect, however, there is no material difference; and, if the optative *were* the correct reading, no one need stumble at it. For, surely, what it is perceived God is going to do, a believer, an apostle, nay, even the purest of angelic natures, may fitly desire to see accomplished. *P. F.*

17. As the Lord Jesus at the end of his career was left alone, all his disciples having forsaken him and fled, so was Paul in his last sufferings alone. Nevertheless, there was consolation for the forsaken one. As the Master said, "The Father is with me," so the servant said, "The Lord stood with me and strengthened me." *D. F.*—*The faithfulness of the Lord* stands forth as in contrast before our eyes in heightened splendor. "All men forsook me; notwithstanding the Lord stood with me." So sounds forthwith Paul's vaunt of faith. Jesus departs not hence. Jesus is never nearer than when the Demases become conspicuous through their absence. He has overcome the present world, and he who remains faithful to Him shall share His victory. *Van O.*

THE PREACHING OF THE WORD.

For dignity and usefulness the pastoral office is the first in the Church. None is above it; every other subserves and culminates in it. It is in the pastor that we find the minister in the plenitude of his functions. The pastor is also "a steward of the mysteries of God," "a teacher," "a bishop," "a deacon," "an ambassador for Christ," "a ruler," "an angel," but the converse is not true; some of these names may be taken as identical in meaning with pastor; otherwise, neither one nor the whole of them has as comprehensive an import. Vinet does not mistake when he makes the pastor essential to *the typical man*. "It is impossible," he says, "that

the pastor should not make a part of the ideal of man—impossible that he to whom the perfection of human nature was fully represented should not have been a pastor." It was necessary, therefore, that Christ, the divine man, should have borne this office; that this "pastor of the worlds in the heavens," to use the language of Bernard, should also have been the shepherd and bishop of the souls of men. The pastoral office comprises various functions; but first and chief among them is *preaching; the proper ministry of the word.* T. H. S.

Nothing less than a very distinct and forcible conception and assertion of things spiritual will avail in times like our own to keep alive on the mind a truth equally certain and momentous in one age as in another, that whoever is not in a definite sense a Christian is "yet in his sins," and in peril of the future judgment. We are come to no easy and gentle mood of the world's history. This is no hour of leisure and facility and soft persuasion. Whoever dares not speak explicitly and boldly had better not speak at all. Nothing can now avail the cause of truth but the courage which truth ought to inspire. The adherents of the gospel must then either forfeit all chance of a hearing or act with a correspondent energy and promptitude. If in any time during the course of ages there has been need, on the part of Christians, of that boldness which walks abreast with truth and wisdom, this is such a time. And it is now that whatever is capital and essential in Christianity should be clearly and strenuously affirmed. And now it is (how unutterably desirable!) that whatever overloads, encumbers, defaces our faith should be thrown aside. I. T.

The preacher's mind should resemble a lake fed by a running stream, always acquiring fresh knowledge, and never allowing itself to be stagnant. When a man ceases to learn, that moment he becomes unfit to teach. T. A.—If a full man is required anywhere, it is in the preacher of truth, who is fixed to the same spot the year round. Nothing short of a large magazine to draw from will suffice for these frequent demands; without it the thread of his speech will soon run out the staple of his argument, and, instead of a preacher, he will become a spin-text. *Blunt.*

Let prayer go hand in hand with study. Let the period daily spent among our books always take as much as possible the form of a religious meditation. Let us call to mind when we read, the increased accountability under which increased knowledge lays us. Let us regard our minds as instruments in God's hand whereby he proposes to communicate to others the knowledge of his dear Son, and let us furnish them carefully, and guard them jealously,

under this view of their relation to the divine service. E. M. G.

Affect not fine words, but words which the Holy Ghost teaches; that is, sound speech, which can not be condemned. Enticing words of man's wisdom debase your matter. Gold needs not to be painted. Scripture expressions are what people are used to, and will remember. Consider the lambs of your flock. You must take them along with you. Do not over-drive them by being over-long or over-fine. *Henry.*—Bring your own spirit to the fount of inspiration; live in habitual communion with the infinite truth and love, and the words you speak to men, whether rude or refined, will possess a charm, a force, a power to touch their hearts and mold their secret souls which no words of eloquent conventionality can ever attain. There will be an intuitive recognition of the divine fire which has touched your lips. *Caird.*—Lean only on the spirit of infinite pity and help. Keep the simplicity of childlike trust. Never measure your fidelity by the poor signals of man's applause. Be sure your real success in the last awards will be found in the exact measure of the fervor and constancy of your communion with your Lord. The office of the ministry is to take up and carry forward, in man's behalf, Christ's reconciling work; by whatever methods, according to whatever theory; by communication and by incitement; by rousing and kindling the dormant capacities of the soul, and by taking the things of the Spirit and showing them; life as opposed to stupor, half-belief, spiritual indifference, or a heart split between God's worship and mammon worship; life, not death. F. D. H.

Christian saw the picture of a very grave person hung up against the wall, and this was the fashion of it: It had eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books in its hand, the law of truth was written upon its lips, the world was behind its back; it stood as if it pleaded with men, and a crown of gold did hang over its head. Then said Christian, "What meaneth this?" The interpreter answered, "The man whose picture this is is one of a thousand. And whereas thou seest him with his eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books in his hand, and the law of truth written on his lips, it is to show thee that his work is to know and to unfold dark things to sinners, even as also thou seest him stand as if he pleaded with men. And whereas thou seest the world as cast behind him, and that a crown hangs over his head, that is to show thee that, slighting and despising the things that are present for the love that he hath to his Master's service, he is sure, in the world that comes next, to have glory for his reward." *Bun.*

Section 331.

TITUS i. 1-16.

- 1 PAUL, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's
- 2 elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; in hope of eternal life,
- 3 which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; but hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the command-
- 4 ment of God our Saviour; to Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy,

- 5 *and* peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. For this cause
 left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain
 6 elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, the husband of one wife,
 7 having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as
 the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given
 8 to filthy lucre; but a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;
 9 holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine
 both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.
- 10 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circum-
 11 cision: whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which
 12 they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. One of themselves, *even* a prophet of their own,
 13 said, The Cretians *are* alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true. Where-
 14 fore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; not giving heed to Jewish
 fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.
- 15 Unto the pure all things *are* pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving *is* noth-
 16 ing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know
 God; but in works they deny *him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every
 good work reprobate.

SOME sins, far more than others, are sins first of the imagination. They are such that to think of them is to be tempted by them. To harbor their images, to gaze on their portraits, is to open wide the way for the guilty realities themselves. Especially true is this of those which are secret in their very nature, loving darkness rather than light, born and nursed in hidden chambers where no eye of man can reach, till they gain the satanic strength, finally, to break openly over the bounds of law; but at any rate corroding, corrupting, and spoiling the chaste heart till it is pure no longer. So certainly teaches Christ, he who knows this human heart so well in all its weakness, when he insists that sin is in the glance of the eye and the desire of the mind. Hence the supreme importance he assigns in his teaching to the government of the thoughts, the imagination, the "hidden man." You may say, "Unto the pure all things are pure," and so you will go and look and listen as you please; you will let meretricious art and ambiguous literature and bold company tempt you to the full bent of their unbridled will. Yes, "Unto the pure all things are pure"; that declares a principle. But who are the "pure"? Will any one of us, right-minded as he may be, looking up honestly toward the great white throne, dare say, "I am pure"? and, if you are, how does it happen that you willingly suffer impurity to be the tolerated guest of your heart's hospitality? F. D. H.

THE EPISTLE TO TITUS.

THE precise period of Paul's visit to Crete, for the purpose of preaching the gospel and organizing Christians, is not certainly known. But, from the great similarity between certain parts of this Epistle and the First Epistle to Timothy, the probability is that the visit took place some time during the later operations of the apostle in Asia Minor and Greece, and that consequently this Epistle to Titus, who had been left behind to complete the work begun by the apostle, must have proceeded from his pen at no great interval from the time when he indited the first to Timothy. P. F.—Both letters were addressed to persons left by the writer to preside in their respective churches during his absence. Both letters are principally occupied in describing the qualifications to be sought for in those whom they should appoint to offices in the Church; and the particulars are in both letters nearly the same. Timothy and Titus are likewise cautioned against the same prevailing corruptions, and, in particular, against the same misdirection of their cares and studies. The writer accosts his two friends with the same salutation, and passes on to the business of his letter by the same transition. *Paley*.

Extremely little is known of Titus, either as a man or as an evangelist. His name never occurs in

the history of the Acts, which is somewhat strange, as we know from the Epistle to the Galatians that he was with Paul and Barnabas at Antioch, and accompanied them to Jerusalem when they went to have the dispute settled about circumcision (Gal. 2 : 1-3). We learn, from the brief notice given us of what took place on that occasion, that Paul sternly refused to have him circumcised, as some of the Jewish Christians wished, because he saw that in *his* case the principle of gospel liberty was at stake, and must, at whatever hazard, be vindicated. It therefore appears not only that Titus was a Gentile, but that he must have also been employed chiefly in ministering to Gentiles, or to churches in which these formed the predominating element. He appears, at a later period, to have been with Paul and Timothy at Ephesus, doubtless sharing with these in the manifold labors attendant on the planting of the Church in that center of idolatry and corruption. From Ephesus he was sent forth by Paul to Corinth, for the purpose of stimulating the brethren to get forward their contributions for the poor saints at Jerusalem (2 Cor. 8 : 6 ; 12 : 18). He rejoined the apostle in Macedonia, and cheered him with the report he brought, not only of the progress of the contributions, but also of the salutary effect produced by the First Epistle of Paul to the Church at

Corinth (7: 6-15). P. F.—He is spoken of in the highest terms as being Paul's partner and fellow-helper; and his unity of spirit and action with the apostle is confidently appealed to. For about ten years (A. D. 57-67) we lose sight of Titus altogether, i. e., until the notices which our Epistle supplies. Here we find him left in the island of Crete by Paul, for the temporary purpose of carrying forward the correction of those things that were defective. He was to work this out by establishing presbyteries, the members of which are called bishops, in every city. He was to stay there a very short time, as he was, on the arrival of Tychicus or Artemas, to come to the apostle at Nicopolis.

The only plausible account of the origin of these Cretan churches is, that they owed their beginning to some of those Cretan Jews who are related to have been witnesses of the miracle on the day of Pentecost. If this view be correct, it will furnish a complete and interesting explanation of their condition as shown by our Epistle. They had been long founded, yet were in an elementary and unformed state. The errors in them were almost exclusively Jewish, and the apostle's visit had brought out the Judaistic element into open hostility to him. A.

1, 2. The faith and knowledge of God's elect rested on a background of promise and hope, which, in a manner, stretched from eternity to eternity, having God's primeval promise for its origin, and a participation in his everlasting life for its end. What an elevated thought! And how peculiarly fitted, both to enhance the spiritual attainments which carried with them the realization of such a hope, and to exalt the ministry which was appointed to bring them, instrumentally, within the reach of men!

5. The first and apparently the most prominent point concerned the official organization of the churches: *and mightest appoint elders in every city, as I directed thee*. Not only was the appointment of elders to each several congregation to be made, but it was to be done in accordance with the instructions which had been given by the apostle—the main part of which are doubtless embodied in the description, which immediately follows, of the qualifications to be sought in the persons who were to receive the appointment. P. F.

5-7. The name *presbyter*, or *elder*, is no doubt of Jewish-Christian origin—a translation of the Hebrew title *saken*, *sekenim*, applied to the rulers of the synagogues, on whom devolved the conduct of religious affairs. It refers, therefore, primarily to age and the personal venerableness which goes with it; then derivatively to official dignity and authority, since these are usually borne by men of age and experience. The term *bishop*, or *overseer*, is, in all probability, borrowed from the political relations of the Greeks. Hence it came later into ecclesiastical use, and made its first appearance, too, among the Gentile Christians; as, in fact, it occurs in the New Testament only in the writings of Paul and his disciple Luke. It refers, as the term itself signifies, to the official duty and activity of these congregational rulers. The demand for the office unquestionably arose very early; since, notwithstanding the diffusion of gifts, which were not necessarily confined to official station, provision had to be made for the regular instruction and government of the rapidly multiplying churches. The historical pattern for it was presented in the Jewish synagogue, in the bench of elders who conducted the exercises of public worship, prayer, and the reading and exposition of the

Scriptures. Christian presbyters meet us for the first time (Acts 11: 30) at Jerusalem, when the Church of Antioch sent a collection to their brethren in Judea. Thence the institution passed over not only to all the Jewish-Christian churches, but also to those planted by Paul and his collaborators among the Gentiles. The presbyters or bishops of the apostolic period were the regular teachers and pastors, preachers and leaders of the congregations; and it was their office to conduct all public worship, to take care of souls, to enforce discipline, and to manage the church property. P. S.

As at the first settling of the Church of Israel in the wilderness, so it was in the first settling of the gospel. The first fathers of the Sanhedrim in the wilderness were endued with divine gifts; but, when that generation was expired, those that were to succeed in that function and employment were such as were qualified for it by education, study, and parts acquired. So was it with this first age of the gospel and the ages succeeding. At the first dispersing of the gospel, it was absolutely needful that the first planters should be furnished with such extraordinary gifts, or else it was not possible it should be planted, as may appear by a plain instance: Paul comes to a place where the gospel had never come; he stays a month or two and begets a church, and then he is to go his way and to leave them. Who now, in this church, is fit to be their minister? they being all alike but very children in the gospel; but Paul is directed by the Holy Ghost to lay his hands upon such and such of them; and that bestows upon them the gift of tongues and prophesying; and now they are able to be ministers, and to teach the congregation. But after that generation, when the gospel was settled in the world, and committed to writing, and written to be read and studied, then was study of the Scriptures the way to enable man to unfold the Scriptures, and fit them to be ministers to instruct others; and revelations and inspirations neither needful nor safe to be looked after, nor hopeful to be attained unto. And this was the reason why Paul, coming but newly out of Ephesus and Crete, when he could have ordained and qualified ministers with abilities by the imposition of his hands, would not do it, but left Timothy and Titus to ordain, though they could not bestow these gifts: because he knew the way that the Lord had appointed ministers thenceforward to be enabled for the ministry, not by extraordinary infusions of the Spirit, but by serious study of the Scriptures: not by a miraculous, but by an ordinary ordination. J. L.

9. It was the first part of the duty of the overseers of such a community to *exhort*, that is, to *instruct and edify* its own members; and only secondarily, and as occasion required, to resist and expose the false teaching of those who assailed the Christian faith, if so be they might be able to convince them of their errors. So that the qualification here associated with the true Christian pastor corresponds to the *aptness to teach* mentioned in 1 Tim. 3: 2; only here it is more specifically described, and its importance indicated with reference as well to the hostile as to the friendly elements, amid which the church in Crete was placed. P. F.

12. The character of the Cretans quoted by the apostle with approbation, out of the Cretan poet Epimenides, is abundantly illustrated by the testimonies of ancient writers. Livy, Plutarch, Polybius, and Strabo testify to their love of gain, their

ferocity and fraud, their disregard of truth, and general depravity. A.—The description, of course, is to be understood as applying only in the general to the Cretan population, while admitting, doubtless, of many individual exceptions. But, being so general as to have become a kind of byword and reproach to the island, it was to be expected that the noxious qualities would not be long in making their appearance in the Christian Church; on the side especially of these qualities danger was to be looked for to the cause of a pure and healthful Christianity. P. F.

15. Unto the pure all things are pure.

The pure heart becomes a center of attraction round which similar atoms gather, and from which dissimilar ones are repelled. A corrupt heart elicits in an hour all that is bad in us; a spiritual one brings out and draws to itself all that is best and purest. We do not want a new world; we want *new hearts*. Let the Spirit of God purify society, and to the pure all things will be pure. F. W. R.—Let there be purity in the region of thought, desire, will, and then external things assume a corresponding character, because they receive an impress and a direction from the spirit of him who uses them. It is but a fresh enunciation of the truth long before uttered by our Lord, and laid by him as an axe to the root of the mistaken ceremonialism of the Pharisees: that everything depended on the state of the heart, from which proceed, as to good or evil, the issues of life. P. F.

All things are pure which God has given to man. And, therefore, if a man be pure in heart, all which God has given him will not only do him no harm, but do him good. All the comforts and blessings of this life will help to make him a better man. They will teach him about his own character; about human nature, and the people with whom he has to do; ay, about God himself, as it is written, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Yet there is not a blessing on earth which a man may not turn into a curse. There is not a good gift of God out of which a man may not get harm, if only his heart be not pure; as it is written, "To those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure." C. K.—They have within a fountain of pollution, which spreads itself over and infects everything about them. Their food and drink, their possessions, their employments, their comforts, their actions—all are in the reckoning of God tainted with impurity, because they are putting away from them that which alone has for the soul regenerating and cleansing efficacy. P. F.

16. "They *profess*" should be "they make confession." This is important. The English version admits the idea that they *profess*, without *having*, the knowledge, whereas the point of the apostle's accusation is their own confession of the fact that they know God, and their denial of him in their works. A.

Section 332.

TITUS ii. 1-15.

- 1 But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: that the aged men be sober,
- 2 grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that
- 3 they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teach-
- 4 ers of good things; that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their hus-
- 5 bands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their
- 6 own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to
- 7 be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine *shew-*
- 8 *ing* uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he
- 9 that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. *Exhort*
- servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not
- 10 answering again; not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the
- doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.
- 11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that,
- 12 denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in
- 13 this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great
- 14 God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from
- all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things
- 15 speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

THE grace of the gospel is an effectual principle of holiness in all who partake of it. This was the doctrine which Paul delivered to Titus. "The *grace* of God which bringeth salvation teacheth us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world." I read of a *dead* faith, a *presumptuous* hope, a *false* peace, and a *name* to live. Whereas the true faith of the gospel is everywhere represented as "working by love" and "overcoming the world." The hope of the gospel incites all who are possessed of it "to purify themselves, even as he" whom they hope to enjoy "is pure." "The peace of God which passeth all understanding keeps," or guards, "the heart and mind," and fortifies the believer against the fierce assaults of his spiritual enemies. And it is the distinguishing privilege of those who "are not under the law but under grace," that "sin shall not have dominion over them." They show that they live in the Spirit by walking in the Spirit, and give proof that they are "risen with Christ," and "know him in the power of his resurrection," by "seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." These are the words of truth; they are pure words, like silver tried in a furnace of earth, and purified seven times. And they are written in such capital letters, and expressed with such plainness and precision, that no sophistry can either darken their meaning or impair their force: unless it be to those unstable souls who are "ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." R. W.

1. "*Sound doctrine*," as so often, should be "the sound doctrine," i. e., the apostolic setting forth of the Christian faith; not, any kind of wholesome teaching. A.

2. The various things mentioned in the exhortation are peculiarly appropriate for persons in advanced life: they are the qualities in which it behooves them in an eminent degree to adorn the Christian faith. P. F.

6. The term *sobriety* of mind, according to its original import, denoted a *negation*, the absence of intoxication. From this more sensual starting-point it proceeded to denote the removal of all such exciting influences as tend to blind and bewilder the mind, to weaken the power of judgment, to bring our nature under the dominion of passions which plead for immediate gratification. Thus, sobriety of mind came to mean moral soundness or health, the dominion of reason over desire. The word here used, strictly translated, means "sound-minded," or healthy-minded, and implies the conviction that there is a certain standard of character or condition of the mind which bears an analogy to health of body, a condition in which all the functions of the mind are in their right state, in which sound or healthy views of things are taken, in which no part of human nature is inoperative or unduly developed.

This Christian duty of sobriety needs to be pressed with especial *earnestness on young men*, who are apt to fail just at this point. Without the lessons of experience, impulsive and incautious, proverbially hopeful, often dazzled by the colors which their own imaginations throw around the objects of pursuit, who need so much as they a voice of counsel and of solemn warning, drawn from the eternal issues of conduct? Their minds naturally, and by a divine appointment, take hold of life with a strong zest; and earthly desires are at their side, urging them, according to the design of their existence, to the fulfillment of earthly duties, and yet able to draw them away into every excess. Feeling is exuberant, temper quick, passion strong; the evil of indulgence is unknown, or lies afar off and may not be guarded against; restraint has not become habitual. Let all go on in an unchecked progress, let there be no light from the skies to reveal higher duties and a nobler life, and what preservative is there against the mad sweep of sensual passions, if the temperament lead that way, or against the in-

sane thirst for gold or office? How precious then ought that fountain to be regarded from which sobering draughts may be continually drawn; which tells us of a *blessed life*, that is passed in calmness where no gusts of passion invade, and is to be measured, not by outbursts of wild joy, but by the depth of an inward peace; which tells us of a *holy life*, whose communings with an Infinite Father and a Divine Saviour curb, as by a wand of magic, every lust, and bring the soul into harmony; which tells us of a *noble life* full of great purposes, the least of which is worth more to the soul than all that pleasure ever promised; which tells us of a *life looking out beyond the grave*, and in its measurements finding all objects bounded by this world to be ineffably small. T. D. W.

10. *In order that in all things they may adorn the doctrine of our Saviour God.* Here again, as at verse 5, also at verse 8, the high spiritual aim of the gospel, in what it teaches of doctrine and exacts of obedience, comes prominently out. The glory of God's name and character among men is involved in it. And the strongest expression given to this is precisely here where the lowest in social position are concerned. Previously it was that God's word might not be blasphemed; but now it is that the conduct of the poor bondmen who avowed themselves believers might *adorn* the doctrine which is of God. "God thinks it meet" (to use the words of Calvin) "to receive an ornament from bondmen, whose condition was so mean that they were scarcely reckoned among men. But if *their life* (he justly adds) is an ornament of the Christian name, all the more should they who are in honor see to it that they do not mar it by their base behavior." P. F. —The Christian is called to adorn the doctrine of the gospel in whatever calling he is placed. He is to look upon the world as the field where the character of Jesus is to be manifested by his followers, and where God is to be glorified. He is to be a prophet, priest, and king, teaching truth and righteousness, proclaiming peace, and offering interces-

sion, living in a royal spirit above the distractions and anxieties of time. He can be a missionary everywhere: Christ sends him into the world. The less he loves the world in its God-opposed character, the more he truly loves the world, and is a blessing to those around him. A. S.

11-14. Taking occasion from what he had just said of the connection between the conduct of Christians and the doctrine they professed to have received, and the connection of both with the glory of God, the apostle proceeds in these verses to ground the whole of his exhortations respecting the behavior of Christians in the essentially moral nature and design of the grace of God as now manifested in the gospel: *For the grace of God, having salvation for all men, was manifested, disciplining us, etc.* P. F.—By the action of grateful motive and the operation of the Holy Spirit, grace persuades, impels, and educates to a new life of sobriety as respects self, justice toward others, piety toward God above. And this new life is no dull or melancholy thing. It has a blessed hope. It is indeed impelled by one epiphany of Christ, and attracted by another. From the first in grace it has its motive and instruction; toward the second in glory it stretches forward, and in the hope of that glory it is cheered and purified. We are schooled to moderation in all things by the thought that the Lord is at hand. We are kept from fainting in the trial of our faith by the assurance that it will be "found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." We turn away from sin, because we look for that Saviour who gave himself for us in order to deliver and cleanse us from all evil. We are his treasure-people, not our own, and he will come to claim us. Therefore we are under the strongest obligation and inducement to be "zealous of good works." Such was the doctrine of salvation taught by Paul, and committed to Titus. D. F.

11. The whole controversy between man and his Maker may be reduced to a question between the *pride* of man and the *grace* of God. One may accept temporal benefits at the hand of God, and, instead of being humble and grateful, may be vain and boastful, as if he were in some way worthy. But one can not accept the grace of God which bringeth salvation without owning himself a sinner in need of grace—guilty, lost, ready to perish, unless God shall interpose to save. Only sinners have need of grace; only sinners can be saved by Christ; and, among sinners, such only as feel and confess their guilt, and *therefore* come to him for pardon, for justification, and for a new spirit. J. P. T.

12. The saving grace of God comes into consideration as the disciplining or molding power, by means of which our naturally wayward and corrupt

souls are formed to that higher scheme of life. And this corrective influence, or internal discipline, is expressed first in the negative, and shows itself in a denial of ungodliness and worldly lusts. An active following after the good is the necessary counterpart to a renunciation of the evil; and this the apostle describes as a life marked by three prominent characteristics: *soberly* expresses the self-command and restraint which the Christian should always exercise over his thoughts and actions: *justly*, the integrity that should regulate all his dealings toward his fellow-men; while *godlily* or *piously* indicates the state of mind and conduct he should maintain in his relation toward God.

13. The hope, considered with respect to its realization, is here called *blessed*. But the hope itself is more closely defined by what follows—the *manifestation of the glory*. P. F.—**The glorious appearing of the great God.** Christ will then gloriously appear as the *great God*. Every knee shall then bow to him, and confess that he is the Lord of glory. The glory of his *mediatorship* will then appear. As a Saviour and Mediator shall be seen and known the all-fullness of his satisfaction, merit, and saving power. The glory of his *manhood* will then also appear. The very body of Christ will shine with a most glorious brightness. No heart can conceive the glory in which Christ will appear in that day. That day is called the day of Christ. The first coming of Christ was the night of Christ, a time of darkness wherein his glory was greatly hid from the world. But his second coming will be a day, a time of light wherein his glory will be fully revealed and shine forth. *Increase Mather.*

14. An expansion of the term *Saviour* applied to Christ, so presented as to bring out a fresh exhibition of the grace of the gospel: *Who gave himself for us*—himself, as contradistinguished from any inferior gift, and that *for us*, in our behalf. It was altogether in our interest that the great self-sacrificing deed was done; and in what respect is immediately stated: *in order that he might redeem*—by the paying of a ransom free—*us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* It is what may be called the redemptive, not the atoning or propitiatory aspect of Christ's work which is here brought into view, though the two are very closely interconnected, and the one now under consideration presupposes and is founded upon the other; for it is only by virtue of the reconciliation with God, effected through the propitiatory death of Christ, that there is attained by the sinner such a participation in the life of Christ, and such renewing and strengthening aid from the Spirit of grace, as may enable him to break the bonds of his spiritual captivity, and rise into the pure and glorious liberty of God's children.

Having through his obedience unto death paid the costly ransom through which this happy change is accomplished, Christ is therefore said to have redeemed from iniquity those who share in his salvation, and purified them to himself as a peculiar people, a people over and above, occupying a position separate and peculiar, like one's *peculium* or special treasure. P. F.

The purchaser was Christ; and the price paid was Christ. God the Son bought us, and he gave himself, the Son of God, for us. He gave himself for us, not that he might simply pay our debt to divine justice, nor that he might save us in our sins at all, but that he might redeem us from *all iniquity*. He gave himself, to purify unto himself a peculiar people; not only to obtain for them a pardon, but a new man, created after God's image. Redemption from the curse, and from the love of sin, go together; where one is, the other is: both are united in the peculiar people. Purification is setting in on a soul, just when that soul sets its face Zionward; it increases with each step taken on the road, and becomes entire in heaven. Hence, whether Christ's death is of any avail is to be known by our progress in holiness, or by our zeal in good works, as a good tree brings forth good fruit, a sweet fountain sweet streams. Therefore, of the teaching of our words, this is the sum: *Christ gave himself for sinners, that they might be holy; a trea-*

sure for himself; and the mark by which they are known as his is zeal in well-doing. One thing we need—that which an old Choctaw Indian prayed for —“*a clean heart, a white heart, a true heart, and a big heart, large enough to fill the whole body.*” Yes, that is it. We need our bodies full of heart, and our hearts full of Christ; full of faith and the Holy Ghost; then shall we be zealous of good works. R. T.

The movement of the soul along the path of duty, under the influence of holy love to God, constitutes what are called good works. The external form of an action can not alone determine whether it be a good work or not. Its usefulness to others may be determined by its external form, but its moral worth depends on the moral spring from which it flows. Good works, then, are healthy works, or works of a healthy mind. Healthy bodily actions can only proceed from healthy bodily principles; and healthy spiritual actions can proceed only from healthy spiritual principles. Spiritual health is not acquired by good actions; it is followed by them and strengthened by them. They are also music, sweet music. Good works, then, are not undervalued by those who hold the doctrine of *unconditional pardon* in its highest sense. In their view, good works are the perfection and expression of holy principles, the very end and object of all religion, the very substance of happiness, the very element of heaven. T. Erskine.

Section 338.

TITUS iii. 1-15.

- 1 PUT them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be
- 2 ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, *but* gentle, shewing
- 3 all meekness unto all men. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one
- 4 another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,
- 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved
- 6 us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us
- 7 abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should
- 8 be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. *This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works.* These things are good and profitable unto men.
- 9 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law;
- 10 for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretick after the first and second ad-
- 11 monition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned
- 12 of himself. When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto
- 13 me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter. Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.
- 14 And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not un-
- 15 fruitful. All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

God is clearly and delightfully seen to be everything, as he lifts up the faint, tearful culprit from the earth, where he feels his true position to be; and, as He whispers in the astonished ear words of amnesty, forgiveness, adoption, the pardoned penitent is in Christ; and that by the sovereign gift of the Law-giver and King. The prodigal is seen, and met, and kissed, and wept over, and clad, and decked, and feasted. "The kindness and love of God our Saviour" has now appeared; "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy." And this gratuitousness of the reconciliation excludes not only acts, and words, and conformities to law, but quite as much all feelings, moods, purposes, exertions, endeavors, nay, even repentings and believings. All are made utterly worthless, and superseded, by the free grace of God, whereby he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. J. W. A.

1. Titus was also to exhort the Christians to beware of insubordination to the government. Magistracy is an ordinance of God; and his people, while fully at liberty, and even under obligation, to alter and reform in all constitutional ways whatever is amiss in the social and political state of the country in which they dwell, are bound by the highest considerations of religious duty to respect government, to love peace, to pay tribute, and show that honor for rulers and judges which is an essential element and safeguard of human civilization. D. F.—Of course the requirement has its limitations: the duties of rulers and ruled are reciprocal; and absolute unrestricted authority on the one side is no more to be contemplated than unqualified submission on the other, for neither is in accordance with the essential principles of truth and rectitude. Obedience to external authority can be due only in so far as that authority has a right to command; when it oversteps this, and issues injunctions which reach beyond its proper line of things, the higher principles of obligation come in: "We must obey God rather than men"; "Be not partaker in other men's sins." P. F.—**Every good work.** Indifference in any good cause is blamable. In the Christian religion, it is insupportable. It does violence to the first and fundamental principle of that religion, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." Christianity is throughout an active religion; it consists not only in abstaining from evil, but in being "ready to every good work," and, if we stop short at the first, we leave half of our business undone. P.

3-8. As a reason for the manifestation of this mild and benignant spirit toward others, even degraded and ignorant heathen, the apostle refers to their own similar state in the past, and the marvelously kind and compassionate treatment they had, notwithstanding, experienced from their heavenly Father. P. F.—"We ourselves," I, Paul, thou, Titus, and other preachers like us, were once as unpromising subjects as these very "Cretans"; myself, especially, having been "the chief of sinners." But see what the mighty gospel, which you are to preach to your "Cretans," has by the power of the Holy Ghost effected even in us; for "he saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Thus, encouraged, then, by what has been wrought in *ourselves*, be not backward in calling your "Cretans" to the entire holiness which I have enjoined. What I have said "is a faithful saying"; my injunction is in full accord with the spirit of the gospel; "and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works." J. S. S.

4. "Love of God our Saviour toward man appeared" would be better "love toward men of our Saviour God was manifested"; "love-toward-men" is one word, "philanthropy," in the Greek, and so is best kept together. A.

5. *Not of works—works in righteousness—which we did, but according to his mercy he saved us.* The act of God, though expressed only at the close, covers the whole of the passage; he saved us, not on one ground, but on another. *Not of works*—that is, out of them as the formal or meritorious cause. P. F.—It is only the part which God performs in our salvation that is held up to view; and so it did not admit of that being mentioned which is required on the part of man, as the subjective instrument or condition of his entrance on salvation. Hence it is not said by faith (as in other passages); for the apostle's aim here is not to describe the new state of the man, but to point to the act and saving agency of God in regard to the individual, by which the new state is brought about, and which shows, more than anything else, that this new state does not rest on man's merit or his own doing. Wiesinger.

Washing of regeneration. *Laver* is the only ascertained sense of the word. It signifies not the act of washing, but the vessel in which the act was performed. P. F.—I readily admit that the passage is to be explained of baptism, not because salvation is included in the outward symbol of water, but because baptism seals to us the salvation procured by Christ. That man will rightly hold the proper use and virtue of the sacraments who shall thus connect the sign and the thing signified, so as neither to make the sign empty or inefficacious, nor yet, with the view of extolling it, detract from the Holy Spirit what is his own. *Calv.*—If the natural import of Paul's words here obliges us to hold that he speaks of baptism, it is of baptism (to use the words of Ellicott), "on the supposition that it was no mere observance, but that it was a sacrament, in which all that was inward properly and completely accompanied all that was outward. He thus could say, in the fullest sense of the words, that it was a *laver of regeneration*, as he had also said (Gal. 3 : 27) that as many as were baptized into Christ had put on Christ—entered into vital union with him." The most exact parallel, however, is 1 Pet. 3 : 21, where, with reference to the salvation wrought for Noah through the deluge and the ark, the apostle says that "baptism now also saves us"; but then baptism of what sort? Not that (he presently adds) which is simply outward, and which could avail only to the purifying of the flesh, but that which carries with it "the answer" (or interrogation) "of a good conscience toward God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." It was baptism of such a kind as involved an earnest and conscien-

tious dealing with God in respect to salvation, and an appropriation of the new life brought in for believers by the death and resurrection of Christ.

Renewing of the Holy Ghost. By renovation, as used in New Testament Scripture, is meant a progressive change to the better—a growing advancement in the divine life, of which the Holy Spirit, indeed, is the efficient agent, but in which also there is a concurrent action of the regenerated soul. The grace that works in it is not converting, but coöperating and strengthening grace. And, while baptism is the seal of the new birth, and gives assurance of the Spirit for all redemption blessings, it is never formally represented as the seal of spiritual progress, nor could it with propriety be so. For it has respect to our introduction into a new state, but not to any future and successive advances thereafter to be made in it. The ordinance of the supper, in a sacramental point of view, stands related to this, not baptism. There are therefore two things marked here—first, baptism (as the laver of regeneration), and then the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which is but another name for progressive sanctification.

6. *Poured on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.* The form of expression is derived from the language of Old Testament prophecy, adopted by the apostles at the commencement of the New Testament Church—language proceeding on the similitude of the Spirit's grace to quickening and refreshing streams of water. As such he is represented, not simply as given, but as poured out—nay, poured out richly, in order to convey some idea of the plenteous beneficence of the gift. This rich bestowal is peculiar to New Testament times; and here, as elsewhere, it is expressly connected with the mediation of Christ, who, as Saviour, has opened the way for it, and himself sends forth the Spirit as the fruit of his work on earth and the token of its acceptance with the Father. So that the whole Trinity appears here as concurring in the blessed work of our salvation. We are saved by God the Father, through the ministration of his life-giving

ordinances, rendered such by the presence and agency of the Holy Spirit; and this again proceeds on the ground of what was done for us by Christ as our Saviour, and what he still does in mediating between us and the Father respecting the bestowal of the Spirit. Such a style of representation could never have been used unless Father, Son, and Spirit had been coördinate agents in the work of salvation. P. F.

13. We hear for the first time of "Zenas the lawyer"; and it is pleasant to think of the union in Christ of what are called the learned professions, when Zenas the lawyer and Luke the physician met with Paul the theologian and preacher. D. F.—The mention of Apollos here along with Zenas, as one whom Paul wished to have beside him, so near the close of his earthly labors, is a clear proof of the good understanding which subsisted between these two eminent servants of God. P. F.

14. The apostle here indicates to us a duty for which the evangelistic activity of our own time may furnish frequent opportunity. It is that of helping and forwarding missionaries, "so that nothing be wanting to them." Let our churches be not only ordered after the apostolic directions, and instructed in the apostolic doctrine, but also considerate and generous in furthering the propagation of the gospel; and then the benediction which Paul pronounces on the faithful in Crete will fall on them also: "Grace be with you all." D. F.

THE Epistle to Titus is dated from Nicopolis in Macedonia, while no city of that name is known to have existed in that province. There are only eleven distinct assignments of date to Paul's Epistles (for the four written from Rome may be considered as plainly contemporary); and of these, six seem to be erroneous. I do not attribute any authority to these subscriptions. Had they come down to us as authentic parts of the Epistles, there would have been more contrarieties and difficulties arising out of these final verses than from all the rest of the volume. Paley.

Section 334.

PHILEMON i. 1-25.

1 PAUL, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy *our* brother, unto Philemon *our* dearly
2 beloved, and fellowlabourer, and to *our* beloved Apphia, and Archippus *our* fellowsoldier,
3 and to the church in thy house: grace to you, and peace, from God *our* Father and the
4 Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,
5 hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all
6 saints; that the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging
7 of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus. For we have great joy and consolation
8 in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother. Where-
9 fore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet
10 for love's sake I rather beseech *thee*, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a
11 prisoner of Jesus Christ. I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in
12 my bonds: which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to
13 me: whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels: whom
14 I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the
15 bonds of the gospel: but without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not

15 be as it were of necessity, but willingly. For perhaps he therefore departed for a season,
 16 that thou shouldest receive him for ever; not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the
 17 Lord? If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. If he hath wronged
 18 thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account; I Paul have written it with mine own
 19 hand, I will repay it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own
 20 self besides. Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the
 21 Lord. Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also
 22 do more than I say. But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your
 23 prayers I shall be given unto you. There salute thee Epaphras, my fellowprisoner in Christ
 24 Jesus; Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers. The grace of our Lord
 25 Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.

THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

THIS short letter differs from all others which have come down to us as parts of the canon of Scripture. It gives us a glimpse of the private friendships of an apostle, and of the social intercourse which he held with his fellow-Christians. A. —Philemon was a man of position in Colosse, who had been converted to the Christian faith under Paul's ministry at Ephesus; for the apostle had never visited Colosse. Apphia, so cordially greeted along with Philemon (v. 2), was doubtless his wife, and Archippus, named not here only but also in the Epistle to the Colossians, a son or other near relative. The house was resorted to for Christian worship; for Paul and Timothy send greeting to the Church in the house.

Among the household slaves was one named Onesimus, by birth a Colossian. He was not a Christian; and, giving way to the temptation to "purloin," he defrauded his master and absconded. He bent his steps to Rome, where he might easily escape detection. Paul was then in Rome, suffering his first imprisonment. He was under the care of a soldier who was responsible for his custody, but was allowed to live in "his own hired house." To this house Onesimus repaired in his distress. It may have been that he went in as by accident, but there the Spirit of the Lord opened the heart of this hearer, so that he was begotten again of the word of truth; for the apostle writes of him as "my son Onesimus whom I have begotten in my bonds." How the grace of God follows the unworthy! Onesimus had possessed in Colosse every advantage for learning the Christian doctrine; but he learned it not. He then loved the darkness rather than the light. But the good Lord willed not that he should perish; and the grace which he refused at Colosse followed him to Rome. The slave became a free-man of Christ. The runaway became a brother beloved of an apostle and of saints. So pleased with him was Paul that he would gladly have retained him to cheer and help him in his bonds; and gladly would Onesimus have tarried at Rome for such a purpose. But he confided to the apostle the shameful manner and reason of his flight from Colosse, and Paul sent him back to Philemon with this letter explaining the circumstances, and intimating an earnest desire that Onesimus might be kindly received. He was also so thoughtful as to mention Onesimus at the same time in his letter to the Colossian Church, certifying him as "a faithful and beloved brother."

The letter to Philemon is a model of tact and delicacy. Luther calls it "a charming and masterly example of Christian love." Erasmus, thinking most of its outward form, remarks that "Cicero never wrote with greater elegance." D. F. —This letter was preserved in the family to which it was addressed, and read first, no doubt, as a precious apostolic message of love and blessing in the Church which assembled in Philemon's house. Then copies of it became multiplied, and from Colosse it spread through the Church universal. It is quoted as early as the end of the second century, and has ever, except with some few who question everything, remained an undoubted portion of the writings of Paul. A.

2. A word respecting this *Church in Philemon's house*. Remember that this was before there were any fixed buildings appropriated to purposes of divine worship. The Christians assembled where and how they could, and generally, we may well suppose, in not very large numbers; and thus the house of the minister, or of some other Christian brother, became a regular place of meeting for prayer and the sacrament. We learn from the Epistle to the Colossians that, in the neighboring city of Laodicea, one Nymphas similarly assembled the Church in his house; and in Rom. 16: 5, and 1 Cor. 16: 19, the same is said of Aquila and Priscilla.

4-7. The apostle proceeds to pave the way for his coming request, by commending the faith and love of him to whom he was writing. Philemon had refreshed the hearts of the saints; was known as one full of benevolence and Christian charity. This, the apostle says, made him the bolder. He might have *commanded* him to do what was fitting; this also he mentions to bespeak acceptance for the lesser thing — viz., his request for love's sake. 8-14. And thus he introduces the subject of his letter, even further bespeaking favor for it by the circumstance of his being now Paul the aged, and in chains for Jesus' sake. Onesimus is his own child; a birth into the Christian Church, which had been the fruit of his own imprisonment. His name ONESIMUS, in Greek, signified "profitable"; little indeed had this signification as yet been verified;

but now the unprofitable one had become a source of profit—to the apostle, whose ministry he had sealed—to his master, who would receive him now as a brother beloved. The apostle had a thought of retaining him to minister to himself that duty which he gently reminds Philemon that he, the master, owed to his father in the faith; but he is unwilling to take his service for granted, and thus constrain it; all that he does for the apostle shall be of free will. A.

The tenderness and delicacy of this Epistle have been long admired. Yet the character of Paul prevails in it throughout. The warm, affectionate, authoritative teacher is interceding with an absent friend for a beloved convert. He urges his suit with an earnestness befitting, perhaps not so much the occasion as the ardor and sensibility of his own mind. Here also, as everywhere, he shows himself conscious of the weight and dignity of his mission; nor does he suffer Philemon for a moment to forget it: "I *might* be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient." He is careful also to recall to Philemon's memory the sacred obligation under which he had laid him by bringing to him the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Without laying aside the apostolic character, he softens the imperative style of his address, by mixing with it every sentiment and consideration that could move the heart of his correspondent.

10. An assertion in the Epistle to the Colossians, viz., that "Onesimus was one of them," is verified by the Epistle to Philemon, not by any mention of Colosse, nor by the most distant intimation concerning the place of Philemon's abode, but by stating Onesimus to be Philemon's servant, and by joining in the salutation Philemon with Archippus; for this Archippus, when we go back to the Epistle to the Colossians, appears to have been an inhabitant of that city, and to have held an office in that Church. This correspondence evinces the genuineness of one Epistle as well as of the other. It is like comparing the two parts of a cloven tally. Coincidence proves the authenticity of both. *Paley*.

15, 16. Paul had confidence in Onesimus that he would now prove as valuable to Philemon as he had been worthless before. His strong desire was that his former master and the Church at Colosse should, without misgiving, receive Onesimus on his return into "the fellowship." This, indeed, is the great thought of the letter. There is a fellowship in Christ which overrides all outward distinctions, swallows up a thousand upbraidings, and makes master and servants brethren in the Lord. It is the warm, generous, sacred communion of saints. D. F.

18, 19. Since a slave could possess nothing, the means of escape and sustenance must have been fraudulently obtained out of his master's property,

even supposing there was no greater theft behind. To whatever sum this damage amounted, Paul gives his word that he would himself be chargeable with it. But he delicately reminds Philemon that a far greater debt is owing to him than can be due from him—"even *thine own self*"—to him who first taught thee the worth of thine own soul.

The apostle will not rashly or hastily interfere with existing institutions. He had elsewhere advised (1 Cor. 7: 20) that every man should abide in the calling in which he finds himself. And here he is consistent with himself. He never requests Philemon to set Onesimus free, but only to receive him back kindly. A.—As the Christian teachers did not directly assail the civil constitution, however defective it might be considered, so they did not try to sweep away by a revolutionary stroke the institution of slavery, which was so firmly established in ancient society. They set forth the common relation of master and servant to Christ, the Master of both; they declared that the master and slave, as brethren, were equal; they pointed out the inconsistency of all unkindness and oppression with the law of love; they enjoined upon both parties the duty of mutual forbearance and just dealing; but they did not formally terminate the relation. G. P. F.—The New Testament contains vital principles, not always defined, but which, as they are evolved one after another, and are successively brought to bear upon the opinions and manners of Christianized nations, do actually remove from them those evils which had accumulated in the course of time. The New Testament, considered as embodying a system of morals for the world—a system which is slowly to develop itself, until the human family has been led by it into the path of peace and purity—effects this great purpose, not by prohibiting, in so many words, the evils it is at length to abolish, but by putting in movement unobtrusive influences, which nothing, in the end, shall be able to withstand. I. T.

23, 24. As the letter to Philemon and that to the Colossians were written at the same time, and sent by the same messenger, the one to a particular inhabitant, the other to the Church of Colosse, it may be expected that the same, or nearly the same, persons would be about Paul, and join with him, as was the practice, in the salutations of the Epistle. Accordingly we find the names of Aristarchus, Marcus, Epaphras, Luke, and Demas in both Epistles. *Paley*.

We happen to possess the means of comparing this specimen of Christian intercession with a like specimen from the pen of a kindly spirited and cultivated heathen. The younger Pliny, the same who wrote the celebrated letter to the Emperor Trajan about the Christians in Bithynia, writes to his friend Sabinianus entreating his pardon for a freedman who had offended him; and writes again, acknowledging gratefully the granting of his request. The letters are models of courtesy, humanity, good feeling. But, to a Christian mind, the comparison with this of Paul is most instructive. They lack just that in which this is eminent. Pliny conjures his friend by motives of pity, of self-respect, even of self-indulgence, for, says he, anger must be a torment to a man of your benevolent disposition. Nay, he puts in another motive still: if you spare him now, you will have more excuse for anger with him in case he offends hereafter. Paul writes to his

friend far otherwise. There is no appeal to pity, no mirror held up to self-esteem, no after-thoughts admitting and justifying inconsistency: all comes warm from the loving heart, and all the heart's love is kindled by the love of Christ.

Many, in commenting on this Epistle, have reminded us of the deeper thought which has occurred to them, that Paul is indeed here our example, but was himself following a higher example, even that of him who found *us* wandering from our duty and our Father's house, and pleaded for *our* restoration with

his own suffering, and his own most precious blood. But, beyond doubt, *the* lesson of all others from this Epistle is, that we should carry into the concerns of private life the courtesy and the Christian spirit here shown by the apostle; that we should talk to one another, not as men of the world, but as disciples of Christ; not as Pliny, but as Paul; remembering whose we are, and whom we serve; and that our religion is to be a light shining before men, to show forth the glory of him who hath redeemed us by Christ. A.

Section 335.

HEBREWS i. 1-14.

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by
2 the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed
3 heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of *his*
4 glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his
5 power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty
6 on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a
7 more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou
8 art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he
9 shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world,
10 he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who
11 maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy
12 throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy king-
13 dom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* thy God,
14 hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou, Lord, in the
beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine
hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a gar-
ment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art
the same, and thy years shall not fail. But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit
on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering
spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

THE Scriptures have a wonderful unity, for all their books give us the one person of our Lord. Human history has no other center of convergence and divergence than the cross on Calvary, and no other prophetic end than the kingdom of Immanuel; and thus is Christ the life of all history. All vital theological systems, as they are based in the Trinity, so do they center in the mediation of Christ. Consciously or unconsciously they pursue that plan which makes the Trinity the foundation, each separate truth a column, each connecting truth an arch, and Christ the dome that crowns the whole, while the work of the Holy Spirit, like the ascending spire, leads us toward heaven. H. B. S.

Now that the end of all the beauty and awfulness of Zion was rapidly approaching, what could take the place of the Temple, and that which was behind the veil, and the Levitical sacrifices, and the Holy City, when they should cease to exist? What compensation could Christianity offer for the loss which was pressing the Hebrew Christian more and more? The writer of this Epistle answers: "Your new faith gives you Christ, and, in Christ, all you seek, all your fathers sought. In Christ, the Son of God, you have an all-sufficient Mediator, nearer than angels to the Father, eminent above Moses as a benefactor, more sympathizing and more prevailing than the high priest as an intercessor: his Sabbath awaits you in heaven; to his covenant the old was intended to be subservient; his atonement is the eternal reality of which sacrifices are but the passing shadow; his city heavenly, not made with hands. Having him, believe in him with all your heart, with a faith in the unseen future, strong as that of the saints of old, patient under present and prepared for coming woe, full of energy, and hope, and holiness, and love." Such was the teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews. S.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

THERE is no portion of the New Testament whose authorship is so disputed, nor any of which the inspiration is more indisputable. Every sound reasoner must agree with Jerome, that it matters nothing whether it were written by Luke, by Barnabas, or by Paul, since it is allowed to be the production of the apostolic age, and has been read in the public service of the Church from the earliest times. Those, therefore, who conclude with Calvin that it was not written by Paul, must also join with him in thinking the question of its authorship a question of little moment, and in "embracing it without controversy as one of the apostolical Epistles." We need not scruple to speak of this portion of Scripture by its canonical designation, as "the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews." Jerome expresses the greatest doubts concerning its authorship; and Origen says that "the writer is known to God alone." The same doubts are expressed by Eusebius and by Augustine; yet all these great writers refer to the words of the Epistle as *the words of Paul*. In fact, whether written by Barnabas, by Luke, by Clement, or by Apollos, it represented the views, and was impregnated by the influence, of the great apostle, whose disciples even the chief of these apostolic men might well be called. By their writings, no less than by his own, he being dead yet spake. C.—The Epistle is Pauline in thought, design, and argument, even though it may not be in form and expression. The opinion that the apostle Paul is the author, though not the writer and composer, seems, on the whole, the most probable. A. S.—The more thoroughly we enter into the current of thought and line of doctrinal discussion in the Epistle, the more we are persuaded that the mind of Paul is at work. He may have sketched out the argument, and one of his friends (no one more fit than Apollos) may have written it out under his general sanction. D. F.

It may be held as certain that the Epistle was addressed to *Hebrew* Christians. Throughout its pages there is not a single reference to any other class of converts. Its readers are assumed to be familiar with the Levitical worship, the temple services, and all the institutions of the Mosaic ritual. They are called to view in Christianity the completion and perfect consummation of Judaism. They are called to behold in Christ the fulfillment of the law, in his person the antitype of the priesthood, in his offices the eternal realization of the sacrificial and mediatorial functions of the Jewish hierarchy. C.—The Jews did everything in their power to withdraw their brethren who had been converted from the Christian faith. To persecutions and threats they added arguments derived from the excellency of the Jewish religion. They regarded the law of Moses as given by the ministration of angels; that Moses was far superior to Jesus of Nazareth, who suffered an ignominious death; that the public worship of God, instituted by their great legislator and prophet, was truly splendid, and worthy of Jehovah; while the Christians, on the contrary, had no established priesthood, no temple, no altars. These arguments being both plausible and successful, the apostle wrote this Epistle to prove that the same God who gave the former revelations of his will to the fathers of the Jewish nation, by his prophets, had in these last days spoken to all mankind by his Son; consequently that these revelations, emanating from the same divine source, could not possibly

contradict each other. The Epistle may be considered as the key to the Old Testament, unlocking all its hidden mysteries, and may be divided into three separate heads. First, that which relates to the person of the Son of God, as he had been described in the Old Testament. Secondly, to show that the religion of the gospel is the same under both Testaments, being shadowed out in the Old. And, thirdly, to prove that the Church of Israel was a figure of the Church of Christ. G. T.—The writer demonstrates the infinite exaltation of Christ above Moses, Aaron, and all angels, as well as the superiority of the new covenant established by him over the old. The arguments are mostly drawn from the Old Testament itself, which is to the writer a significant symbol and shadow of good things to come, prefiguring in all its wonderful institutions the higher glory of Christianity, but at the same time predicting its own dissolution as soon as the antitype and substance should be revealed. True, the Epistle implies throughout the existence still of the Jewish economy and the Levitical cultus, but represents them as superannuated and in process of decay, and points to the impending judgment which a few years afterward destroyed the Holy City and the Temple. These exceedingly interesting expositions are interwoven with the most precious consolations in view of the heavy persecutions from the unbelieving Jews, and with the most earnest and impressive exhortations to steadfastness in the Christian faith. For the more valuable the blessings of the new covenant in comparison with the old, the greater are its obligations also, and the heavier the condemnation for rejecting it. P. S.—To use one of its own expressions, the whole of this Epistle is a "looking unto Jesus"; and it derives its peculiar value from its showing us how all things under the law looked to Jesus also; how the Levitical ritual, the ceremonial cleansings, the prophecies of seers, the sacrifices of priests, and the functions of theocratic princes, were a prediction and an expectation of that Son of the Highest who should be the Revealer of God, the Reconciler of God and man, and the Ruler of his own redeemed and regenerate kingdom. *Hamilton*.

1, 2. Over and above the discoveries of the mind of God which are contained in the natural order of things, and which we may discern by an intuitive faculty or infer by a reasoning process, we have that which, in the clearest, fullest, strongest sense, must be called the "*word of God*." Nay, he has not only given us a *word*, he has done more, he has given us *words*, separate, articulate, definite communications, each as truly divine as is the whole word which they compose. Such words of God were spoken of in old time as "coming to" particular persons, who were to be the messengers of those words to others. The prophets testified, when they spoke, that "the word of the Lord came to them"; and the testimony was authenticated of God and accepted of men. But the communications made through them were only introductory. "In sundry parts and in divers ways God having spoken of old to the fathers in the prophets, at the end of these days spake to us in his Son." Those to whom the word of God came were succeeded by him who is himself the "Word of God." He became man, and stood forth as the one real and eternal Prophet, the medium of communication between the mind of God and the mind of man. On the one side he *received*, on the other he *gave*. He

spoke to the world the words which he had heard with his Father; and, in closing his personal teaching in the flesh, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me." On the truth of this saying stands the whole fabric of creeds and doctrines. It is the ground of authority to the preacher, of assurance to the believer, of existence to the Church. It is the source from which the perpetual stream of Christian teaching flows. All our testimonies, instructions, exhortations, derive their first origin and continuous power from the fact that the Father has given to the Son, the Son has given to his servants, the words of truth and life. T. D. B.—**These last days.** But it may be asked, How could those days of primitive Christianity be called the last days, inasmuch as since those days eighteen hundred years have elapsed, and still the world's history has not reached its close! The answer is obvious. No new dispensation has been established since God sent his Son into the world to die for sins, and, in consequence of his Son's exaltation, poured down from heaven the gifts of his Spirit. And it is destined to be the last economy under which man is to be tried. E. M. G.

A Son! the Son! God's Son! is the emphatic word in this passage, and it is the key to this Epistle. A Son, his express image, had come and lived on earth, and in a "mode" the most express and assuring he revealed the Father. We saw how he is not an abstraction, or an attribute, but a living person. We saw how God loves, and pities, and consoles. We saw how God dislikes pretense, and hypocrisy, and self-sufficiency; how he delights in humility, ingenuousness, and a believing or trustful disposition. We saw how God pardons sin, and how by long-suffering and wisdom he cures infirmity and elevates into the beauty of holiness characters which, as he found them, were feeble, selfish, and unlovely. And now that God has spoken in his Son, the revelation is not only precise and explicit, but it is supremely authoritative, and peculiarly kind and sympathetic. On the one hand, its sanctions are as august as its author is divine; on the other, its tone is as tender as the speaker is brotherly. *Hamilton.*

2. The grandeur of the latter discovery of God was derived from two views of a person. This person was not only a revealer, as all prophets were revealers of God, but he was in himself the revelation of God. The prophets spake concerning God and a coming Messiah. He spake concerning God and himself. Rather, he spake of God when he spake of himself. Nay, more, when he did not speak, but simply stood forth and wrought, so as to be seen and known, even then he most fully disclosed the nature and the character of God. He had only to say, "I and my Father are one," "Whoso hath seen me hath seen the Father," and then to stand still or move along before the eyes of men to be looked upon, in order to make manifest to men all of God that they could

comprehend. J. T. D.—A mind informed from above will, in a peculiar manner, catch by sympathy the greatness, the magnanimity, which belongs to the character and actions of the Saviour of the world. In this character and in these actions, in these words of grace and deeds of mercy, scope is found, and more than scope, for the profoundest emotions which the spirit of man may at all sustain. The mind reaches no limit on this ground; the objects of its meditation, by a combination mysterious truly, possess at once all the distinctness and vivacity that belongs to what is human, and all the depth and height that attach to what is divine. Scarcely a sentence recorded by the evangelists, and scarcely an action narrated, fails to present, with more or less distinctness and in wondrous unison, the divine and human attributes of him who spake "as never man spake." I. T.

3. In both the old Scripture and the new, whatever may be the word for the divine glory, its symbol is always light. God is light; he is a sun; he dwelleth in light; he clothes himself with light as with a garment. The light in the cloud was the token of his presence; the light of the Shechinah was the proof of his indwelling; the light in the temple was the sign of his majestic appearing to the prophet. Then, again, in the new Scripture, God is light; he is the Father of lights, the effulgence that causes the night to cease in heaven and the sun to be needless to the eternal day. From this symbol of the divine grandeur and excellence we receive our expressive word glory. It conveys the conception of outshining splendor. Of this glory of God, "Jesus Christ, his Son," is said to be "the brightness." It is not said of him, "who" disclosing or showing, but "who being the brightness of his glory." Expanding the idea, the ancient creed declared him "light of light," "very God of very God." Jesus Christ is God's very self revealed and known. He could say of himself truly, as he said, "He that seeth me seeth him that sent me." J. T. D.—Believe the Son to be equal with the Father, but still the Son to be from the Father, and not the Father from the Son. With the Father is origination; with the Son equality. The Father always, the Son always. The Father without beginning of time, the Son without beginning of time; never the Father before the Son, never the Father without the Son. But still, since the Son is God from God the Father, and the Father is God, but not from God the Son, let it not displease us to honor the Son in the Father. For to honor the Son renders honor to the Father, and does not lessen his divinity. *Aug.*

4-6. The proofs of the eternal Deity of Christ are produced with that evidence of Scripture light that only a veiled heart, obstinate infidelity, can resist. The medium which the inspired penman makes use

of is the comparing him with the angels, the most noble flower of the creation, and showing that he is infinitely dignified above them. This he does by a strong connection of arguments: First, by his title that is divinely high and peculiar to himself. He is declared by the testimony of the eternal Father to be his Son (vs. 4, 5) in the most proper and sublime sense; *begotten of him*, and therefore having the same essential perfections of the Godhead in their uncreated glory. But the angels are not dignified with this name in any places of Scripture, where the excellency of the angels is in the fullest terms expressed. And that this name is taken from his nature is clearly proved; because adoration is due to him upon this account, even from the angels of the highest order. When he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, "And let all the angels of God worship him" (v. 6). *Bates.*—Which one, then, of all the heroes, sages, saints, of any nation, commemorated by monuments, by literature, by private veneration, shall claim to be brother, in kind or in degree, of him whom even all the angels of God are commanded to worship?

7. His angels are his messengers. In so sublime a ceremonial as the visible ushering into the world of the Person of its Lord, they might well come as winged forms in the sky, heavenly light clothing them, singing a supernatural hymn; the whole appearance a court befitting the glory of the King. When God bringeth his Only-begotten Son into the world, he "maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." We call it supernatural, and it is; yet what could be more natural to him than that, when the eternal Son, begotten of his Father before all worlds, becomes a man—because men could not be thoroughly and inwardly saved but by the sacrifice and sympathy of a Saviour entering into the poverty and suffering of their mortal estate—those intermediate orders of life which stand between him and us should attend his advent, and announce the transcendent blessing to the world? It was too high a mystery to be heralded, even in music, from the stained and sinning lips of men. F. D. H.

8. The Father creates and gives life, grace, and peace, and even so gives the Son the same gifts. Now, to give grace, peace, everlasting life, forgiveness of sins, to justify, to save, to deliver from

death and hell—surely these are not the works of any creature, but of the sole majesty of God; things which the angels themselves can neither create nor give. Therefore, such works pertain to the high majesty, honor, and glory of God, who is the only and true Creator of all things. We must think of no other God than Christ; that God which speaks not out of Christ's mouth is not God. God, in the Old Testament, bound himself to the throne of grace; there was the place where he would hear, so long as the policy and government of Moses stood and flourished. In like manner, he will still hear no man or human creature, but only through Christ. We seek God everywhere; but, not seeking him in Christ, we find him nowhere. *Luther.*

13. *To which of them said he, Sit on my right hand?* This they look upon with perpetual wonder, but not with envy nor repining; yea, they rejoice in the infinite wisdom of God in this design, and his infinite love to poor, lost mankind. It is wonderful indeed to see him filling the room of their fallen brethren with new guests from earth; not only that sinful man should thus be raised to a participation of glory with them who are spotless, sinless spirits, but that humanity in the Redeemer should be dignified with a glory so far beyond them. This is that mystery they are intent in looking and prying into, and can not, nor ever shall, see the bottom of it; for it hath no bottom. L.

14. There are many reasons to conclude that the angels who never sinned are constantly employed. The very name *angel* signifies a messenger; one who is appointed to execute a commission. They do the commandments of God. An angel appeared to Zacharias and to Mary. Angels announced the birth of the Saviour, and they attended him in his temptation and in his final agony. They conducted the apostles out of prison. An angel advised Cornelius to send for Peter. An angel informed Paul that he and his companions should not perish on their voyage to Rome. And the separation of the righteous from the wicked at the day of judgment is ascribed to the angels. In short, they are described as *ministering spirits* sent forth to minister to them who are heirs of salvation. All these passages go to prove that their great work is not silent adoration, abstract contemplation, but activity, boundless activity. B. B. E.

Section 336.

HEBREWS II. 1 18.

- 1 THEREFORE we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard,
 2 lest at any time we should let *them* slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast,
 3 and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall
 we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the
 4 Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; God also bearing *them* witness,
 both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, ac-
 5 cording to his own will? For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to
 6 come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that
 7 thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a
 little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him
 8 over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in
 that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But
 9 now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little
 lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he
 10 by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom *are*
 all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the
 captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.
- 11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause
 12 he is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren,
 13 in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in
 14 him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then
 as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the
 same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the
 15 devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bond-
 16 age. For verily he took not on *him the nature of* angels; but he took on *him* the seed of
 17 Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that
 he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make recon-
 18 ciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted,
 he is able to succour them that are tempted.

"As the children are partakers of flesh and blood," the eternal Son also "took part of the same." He put on the garment of humanity, and drew near in person, that we might clasp him as a kinsman in our arms, and feel the Infinite One to be our own. Our fallen nature made it needful that he should come closer still. He became the partaker of suffering and shame that we might touch him in the sympathy of our hearts, and feel that, in like manner, he can touch us and be afflicted in all our afflictions. Nay more, he became sin for us, and bore it in our stead, that his healing touch might reach our conscience, and that we may have the assurance that he can be present to help in the deepest guilt and darkness of the soul. The history of all God's dealings with man is the record of an approach nearer still and nearer, until, in the incarnate Son, he shares all our sorrows and carries our sins, till faith puts its fingers into the print of the nails, its hand into the wounded side, and constrains us to cry, "My Lord and my God." So does he approach man, for man's heart thus yearns to draw near to him—to a living God, to a personal Saviour. *Ker.*

Christ is large enough, comprehensive enough, compassionate enough, to take in all the experience, the souls, the lives, the burdens, the sorrows, of all nations and all ages. See at once what a higher and holier character this truth puts on the much-abused dogma of the dignity of human nature. Human nature without the incarnation is the least dignified of all things: it is weak, inconstant, guilty, lost. But let it be seen that human nature is uplifted and ennobled in the Divine humanity of Christ, Son of man and Son of God, and forthwith it wears a grandeur as if the majestic bearing and outlines of the Divine Man were visibly reflected upon it. F. D. H.

1-3. It was vital to bring out the real dignity and preëminent glory of Jesus Christ. It was in place to set him before those Hebrew eyes as the very image of the infinite God, the glorious Creator and Lord of all; as high above the highest of created angels. It was directly to the point of their case to warn them not to neglect so great a salvation which the Lord from heaven himself began to teach; which came to men through lips more pure and sacred than angels; and, though Jesus was made a little lower than the angels, it was only for a little time, and so long only that he might suffer and die for men, and then, having died, be crowned with glory far higher than theirs. How could they think lightly of such a Saviour? How could they afford to dishonor one who had laid aside the honors of heaven and humbled himself so low that he might the better sympathize with their sorrows, and bear their sins, and wash them out in his own blood! H. C.

1. Lest we let them slip. He who sows tares also roots up growing wheat, and does not neglect to sweep away the seed. His chosen instruments are those light, swift-winged, apparently innocent flocks of flying thoughts that come swooping across your souls even while the message of God's love is sounding in your ears. Yes, with most men, it is the constant succession of petty cares, the constant occupation of heart and mind with trivial subjects and passing good, much rather than any conscious fixed resolve to shut their souls against Christ and his love, that steals away the word from their memories and thoughts. Surely you ought to have more control over your minds, and the subjects which shall occupy them, than to let present cares and duties and enjoyments absolutely hide from you the truth which you profess to believe is of supreme importance. Surely it scarcely becomes a man to hold it with so slack a grasp that any runaway may snatch it from you as you go along. A. M.

2. The Jews attached much importance to the part which the angels sustained in the giving of the law. "The Lord came from Sinai; from his right hand went a fiery law." "The chariots of God are of twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place." No wonder that the Hebrews attached surpassing sanctity to a law thus given, and felt that it would be a fearful thing to violate a covenant which not only issued from the throne of the eternal, but to give grandeur and emphasis to which Jehovah had for once held court upon earth, and marshaled so many of the highest peers of heaven, and to observe the carrying out of which was one main part of the angelic ministry. Yet, august and sacred as was the law, the apostle urges more sacred still and more august is the gospel. And this he does, not on grounds which the Hebrews might question or controvert, but on grounds which he knew they must concede. *Hamilton.*

3. Great salvation. Salvation! What mu-

sic is there in that word, music that always rouses yet always rests us! It is vigor to us in the morning, and in the evening it is peace. It is a song that is always singing itself deep down in the delighted soul. Angelic ears are ravished by it up in heaven; and our eternal Father himself listens to it with adorable complacency. It is sweet even to him out of whose mind is the music of a thousand worlds. What is it to be saved in the fullest and utmost meaning? Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard. It is a rescue, and from such a shipwreck! It is a rest, and in such an unimaginable home! It is to lie down for ever in the bosom of God in an endless rapture of insatiable contentment. *Faber.*

The idea of salvation is inconsistent with the idea of any temporary or limited perdition. If the lost are saved, it is because they were lost for ever. Neither can this word *lost* mean annihilation, the extinction of being, the cessation for ever of thought and feeling. There can be no punishment in that, nor retribution, nor wrath abiding, nor wages paid, nor second death, nor anything that needs a Saviour. Nor was it any bare negation, or form of negation, but a positive, absolute perdition, of which no words can convey any adequate sense or measure; a perdition without end, and a loss therefore of souls in sin and death eternal. This indeed is a ruin and a misery demanding the interposition of an Almighty Saviour, and justifying God in such a sacrifice. Thus the demonstration of eternal death, from the offer of eternal life through Christ, is unquestionable. In this view the very offer of salvation is a most alarming interposition. It startles the soul from its false security with that impressive question, "How shall we escape, if we *neglect* so great salvation?" G. B. C.—If God hath, as it were, exhausted all his infinite resources, and infinitely surpassed all your own conceptions; if he hath carried on an argument through four thousand years, gradually cumulating to its full completion; if, in the way of argument, he hath given every conceivable exposition; if, in the way of persuasion, he hath used every conceivable appeal of tenderness and love; if, in the way of warning and alarm, he hath arrayed before you every conceivable terror among the recompenses of reward to transgressors—then what more is there to wait for? what more to hope for? how can he possibly escape who neglects so great salvation? S. R.

The eternal destiny is in you, and you can not break loose from it. With your farthing bribes you try to hush your stupendous wants, with your single drops, to fill the ocean of your immortal aspirations. Oh, this great and mighty soul, were it something less, you might find what to do with it: charm it with the jingle of a golden toy, house it in a safe with ledgers and stocks, take it about on

journeys to see and be seen! But it is the godlike soul, capable of rest in nothing but God; able to be filled and satisfied with nothing but his fullness and the confidence of his friendship. What man that lives in sin can know it or conceive it? who believe what it is? Oh, thou Prince of Life! come in thy great salvation to blinded and lost men, and lay thy piercing question to their ear, What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Breathe, oh breathe, on these majestic ruins, and rouse to life again, though it be but for one hour, the forgotten sense of their eternity, their lost eternity. H. B.

Began to be spoken by the Lord. He was the messenger and teacher of this salvation, as well as its author and giver. It was fully wrought by the Lord; but, besides that, it began to be "*spoken*" by the Lord, its announcement coming first from his own lips. "*It began to be spoken by the Lord,*" and when he ceased to speak the word was not yet completed. It was to be cleared and assured to the world by those that heard him; who, having been educated and commissioned by him for the purpose, proceeded to preach the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and with adequate proofs of the coattestation of God. It would be easy to show that *every doctrine expanded in the Epistles roots itself in some pregnant saying in the gospels*; and that the first intimation of every truth revealed to the apostles by the Spirit came first from the lips of the Son of man. In each case the later revelation may enlarge the earlier, may show its meaning and define its application, but the earlier revelation stands behind it still, and we owe our first knowledge of every part of the new covenant to those personal communications in which the salvation began to be spoken by the Lord. "In all things he was to have the preëminence," in speaking as well as in acting, not only as the Life but also as the Light of men. The more we study the records of that short ministry in the flesh the more we are impressed with the fact that all the past and all the future are gathered up in it. Past inspired teaching here finds its meaning interpreted and its authority sealed, while the several chapters of future inspired teaching are opened by pregnant summaries and certified by anticipatory sanctions. That is indeed a time "of large discourse, looking before and after," and the words of prophets on the one side, and of apostles on the other, are for ever justified and maintained by the words of him who came between them. T. D. B.

6-8. (Ps. 8: 5-7). Quoted also (with a slight variation) as referring to our Lord, 1 Cor. 15: 27, and Eph. 1: 22. The Hebrew Psalmist speaks of mankind; the New Testament teaches us to apply his words in a higher sense to Christ, the representative of glorified humanity. C.

9. He took on him, at the very instant when angels were adoring him as the Only-begotten of the Father, the form of a servant, and came to be despised and rejected, to hear taunts and blasphemies, instead of hosannas and hallelujahs. He exchanged heaven's diadem for Judea's thorns; he forsook the palace where he was sovereign for the judgment-hall where he was bound and buffeted,

scourged and condemned. He was the Lord of the universe, but he was born of one of the lowliest inhabitants of earth's obscurest corner. He was Prince of Life, but he tasted death for every man. *Kirk*.—Man could not save, for he lay under the debt of sin. An angel had not power to redeem mankind, for he had not at hand the ransom required. No other mode of release from the evil was left than this—that the sinless God should die for sinners—even he alone, the virgin-born, God and man; he who possessed that price which was not only equivalent to the number of the condemned, but which far outweighed it. *Proclus*.

It was necessary that a mediator between God and men should have something like to God, something like to men; lest, if he were wholly like to men, he should be far off from God; or, if he were wholly like to God, he should be far off from men, and so should not be a mediator. If all men as long as they are mortal must needs be miserable, we must seek for some midway being who shall be not only man but also God; that the blessed mortality of such a midway being may lead men out of their miserable mortality into a blessed immortality. That we might be brought to the one beatific good, not many mediators were required, but one, that same One by communion with whom we may be blessed, that is, the uncreated Word of God, "by whom all things were made." Yet it is not because he is the Word that he is the Mediator; for the Word, as being in the highest degree immortal and in the highest degree blessed, is far removed from miserable mortals; but he is Mediator in that he is man; by that fact indeed showing that, in order to reach that good which is not only blessed but beatific, we ought not to look for other mediators, and suppose that through them we must fashion steps whereby to reach it; for God, the blessed and the beatific, having become partaker of our humanity, has given us a short way to the partaking of his Godhead. *Aug*.

10. We have a Saviour who is called the Captain of our salvation, because he marches in the van. Through many sufferings he was made perfect, that he might bring many sons into glory. Cast your eye on him when ye are weary; see, he goes before not only as your Leader, but also conquering for you. Let me then venture upon the conflict with all its sacrifices; when I shall have fought it out, how blessedly I shall rest! And in the struggle let his "It is finished" be my consolation as well as my strength. A. T.—**Perfect through sufferings.** Not perfect in the sense of sinless, for that he was from his infancy upward, but perfect in the sense in which no one can be perfect who has not submitted to the discipline of trial. The spotless block of marble may be perfect in the sense of be-

ing without a flaw; but it acquires a perfection of another sort when, after being shaped and chiseled, it is converted into a beautiful vase fit for the palace of a monarch. The Lord, in virtue of his humanity, had a will which shrunk from a deprecated suffering. This will, however, was brought into complete acquiescence with the higher will. It was this acquiescence which gave to the human character of Christ, sinless all along, an exquisitely finished perfection. E. M. G.

11. In Christ, every believer *is born of God*; is his Son; and so they are not only brethren, one with another, that are so born, but Christ himself *is not ashamed to call them brethren*. L.—His way was to come from an infinite height into this world, that he might be near sinners, able to touch them, and ready to be touched. It was to take their nature upon him in the likeness of sinful flesh, that they might feel him closer still, and that "he might call them brethren." It was "to become sin for them, though he knew no sin"; that he might bear it, first by pity, then by sacrifice, and at last by pardon. This is the great and godlike plan, the very heart of the reason why he touched the soil of our sin-stricken earth. Ker.—God's only Son has made many sons of God. He bought himself brothers with his blood; when they reprobated him, he approved them; when they sold him, he redeemed them; when they outraged him, he honored them; when they killed him, he gave them life. Can you doubt that he will give you his good things, who did not refuse to take on himself your evil things? Aug.

12. Whereas we were no brethren of his, but had become his enemies by our offenses, he, not being a mere man, but God, after freely bestowing on us liberty, calls us even his own brethren. For, says he, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren." He, then, who redeemed us, if you look at his (original) nature, is not our brother, nor man; but, if you look at that condescension to us which is the result of his grace, he calls us brethren, and stoops to manhood. Basil.

14. The very Only-begotten Word of God, the Maker of the worlds, he by whom are all things, and in whom are all things, the true Light, the all-quickening Nature, in the last times of the world's period, by the Father's gracious will to save the human race which had fallen under a curse, and through sin had been borne away to death and corruption, did become "partaker of flesh and blood," that is, he became man; that being made man for us, he might die humanly, and rise again divinely, having trampled down the power of death. Cyril of Alex.—The Seraphim were not daring to gaze on him who was being questioned by Pilate. The slave buffeted him, and creation shuddered. He

was nailed to the cross, while the throne of glory was not emptied of his presence. He was inclosed in the tomb, while he was spreading out the heaven like a curtain. He was reckoned among the dead, while he was despoiling Hades. Here he was being calumniated as a deceiver, there he was being glorified as holy. Oh, mystery! I see the wonders, and I proclaim the Godhead: I see the sufferings, and I deny not the manhood. Proclus.

That hath the power of death. The power of God is wholly constructive; even when he destroys, it is to build up in some other form. But the power of Satan is wholly destructive, and only by the higher power of God is it ever made an occasion of good. The kingdom of God is thus a kingdom of eternal progress; a kingdom of light, ever shining more and more unto the perfect day; a kingdom of life, ever growing and renewing itself as life eternal. But the kingdom of evil is without progress except from death to death, without light, without life, while all is wasted and lost. That Satan, therefore, should have the power of death is in keeping with all we know of the kind of power possessed by the wicked alone. N. M.

15. **Fear of death.** If we have faith in Christ now, if we have known and loved him daily, and have nailed our sins to his cross, and have risen with him in newness and holiness of living, then we need not be afraid that our faith will fail at the moment when it is going to be exchanged for sight. Then there is indeed death before us, but there is also Christ with us; he knows the way through that dark valley; it kept him not in it a prisoner, neither did it destroy him; but he rose again to live for evermore, and he can and will keep in perfect peace and raise to perfect glory those who have put their trust in him. T. A.

For the grace of preservation which extends through the whole journey there comes *the grace of victory in death*. But let no one expect this before the time. Some believers distress themselves not a little because they can not die calmly or joyfully, in thought and feeling, long before they die in fact. They want the dying grace before the dying comes; instead of trusting, as they ought to trust, that the rich and thoughtful love which has always met the needs of busy life, will, when the time comes, give the needed grace to die. The fullness of God in Christ, of which we have received all these years, will be the fullness of God in Christ on the day of death; and if only we seek the grace to live by as long as we live—be it strength, or patience, or watchfulness, or faith, or whatever else within the great circle of the gracious beneficence of God—we need have no fear of finding the help that will be needed to go through the dark valley, and to stand up in the manifestation among the sons of God. A. R.

Many true Christians go through the world in bondage from the fear of death, because they have allowed themselves to think there is some dark passage through which the soul must go after it has left the body, and before it enters into the presence and the joy of the Lord. There is no warrant for such an opinion in the word of God. Absence from the body is there represented as presence with the Lord, and that which from the human side is called a departure is described on the heavenly side as a being with Christ. The two are simultaneous. That which separates the Christian from Christ is not distance, but the veil of the flesh; and, therefore, the moment that is laid aside the Christian is with his Lord. There is no middle passage of horrors between the two. W. M. T.

Christ, who dying conquered death in his own person, conquered sin, and death, which is the wages of sin, for thee. The grave is thy bed of rest, and no longer the *cold bed*; for thy Saviour has warmed it and made it fragrant. If then it be health and comfort to the faithful that Christ descended into the grave, with especial confidence may we meditate on his return from thence, *quickened by the Spirit*; this being to those who are in him the certain pledge, yea, the effectual cause, of that blessed resurrection for which they themselves hope. There is that union betwixt them and their Redeemer that they shall rise by the communication and virtue of his rising; not simply by his *power*, for so the *wicked* likewise to their grief shall be raised, but *they by his life as their life*. L. & S. T. C.

Dr. W. Gordon, a man of high culture, said when dying, "People have said that death is *frightful*. I look on it with pleasure. Death! I see no death at my bedside. It is that benign Saviour waiting to take me. I could not have a fear. This is not the testimony of one who has nothing to live for. I am in the prime of life, with comforts and friends around me, but the prospect of heaven is more than all. *Christ*, not death, is about to take me from earth. There is no *death* to the Christian. That glorious gospel takes away death." *Closing Scenes, etc., by N. Hall.*

16. He took not hold of the angels; let them go: hath left them to die for ever; but he took hold of the seed of Abraham, and took on him indeed their flesh, dwelling among us. L.—The Word personally united to himself flesh animated with a reasonable soul, and became man, ineffably and inconceivably. Although the natures which were combined into a real unity are diverse, yet from both results one Christ and Son; not as if the difference of the natures had been annulled because of the union, but rather that Godhead and manhood, through the ineffable and inexplicable concurrence into unity, constitute for us the one Lord and Son, Jesus Christ. *Cyril of Alex.*—Christ, who delighted to mingle every mercy with miracle and wonder, took a finite nature into the society

and union of his person; whereupon what was impossible to a divine nature was rendered very possible to a divine person; so that, being made man, he could do all things that man could do, except only sin. R. S.—We perceive love, in that the human nature, the nature of man, not of angels, is taken into union with God. By this very act of the heavenly wisdom we have an inconceivable pledge of the love of Christ to man; for, in that he hath taken into union with himself our nature, what doth it signify but that he intends to take into union with himself our persons? For this very purpose did he assume our nature. *Bun.*—God hath become our brother, yea, our flesh and blood. This great honor is not experienced by the angels, but by us men. Although the angels are more glorious creatures than we, yet God hath honored us more than them, and hath approached nearer to us than he hath to them, inasmuch as he became, not an angel, but a man. *Luther.*

If Christ took our nature upon him, as we believe, by an act of love, it was not that of one but of all. He was not one man only among many men, but in him all humanity was gathered up. And thus now, as at all time, mankind are, so to speak, organically united with him. His acts are in a true sense our acts, so far as we realize the union; his death is our death, his resurrection our resurrection. *B. F. W.*—The Son of God took on him human nature, not a human personality. Therefore he becomes the Redeemer of our several persons, because he is already the Redeemer of this our common nature, which he has made for ever his own. As human nature was present in Adam when by his representative sin he ruined his posterity, so was human nature present in Christ our Lord when by his voluntary offering of his sinless self he "bare our sins in his own body on the tree." Christ is thus the second head of our race. Our nature is his own. He carried it with him through life to death. He made it do and bear that which was utterly beyond its native strength. His eternal person gave infinite merit to its acts and its sufferings. In him it died, rose, ascended, and was perfectly well pleasing to the All-Holy. Thus by no forced or artificial transaction, but in virtue of his existing representative relation to the human family, he gave himself to be a ransom for all. In intention and efficacy his sufferings were endured on behalf of all who share his human nature. In point of fact they avail to pardon those who, through faith, are livingly one with him, so that his personal acts have become their own. H. P. L.

17. That God is in Christ, reconciling the world to himself—this is the keynote of the Christian dispensation, its luminous and life-giving message. All religion is the union between man and God; the Christian religion is a reunion, a reinstated fellowship, a redemption. And this redemption centers in the person and work of Christ, the one Mediator between God and man. In his mediation is, then, to be found the central principle of this divine economy. It may be called the mediatorial principle, for mediation between a holy God and sinful man is the essence of his work; or it may be called the Christological principle, as it represents to us the person of Christ, the God-man. In its fullest state-

ment it includes both incarnation and redemption ; for, both as incarnate and redeeming, Christ is our Mediator. In the fact of the incarnation of the Son of God for our redemption may be said to be the grand principle of the Christian faith, its center of unity. He was made like unto us that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. H. B. S.

18. The two elements of character requisite to the helpful friend are *sympathy* and *power*. A heart to love and an arm to save, combined in one, make that one the friend you need. In the chapter before us, the writer's mind is mainly engrossed with the *sympathy* of Jesus for his people. The human side of his being is chiefly under consideration. Yet it is a striking fact that, in saying "is able to succor," he has chosen the word which, more than any other in the language, suggests *dynamic force* ; as if, out of his deep sufferings and terrible temptations, there came forth that very *power* in which he proves himself so gloriously "mighty to save." H. C.

It was necessary that Jesus should be tempted ; that is enough. The temptation was no mere accident in his life ; it was essential to it ; it entered into the plan of our redemption. All the images under which the prophets had described the coming

Messiah looked to a strife between himself and the spirit of darkness—a strife of which the narrative given in the gospel is but the prelude. Having come to establish a kingdom, but to establish it upon the ruins of a usurper, the Messiah, that true Joshua, could obtain his dominion only by conquest ; he could receive "the inheritance of the nations" only by wresting it from "the prince of this world." The Jews had understood it thus themselves, and it was an article in their belief that the Messiah should be tempted by Satan at the very outset of his career. *Monod.*

Temptation is the condition of human life, and to try to flee from it in one shape is often only to provoke it in another. Every period of life, every class in society, every occupation and calling, duties as well as pleasures, work as well as rest, contain within them the elements of an incessant temptation, which it is at once our folly to ignore, our discipline to encounter, and our glory to overcome. It is no sin to be tempted, for Jesus, the sinless one, was tempted in all things like as we are, yet without sin. It is no weakness to feel the temptation grievous, for Jesus again *suffered being tempted*. The mistake is to run into temptation of our own accord. The sin is in listening to the voice of the charmer until our hearts go out after the forbidden sweetness. A. W. T.

Section 337.

HEBREWS iii. 1-19.

- 1 WHEREFORE, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and
- 2 High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus ; who was faithful to him that appointed him,
- 3 as also Moses *was faithful* in all his house. For this *man* was counted worthy of more
- 4 glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the
- 5 house. For every house is builded by some *man* ; but he that built all things *is* God.
- 6 And Moses verily *was faithful* in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things
- 7 which were to be spoken after ; but Christ as a son over his own house ; whose house are
- 8 we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.
- 9 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your
- 10 hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness : when your fathers
- 11 tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that
- 12 generation, and said, They do alway err in *their* heart ; and they have not known my ways.
- 13 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)
- 14 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing
- 15 from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day ; lest any of
- 16 you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ,
- 17 if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end ; while it is said, To day
- 18 if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. For some, when
- 19 they had heard, did provoke : howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with
- whom was he grieved forty years ? *was it* not with them that had sinned, whose carcases
- fell in the wilderness ? And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest,
- but to them that believed not ? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Who is this new "*Sun of Righteousness*," that identifies, in their effects on the eternal state, the attraction of faith to himself as a center, and the attraction of unsinning obedience to God as a center? I can find no solution for the question until I recognize in him, who fixed on himself man's grasp of faith, the same everlasting God, who of old fixed on himself man's obligation of obedience. Then can I see the force of that comparison of Paul between the two prophets of the law and gospel, which states that Moses was "the servant," but Christ "the builder of the house," and "the Son over *his own house*." As the giver and witness of the law, the very essence of righteousness in his own person, he could, on the one hand, maintain it inviolate, on the other, alter his terms of acceptance from sinless obedience to himself to faith dependent on himself. W. A. B.

1. As "the Apostle of our profession," the prime-minister of the Gospel Church, Christ was the principal messenger of God to men, the great revealer of that faith which we profess to hold and of that hope which we profess to have. Henry.—The apostleship of Jesus Christ is still and for ever in the world; as really in all the substance of the office as when it was held, under circumstantial differences of miraculous attestation, by Peter and James and John. And when he to whom "all power is given in heaven and earth" promised to be "always, unto the end of the world," present with his eleven mortal commissaries, he spake not to the men, but to the office, or to the men as the temporary symbols, representatives, and occupants of the office. W. A. B.

2-6. It is hardly possible for Gentiles to understand or realize the veneration and affection with which the Jews regard Moses, the servant of God. All their religious life, all their thoughts about God, all their practices and observances, all their hopes of the future—everything connected with God is with them also connected with Moses. He was to them the great apostle, the man sent unto them of God, the mediator of the Old Covenant. A. S.—The Christian Hebrews were in no wise to disown or disparage Moses, but are exhorted to consider a greater apostle, or Sent One; not a servant, as Moses was, in the house of God, but the Son presiding over his own house. Let the dignity of Moses, his great services, and noble fidelity be fully acknowledged; yet Christ Jesus is worthy of more glory than he. D. F.—Moses is but a star shining by reflected light; Christ is the Sun, the light of the world. Moses foretold his coming, and in spirit sat at his feet and listened to his voice, as did Abraham before him, and all the prophets after him. Christ is more than a prophet; he is the central figure of all prophecy. The place that he assumes as the center of Christianity and the head of this spiritual kingdom was prepared in the ages for him. He takes the throne as the only one in the universe capacitated for it. No one stands a moment in comparison with him, the Lord of lords and King of kings. S. W. F.

7-11. Amid all the demonstrations of the pow-

er and goodness of God in behalf of the Jews, they had still hardened their hearts by their continued and aggravated rebellions. At length, wearied and grieved by their provocations, he formed the irrevocable purpose, and confirmed it by an oath, that they should not enter the land of promise, the type of the heavenly country. This severe judgment of God against these ancient Israelites was appealed to by the Holy Ghost in the days of David as a solemn warning to unbelievers of his time. The same use is made of it by the apostle Paul; and it is left on record as equally applicable to those of similar character in every succeeding age. "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." N. W. T.

12. Heart of unbelief. There is no greater mistake in the world than to suppose that we believe what we do not disbelieve. The common state with many of us is to do neither the one nor the other; neither to think that Christ's word is true nor yet that it is false, but to think nothing at all about it. But this is truly unbelief; truly, and in the scriptural sense of unbelief; because, although neither our tongue nor our understanding consciously says that Christ's word is false, yet our whole being says so daily; it gives its witness against Christ's truth, silently, indeed, but quite decisively. Our whole being has settled the question for itself without directly arguing it. Our hopes renounce Christ, our fears renounce him, our affections renounce him; they all go on their way, working busily every day, but taking no account at all of him. And their testimony is *our* testimony, for they are our true life. Ask of our fear whether it ever knows anything of Christ, and it will say, No. Ask of our hope the same, and it will give the same answer. Ask of our affections, which are very busy every day, and their answer is no less positive, that to them Christ is not. T. A.

No man can receive Christ without being made ready for him by the teachings of conscience and of reason. The root of unbelief and of skepticism lies deeper down in the soul than many a man thinks: it is not merely rejection of the supernatural, or even the closing of the heart to God's infinite love, manifest in his dear Son, but it is shutting

the ear to the very voice of nature crying within us, telling us of our immense needs, and thus bringing us to a Christ all ready for our reception. And thus unbelief takes its true place: it is not only sin against Christ, blindness to revealed glories, insensibility to love from heaven—it is also sin against nature, sin against reason, sin against the soul's deepest, most universal convictions. T. D. W.—Why does a man refuse to believe? Because he has confidence in himself; because he has not a sense of his own sins; because he has not love in his heart to his Lord and Saviour. Unbelief men *are* responsible for. Unbelief is criminal, because it is a moral act—an act of the whole nature. Belief or unbelief is the test of a man's whole spiritual condition, just because it is the whole being, affections, will, conscience, and all, as well as the understanding, which are concerned in it. And therefore Christ, who says, "Sanctified by faith that is in me," says likewise, "He that believeth not shall be condemned." Faith is trust: Christ is the object of faith. Faith is the condition of salvation; and unbelief is your fault, your loss—the crime which ruins men's souls! A. M.

Departing from God. Sin is nothing else than that the creature willet otherwise than God willet. And this contradiction to God's will is disobedience, and therefore "Adam," "self-will," "the old man," or "departing from God," do all mean one and the same thing. *Theol. Ger.*—There is nothing contrary to God in the whole world, and fights against him, but self-will. Our only way to recover God and happiness is, not to soar up with our understandings, but to destroy this self-will of ours. God *will* not hurt us, and hell *can* not hurt us, if we will nothing but what God wills. Nay, then we are aided by God himself, and the whole divinity floweth in upon us. When we have cashiered this self-will of ours, which did but shackle and confine our souls, our wills shall then be widened and enlarged to the extent of God's own will, which is freedom indeed. *Culverwell*.

13. Exhort one another. Exhortation may easily be much overdone, in which case it has little or no effect. Scarcely anything is of less force than a continued stream of it, when it comes not from visible and adequate truth-springs. But the exhortations here commended by the apostle are founded, as we know and as they knew, upon the broadest of all foundations. They rest on the proved actuality of the revelation of God to men; on God manifest in the flesh; on redemption accomplished; on Christ risen; on the believer risen with Christ; on all that is peculiar, vital, permanent, in the Christian system. A. R.—To exhort one another in a Christian spirit with genuine love, but at the same time with holy earnestness; to do this without ar-

rogance, without hardness or bitterness, without respect of persons; to do this not merely once, but every day anew, as frequently as occasion offers, as long as it is called to-day; to go on doing it, even when our voice has been already more than once as the voice of one crying in the wilderness: how much is comprised in this, and how far even the best of us come short of it! *Van O.*

Deceitfulness of sin. *Sin deceives us until it comes into manifestation.* Men are apt to think that they are good enough, because no indications of a corrupt character are shown in their lives. And then, when the time of trial comes and they yield, they excuse themselves because temptation is so strong and so sudden. In neither case does their moral judgment conform to the true state of things. Principle means that which will stand the test, when native characteristics which were on its side have turned against it. The measure of principle is the strength of resistance to attacks of temptation, and, if hatred or lust is a cherished feeling of the heart, there is no possibility of resistance when circumstances turn so as to favor sin. How deceitful then and how false the judgments from a mere absence of outward sin! T. D. W.

15-19. The great reason why a revelation from God is given at all is because the destiny to come is an *eternal* one, because the heaven to be lost, if lost, is *eternal*, and the retributions to be endured, if endured at all, are *eternal*. We may safely say that, if this were *not* the case, there would have been no revelation, because the human race could as well have gone on and have been saved *without* a revelation as with one. The very *fact* on which that revelation is grounded is the fact of a future state of *endless retribution*, to which this world, according to the character formed in it, is an introduction. What makes God's warnings so awfully impressive is, that they are warnings as to a threatened experience which is endless. There is no return from it, no change of it, after it be once entered. This eternity of our future condition has made the cross a reality; for without it there had been no Saviour suffering, dying, and no need of one. And the cross itself, the system of redemption, this vast, incomprehensible, all-comprehending transaction, demonstrates that eternal retribution, and makes its eternity a reality. The system itself, in the character of the sinner and the character of the Son of God, is such that, if accepted, it secures *heaven* as eternal; but, if rejected, is death unto death, and renders *hell* both inevitable and eternal. It is under these circumstances that God has said that there is no way or possibility of salvation except through Christ, and that he has added to this the warning of the Holy Ghost, *TO-DAY!* "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." G. B. C.

Section 338.

HEBREWS iv. 1-13.

1 LET us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left *us* of entering into his rest, any of you
2 should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto
them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that
3 heard *it*. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my
wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the founda-
tion of the world.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh *day* on this wise, And God did rest the
5 seventh day from all his works. And in this *place* again, If they shall enter into my rest.
6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first
7 preached entered not in because of unbelief: again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in
David, To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden
8 not your hearts. For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken
of another day.

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his
10 rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his. Let us labour therefore
11 to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. For the word
12 of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the
dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the
13 thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his
sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

The rest of God—"My rest." That rest belongs necessarily to the Divine Nature. It is the deep tranquillity of a nature self-sufficing in its infinite beauty, calm in its everlasting strength, placid in its deepest joy, still in its mightiest energy; loving without passion, willing without decision or change, acting without effort; quiet, and moving everything; making all things new, and itself everlasting; creating, and knowing no diminution by the act; annihilating, and knowing no loss though the universe were barren and unpeopled. God is, God is everywhere, God is everywhere the same, God is everywhere the same infinite, God is everywhere the same infinite love and the same infinite self-sufficiency; therefore, his very being is rest. And yet that great ocean of the Divine Nature which knows no storm nor billow is not a tideless and stagnant sea. God is changeless and ever tranquil, and yet he loves. God is changeless and ever tranquil, and yet he wills. God is changeless and ever tranquil, and yet he acts. Mystery of mysteries, passing all understanding!

The heaven of all spiritual natures is not idleness. Man's delight is activity. The loving heart's delight is obedience. The saved heart's delight is grateful service. The joys of heaven are not the joys of passive contemplation, of dreamy remembrance, of perfect repose; but they are described thus: "They rest not day nor night," "his servants serve him, and see his face." Yes, heaven is perfect "*rest*." God be thanked for all the depth of unspeakable sweetness which lies in that one little word, to the ears of all the weary and the heavy laden. Rest in heaven—rest in God! Yes, but work in rest! Ah, that our hearts should grow up into an energy of love of which we know nothing here, and that our hands should be swift to do service, beyond all that could be rendered on earth—that, never wearying, we should for ever be honored by having work that never becomes toil nor needs repose; that, ever resting, we should ever be blessed by doing service which is the expression of our loving hearts, and the offering of our grateful and greated spirits, joyful to us and acceptable to God—that is the true conception of "the rest that remaineth for the people of God." Heaven is waiting for us—like God's, like Christ's—still in all its work, active in all its repose. See to it that your life be calm because your soul is fixed, trusting in Jesus, who alone gives rest here to the heavy laden. Then your death will be but the passing from one degree of tranquillity to another, and the calm face, whence all lines of sorrow and care have faded utterly away, will be but a poor emblem of the perfect stillness into which the spirit has gone. Faith is the gate to partaking in the rest of God on earth. Death with faith is the gate of entrance into the rest of God in heaven. A. M.

1. Since the earth has stood, the heart of many a man has been pierced through by the cutting words, "It is too late." But who will describe the lamentation that will arise when, at the boundary line which parts time from eternity, the voice of the *righteous Judge* will cry, "It is too late!" Loag have the wide gates of heaven stood open, and its messengers have cried at one time and another: To-day, to-day, if ye will hear his voice! Man, man, how then will it be with you, when once these gates, with appalling sound, shall be shut for eternity! But the more appalling the truth is that, at the dividing line between time and eternity, the sentence will be proclaimed, "It is too late," so much the more consoling is the word, flowing down to us from the cross of Jesus—Sinner, while thou standest on this side the grave, it is never too late. "Therefore, let us fear," cries an apostle to us, "lest we should slight the promise of entering into his rest, and some one of us remain behind—to-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Whether the voice of thy God will come to thee again and search thee out, this thou knowest not; but whatever may lie behind thee, whether nights of the darkest error, whether mountains of sin, thou distinctly hearest to-day his proclamation, "It is not too late!" A. T.

2. **Not mixed with faith in them that heard.** If the seed were *in* the ground, where it should be, instead of *on* it, no foot of peasant, no hungry bird could harm it; and if the Divine word were in the hearer's heart instead of outside it, no external impression could injure or remove it. As it is, it lies at the mercy of any, even the most natural and innocent, succeeding impression. He has *felt* the word fall upon his heart, perchance, hard though it be; he has dimly and from afar apprehended that there is a life, a reality, in the truth of God which he has not hitherto recognized; and he has thought, as he listened, that it will be well for him to look into the matter for himself some day; but the sermon over, the organ begins to play, and the sweet innocent music with its new impressions carries off part of the impression previously made. Then follow neighborly salutes and inquiries, a pleasant walk, and the good thought is gone. The man has been so accustomed to let all kinds of impressions come and go that he feels rather relieved when *this* has taken flight; and so he goes on and on, meaning no harm, yet doing this great harm—that he is not only hardening his own spiritual nature and frittering away its strength, not only preparing sharp pangs for himself in the future, but helping to keep the world at a low unspiritual level of life, and hanging like a retarding clod on the chariot-wheels of the divine King. Coz.

Our Christianity has a fault that is too common: it is outward, it is plated; it is upon us, but is

not in us. From that surface of our being where it stops, it has penetrated as far as our morning and evening prayers; but it has not entered everywhere into our domestic life—into the work of our retirement, into our literature, into our commerce, into our politics; it is not melted into our human existence, and therefore it has so little hold upon humanity. *Monod.*—If Jesus Christ himself were on earth and now preaching among us, yet might his incomparable words be unprofitable to us, not being mixed with faith in the hearers; but, where faith is, the meanest conveyance of his message, received with humility and affection, will work blessed effects. L.—It is very certain that the purer, the truer, and deeper a soul's religious experience becomes, and the more a man distrusts and abases self and clings solely to God and his word, exalting *them*, the more sure and trustworthy and full of truth will be that soul's views of religious doctrine. He who exalts the word, the word will exalt him; but he who neglects or disesteems the word, will himself go down in proportion. It is surprising what an invigorating and expanding power a great faith in God's word exerts upon the mind; and on the other hand, a weak faith in God's word leads to weakness, to doubt, self-confidence, and dependence upon men. G. B. C.

3. The rest, or Sabbathism, which God spoke of in the words, "If they shall enter into my rest," did not mean entering into the promised land under Joshua, for they are said in a psalm of David long after Joshua. Therefore their fulfillment is *yet to come*, and the solemn threat yet endures in all its power. A.—5. The meaning of this is: God's rest was a perfect rest; he declared his intention that his people should enjoy His rest; that intention has not yet been fulfilled; its fulfillment therefore is still to come. 6. Here it is said they entered not because of *disobedience*; in 3 : 19, of *unbelief*; but this does not justify us in translating these different Greek expressions by the same English word. The rejection of the Israelites was caused both by *unbelief* and by *disobedience*, the former being the source of the latter. C.

7. How many things combine to make us lay this warning in all its seriousness to heart and conscience! Earnestly it points us to an *irrevocable past*, in which already so much precious time has been lost, dreamed away, trifled away, sinned away; regarding which so many voices rise to accuse us, while we can not call back one hour of the past, can not with all our tears wash out one single stain in our life's history. But in friendlier guise, on the other hand, a *blessed to-day* is placed before us, in which again the glad tidings are proclaimed to us, and absolutely nothing left untried to win our hearts to heaven. Who can tell the riches of blessing

which this day of salvation may bring to a soul really hungering and thirsting after righteousness? But, on the other hand, what tongue may express the peril to which that recklessness exposes us, which always counts on years, while yet we can not be sure of an hour? To an *incalculable to-morrow* these words of warning point significantly; but a to-morrow of mercy is nowhere promised. *Van O.*

8. Note particularly that the word "*Jesus*" should read "*Joshua*," and that "*he*" (following) refers to God. B.

9, 10. If we take the context of the passage, we can not but recognize this as the truth taught here, that faith, and not death, is the gate to participation in Christ's rest—that the rest remained over after Moses and Judaism, but came into possession under and by Christ. For the main scope of the whole passage is the elucidation of one of the points in which the writer asserts the superiority of Christ to Moses, of Christianity to Judaism. That old system, says he, had in it for its very heart a promise of *rest*; but it had only a *promise*. It could not *give* the thing that it held forth. It could not, by the nature of the system. It could not, as is manifest from this fact, that years after they had entered into possession of the land, years after the promise had been first given, the psalmist represents the entrance into that rest as a privilege not yet realized, but waiting to be grasped by the men of his day whose hearts were softened to hear God's voice. David's words clearly, to the mind of the writer of the Epistle, show that Canaan was not the promised "*rest*." David treats it as being obtained by obedience to God's word, as not possessed by the people, though they had the promised land. He treats it as then, in his own "*day*," still but a promise, and a promise which might not be fulfilled to his people if they hardened their hearts. All this carries the inference that the Mosaic system did not *give* the "*rest*" it promised. Hence, says the author of the Hebrews, that "*rest*" held forth from the beginning, gleaming before all generations of the Jewish people, but to them only a fair vision, remains unpossessed as yet, but to be possessed by all who believe. A. M.

9. Weariness and strife are still but the next to the last words of the story of our earthly life; the last shall be like that of *Jesus*, rest. Like a sunset in solemn majesty was his death; like a sunset shall be the death of each one of his followers. But we know that after the sunshine comes the shadow, after the labors of the week the Sabbath, and thus happiness is in store for us, the rest which shall come to us. There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God, a rest won through the cross of *Jesus*, guaranteed through the sepulchre of *Jesus*. Christians, cross-bearers, go forth then

boldly through the noonday and the evening of your life to meet the night! The light of faith shall not fail your sight; the star of hope is about to shine above the tomb on you; and the bond of love which knits you to the Lord, and to all who are his in heaven and earth, is stronger than death and the grave. *Van O.*

10. Faith, which is the means of entering into rest, will—if only you cherish it—make your life no unworthy resemblance of his who, triumphant above, works for us, and, working for us, rests from all his toil. Trust Christ! is the teaching here. Trust Christ, and a great benediction of tranquil repose comes down upon thy calm mind and upon thy settled heart. Trust Christ, and rest is thine—rest from fear, rest from toil and trouble, rest from sorrow, rest from the tossings of thine own soul, rest from the tumults of thine own desires, rest from the stings of thine own conscience, rest from the seeking to work out a righteousness of thine own. Trust Christ, *cease* from "*thine own works*," forsake thine own doings, and abjure and abandon thine own righteousness; and though God's throne be far above thee, and the depth of that being be incommunicable to and uncopiable by thee, yet a divine likeness of his still and blessed and unbroken repose shall come down and lie, a solid and substantial thing, on thy pure and calm spirit. A. M.

12, 13. The word of God is quick. This almost obsolete Saxon word retains its old sense in certain set phrases: e. g., "*cut to the quick*" means cut into the live flesh. The Greek is simply *living*—all alive with vital energy. The word for "*powerful*" is the Greek for energetic, instinct with force. A "*double-edged sword*" is one brought to an edge on both sides of the blade. "*Dividing asunder the animal life from the spiritual*," and so causing death. "*Severing joints and marrow*" involves dismembering the body and cutting through the solid bones to the central marrow within. These words carry out the figure of the double-edged sword, to which the word of God is compared. The word "*discerner*" carries the thought rather to God than to his word. Throughout verse 13 the writer speaks definitely of God—"his sight"; "him with whom we have to do." No created being can be hidden from God's searching eye. "*All things*"—all deepest thoughts and purposes of creatures made of God lie naked and opened to his eyes, before whom is our account, to whom we are supremely responsible, and before whom we must *speak*—as the Greek word implies—render up orally our account when he shall summon us to his bar. The Greek word for "*opened*" is neck-exposed, as when the head of an animal is forced back to lay the neck open for the bloody knife. H. C.

12. There is mention (Gen. 3: 24) of a sword turning every way; parallel whereto is the word of God in a wounded conscience. Man's heart is full of windings, turnings, and doublings, to shift and shun the stroke thereof if possible; but this sword meets them wheresoever they move; it fetches

and finds them out ; it hunts and haunts them, forbidding them during their agony any entrance into the paradise of one comfortable thought. *T. Fuller.*

—It takes human nature as it actually is ; and, disregarding all adventitious differences, it enters into the inner man and speaks to all the same language ; addresses in all the same principles and feelings, and supplies the same wants of this dying, immortal, rational, accountable being. It recognizes his profoundest moral feelings, the mighty movements of his spirit, and everything in him which loves to grapple with infinity, which rejoices in the thoughts of eternity and longs after immortality. It shows an intimate acquaintance with his deepest musings, his most retired thoughts, the agonizing throes and throbbings of his soul, when the flesh contends with the spirit and the spirit with the flesh ; when he feels the entanglements and enticements of worldly pleasure, and is powerfully attracted by the lying vanities of life, but yet knows that he has a nature allied to heaven, and is an heir of eternity ; when the dark cloud of guilt hangs over his heart, and truth is only like the lightning-flash which shows the fearfulness of the coming storm. The deep anxieties, the soul-shaking terrors, the envenomed

stings of remorse—all, in a word, that guilt suffers and the greater torments which it fears, are perfectly known to the Bible, as well as every feeling of ingenuous repentance, every purpose of holy living, every kindling up of hope, every anticipated joy of eternal life. In this sacred word of eternal truth we find a power of thoroughly searching the heart, a perfect knowledge of everything in man, which compels us to believe that he who made him made the Bible also. *Rice.*

Having this penetrating and convincing efficacy, the word of the cross is capable of a most faithful and deep work in the character ; no gospel therefore of temporizing mercy and slight healing, but a downright, thoroughgoing, radical, life-renewing energy—a power of God unto salvation. It bends to no false principle, deals in no mock sentiment, hides no point of exactness, spares no necessary pain. It applies to sin a surgery deep as the malady ; it cuts the cancer clean out by conviction that a genuine, true healing may follow. And what shall we do but open our heart to it, counting it even good to be condemned before a salvation so thorough, so deeply grounded in the unsparing severities of truth ? *H. B.*

Section 339.

HEBREWS iv. 14-16 ; v. 1-10.

14 SEEING then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the
15 Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot
be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*,
16 *yet* without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain
1 mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest taken from among
men is ordained for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sac-
2 rifices for sins : who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the
3 way ; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought,
4 as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. And no man taketh this honour
5 unto himself, but he that is called of God, as *was* Aaron. So also Christ glorified not him-
self to be made an high priest ; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I
6 begotten thee. As he saith also in another *place*, Thou art a priest for ever after the order
7 of Melchisedec. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and suppli-
cations with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and
8 was heard in that he feared ; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things
9 which he suffered ; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto
10 all them that obey him ; called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

CHRIST is before us. Those that place their hands in his he leads to the Father. "All mine," he says, "are thine, and thine are mine." To have faith in Christ is to be brought nigh to God. Here is the spiritual bond which unites our loftiest aspirings with heaven no less than our lowliest self-accusings. In the Mediator our hope as well as our penitence is satisfied. We are not only restored from what we have been—we are helped forward to what we would be. If our sin finds pardon, our love of excellence finds a pattern. Our whole humanity is redeemed. No thought or affection, but Christ leads, and trains,

and unfolds it. And so our life at its best estate—whether that be its humiliation or its triumph, whether in the valley of dejection or on the delectable mountains where the city of God beckons us—is “hid with Christ in God.” F. D. H.

Turn your thoughts more frequently to the glorious high estate of our *great High Priest*. He sits on high, and is upon the council of all, *who hath loved us and given himself for us*; yea, who hath made our inheritance there which he purchased sure to us, taking possession for us and in our name; since he is there not only as the Son of God, but as our surety and our head; and so the believer may think himself even already possessed of this right, inasmuch as his Christ is there. The saints are glorified already in their head. *Where he reigns, there I believe myself to reign*, says Augustine. And consider in all thy straits and troubles, outward and inward, that they are not hid from him. He knows them and feels them, is a compassionate High Priest, and hath a gracious sense of thy frailties and griefs, fears, and temptations; and he will not suffer thee to be surcharged; but is still presenting thy estate to the Father, and using that interest and power he hath in his affection for thy good. And what wouldest thou more? Art thou one whose heart desires to rest upon him and cleave to him? Thou art knit so to him that his resurrection and glory secure thee thine: his life and thine are not two, but one life, as that of the head and members; and if he could not be overcome of death, neither canst thou. Oh! that sweet, sure word, *Because I live, ye shall live also!* L.

14. ONE who was “made like unto ourselves in all points” has in our view trodden the ground of earth, and has passed thence immediately and not through an immeasurable circuit, or by countless progressions, “into the heavens.” Thus we have the reason of our hope of future advancement set out in a living form in the track of our Representative from earth to heaven. What can the dying believer do, uninformed as he is of the way he is to tread—his foot advanced, though the ground on which it is next to rest is unseen—what but recur to the rudiments of his hope? What but look to the *Precursor*, who is also the Lord of that unseen world? I. T.

15, 16. The legal high priest carried the names of the twelve tribes on his shoulder and breastplate when, on the great day of atonement, he made his solemn entrance into the holy of holies; that while God looked upon him he might at the same time remember the tribes of Israel, accept his offering for the expiation of their guilt, and hearken to his prayers and intercession on their behalf. In like manner our great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is gone into the heavenly sanctuary, “appears in the immediate presence of God for us,” sustaining the character of the second Adam, the head and representative of all his spiritual seed: and is raised to the highest dignity and power that he may manage their affairs to the best advantage, and effectually secure their eternal salvation. He was a sufferer himself, and knoweth the heart of a sufferer by personal experience. He was tried with temptations even as we are: and though he conquered them all, yet he had proof of the skill as well as of the malice of the tempter, and can make allowance for the disproportion betwixt himself and us. Nay, he stooped thus low, not only to make atonement for our guilt, and to open for us a passage to the mercy-seat but that we, being assured

of his perfect acquaintance with human infirmity, might have the most cheerful reliance upon his compassion and sympathy, and *boldly approach the throne of grace*, having such a friend to patronize us and to plead our cause. R. W.—It is a real truth that Christ’s eye, the eye of the Son of man, at the right hand of God exalted, is ever upon each of us: when we go out, when we are abroad, and when we are within doors; when we are awake or when we are asleep: when we are alone or when we are with others, Christ is ever regarding us. Think of him when we will, and also at all times when we do not think of him, still in very deed Christ is looking upon us with compassion; that is, he knows our danger, and he desires to save us. Believe this to be true, as indeed it is, and then there is a faith in each of us which will bring us to Christ, and bringing us to him in earnest, will lay hold on his salvation. T. A.

Read verse 15, “For we have not an high priest unable to sympathize with our infirmities; but rather one in all points tempted in like manner, yet without sin.” A.—To be a real comforter, a person must have profound sympathies; but profound sympathies are always in association with keen sensibilities, and keen sensibilities expose their possessor to a depth of anguish utterly unintelligible to ordinary souls. As is the capacity to be a heavenly comforter, such is the capacity to be an awful sufferer. *Pulsford*.—That central heart of love and pity opened itself at every point to all the forms and varieties of human woe. Its sympathy stood free from all those restraints that lie upon ours. Our ignorance, our selfishness, our coldness, our incapacity for more than a few intense affections, narrow and weaken the sympathy we feel. But he knows all, can feel for all; so that not a pang of grief wrings any human bosom but sends an answering thrill through the loving, pitying heart of our

divine Redeemer. W. H.—How many forwardnesses of ours does he smother? how many indignities does he pass by? and how many affronts does he endure at our hands, because his love is invincible and his friendship unchangeable? He rates every action, every sinful infirmity, with the allowances of mercy; and never weighs the sin, but together with it he weighs the force of the inducement; how much of it is to be attributed to choice, how much to the violence of the temptation, to the stratagem of the occasion, and the yielding frailties of weak nature. R. S.

Jesus Christ sees us as we are, and he can only deal with us on a footing of reality. Some of us have felt the blessing of this. In moments of deep self-conviction, we have found the unspeakable comfort of entering just one only presence in which we are known precisely as we are, and yet are borne with. Christ can see, and yet he loves too. And the soul feels this. In hours of mirth and gladness, in days of pride and self-ignorance, we may not value Christ either for his truth or for his tenderness. But let the evil day come—it may be of disappointed ambition, it may be of sharp bereavement, it may be (worse yet to bear) of remorse and shame—then there is something, account for it as we may, which makes the soul trust and turn to the truthful and compassionate Lord; knowing before he speaks that he knows all; knowing before he speaks that he can yet abundantly pardon. V.—Oh, do not, do not keep this sacred thought of Christ's companionship in sorrow for the larger trials of life. If the mote in the eye be large enough to annoy you, it is large enough to bring out his sympathy; and if the grief be too small for him to compassionate and share, it is too small for you to be troubled by it. If you are ashamed to apply that divine thought, "Christ bears this grief with me," to those petty molehills that you magnify into mountains sometimes, think to yourselves that then it is a shame for you to be stumbling over them. But, on the other hand, never fear to be irreverent or too familiar in the thought that Christ is willing to bear and help you to bear, the pettiest, the minutest, and most insignificant of the daily annoyances that may come to ruffle you. He will do more, he will bear it with you, for if so be that we suffer with him, he suffers with us. A. M.

Was tempted. Our Lord's will has been to prefigure us, who are his body, in that body of his in which he has already died and risen, and ascended into heaven; that whither the head has gone before thither the members may trust to follow. Therefore he represented us in himself when he willed to be tempted by Satan. For in Christ you were tempted, since Christ had flesh for himself from you, salvation from himself for you; death

for himself from you, life from himself for you; insults for himself from you, honors from himself for you; therefore temptation for himself from you, victory from himself for you. If in him we have been tempted, in him we overcome the devil. Do you observe that Christ was tempted, and not also that he conquered? Recognize yourself as tempted in him, and recognize yourself as conquering in him. *Aug.*—**Without sin.** A man who was subject, like other mortals, to every temptation to sin and still fell not, was not defiled by the slightest breath of iniquity, wandered not once in his life, not even a hair's breadth from the path of virtue; such a man is indeed no less a wonder in the moral world than one raised from the grave and lifted up with a visible body to heaven is a wonder in the physical world. *Orelli.*

16. We read of no mediator to bring us to Christ; for though, being God by nature, he dwells in the height of majesty and the inaccessible glories of deity, yet, to keep off all strangeness between himself and the sons of men, he has condescended to a consanguinity with us, he has clothed himself with flesh and blood, that so he might subdue his glories to a possibility of human converse. And, therefore, he that denies himself an immediate access to Christ affronts him in the great relation of a friend opening himself both to our persons and to our wants, with the greatest tenderness and the freest invitation. R. S.

Grace to help. It is grace that chooses, it is grace that calleth, it is grace that preserveth, and it is grace that brings to glory, even the grace that, like a river of water of life, proceeds from this "throne of grace." Oh, when a God of grace is upon a throne of grace, and a poor sinner stands by and begs for grace, and that in the name of a gracious Christ, in and by the help of the Spirit of grace, can it be otherwise but such a sinner must obtain mercy and grace to help in time of need? *Bun.*

4. As soon as God began to constitute a Church and fix the priesthood, which before was dispensed into all families, God gave the power and designed the person: and therefore Moses consecrated Aaron; he performed the external rites of designation, but God was the consecrator. Moses appointed Aaron to the priesthood, and gave him the order, but it was only as the minister and deputy of God, under God the chief consecrator. J. T.

5. Earnestly to covet greatness is contrary to the rules of the gospel. We should refer our advancement to the invitations of Providence, and stay until the master of the feast bids us sit higher. "Christ glorified not himself as high priest, but was called of God, as Aaron." When we do not stay for the call of Providence, it is but an untimely de-

sire for promotion, which either God crosses, or else it proves a curse and snare to us. T. M.

7. For "*was heard in that he feared*," read "having been heard by reason of his reverent submission." A.—The inspired writers attribute to Christ all human properties and relations, such even as seem at first sight inconsistent with his Godhead. He was tempted, he prayed, he was heard in that he feared; with strong crying and tears he presented his petitions; he was troubled in spirit; he had angels to comfort him. With startling simplicity are all these facts recorded: and it can hardly excite surprise that reverence for his dignity, though in this case falsely applied, has attempted in every age to modify the form or to soften the meaning of the terms in which these truths have been conveyed. Let no Christian, however, scruple to employ these expressions or to give them their appropriate meaning. What may seem to be gained by restricting them, will be lost in the diminished fitness of Christ for his office as our Sacrifice and Advocate; in the unintelligibility of the evangelical history; the introduction of a partial system of interpretation, and the exaltation of human reason above the plain and obvious import of Scripture. Such passages contain a truth as precious as it is obvious, as consolatory as it is ennobling. He stooped to our nature, that he might make us partakers of his own. J. A.

We are so tried and tossed, so compassed around with pain, so much apparently the sport of fanciful

passion, so curiously framed as it were for temptation, with high aspirations living in us along; with base desires; so hovering ever on the verge of good and ill, and so weak to choose the good; so troubled by the necessity of battle when our heart is weary with the passionate longing for rest; so sick of ourselves and of the vile cravings which at times possess us, that God knows we do want some sympathy higher than any one on earth can give us—some sympathy which will not weaken but strengthen; some certainty that the eternal love and righteousness can feel with us and assist us. Therefore it is the deepest blessedness to know that One who shared in our nature—the proper divine man—was in the days of his flesh a partaker of "our strong crying and tears," and "learned obedience by the things which he suffered," for then we know that he can, in his triumphant nature, be still "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." S. A. B.—When denied the objects we cherish; when these bodies are wasting with disease or racked with pain; when troubled on every side, it should be enough that, like our Divine Master, we are to "learn obedience from the things we suffer," and be perfected through the same; that our sufferings worthily borne will improve and exercise our best virtues, prepare us for and entitle us to the best rewards; so fulfilling the inspired words that, "if we suffer together with Christ, we shall also together be glorified with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him." H. H.

Section 340.

HEBREWS v. 11-14; vi. 1-12.

11 OF whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of 13 righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. 1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not 2 laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and 3 of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit. For it is impossible for those 4 who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers 5 of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to 6 come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to 7 themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by 8 whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: but that which beareth thorns and briers 9 is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

10 For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed
 11 toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire
 that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the
 12 end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit
 the promises.

THE word rendered *full-assurance* carries with it the idea of fullness, such as of a tree laden with fruit, or of a vessel's sails when stretched by a favoring gale. The assurance of *faith* is a persuasion so firm as to be the basis and resting-place of all Christian reliance. It sees Christ, and believes in him. The assurance of *hope* is a settled, well-grounded, immovable persuasion and certainty, that I, as an individual, have thus believed; that I am in Christ; that God is my reconciled Father; that I shall never come into condemnation; and that my heaven is secure. The former is a universal duty; the latter is a gracious privilege. Professors who take their pleasure in this life do not seek this assurance, and do not find it. In chambers of disease and mourning, on death-beds, at the stake, or amid the wild beasts, it has risen to exultation. In the days of primitive piety, it seems to have been enjoyed by all the martyrs. In our day of half-way Christianity, when the children of this world are mingled with the children of light, it is less prized and less freely bestowed. If we had higher graces, we should have more assurance. In a better day, when the universal Christianity shall shoot up to a loftier stature, it will reappear. And, wherever among the throng any shall rise to superior eminence in holiness, his melting heart, fused into a flow of tenderness and love by the heavenly ray, will experience the pressure of this pledge and seal. J. W. A.

11, 12. He tells them plainly how deficient they were in the improvement which might have been expected from the time that they had been in the school of Christ. Instead of being in a capacity of teaching others, they were themselves in the lowest class of learners. Their faculties through disuse had become so contracted as to refuse admittance to the plainest truths, much more to doctrines so deep and involved as those which he had begun to state. Such is the spirit of the apostle's reproof. The neglect, at least the slow improvement of the means of knowledge, has not ceased to be a reproach in these latter days. R. W.—One prolific source of religious indifference is that those who appear to the world as representatives of religion have but a meager and timid apprehension of the principle of *perpetual growth* inherent in the Christian faith. It is not that they are insincere in belief or feeling, but that they take the Christian privilege for a much less glorious thing than it is, and misconceive its mightiest law. They exhibit it as negative when it really is positive; as attained and compassed by a single experience of conversion, whereas that is only the outset of an unceasing progress. Growth is the law of a true Christian life. Such a life is not satisfied, therefore, with conversion, but is quite as exacting of sanctification. Christianity wants to build after the pattern of a divine beauty, a symmetry without blemish, and a wholeness without defect. It is itself incarnated in a living example of that completeness. It has a welcome for every contribution of science, only requiring that science shall remember its ministerial office, not exalting

its telescopes and crucibles into an apparatus of will-worship, displacing dependence and redemption. It has nothing but contempt for that complacent, Pharisaic style of piety which fancies its only needed work is done when it has just grazed the gates of hell by sliding into a lazy church; which goes shuffling and dozing through a life that vibrates between formalities on Sunday and intense vitalities all the week. F. D. H.

13. **Unskilful in the word.** What Divine skill is evinced in so "*dividing the word of truth*" as to build up true Christians from one degree of perfectness to another in the divine life; from the babe to the man of full age; from the carnal to the spiritual; from the dull of hearing to those who, by reason of *use*, have their moral senses exercised to discern both good and evil! And how remarkable that, in all this work of building up Christians in their most holy faith, *the word, the word*, is the only instrument mentioned as wielded by the Spirit in the hand of a living ministry! J. S. S.

14. Nothing has been of more prejudice to Christianity than the premature indigested reasoning of novices about its more speculative doctrines before they have been well established in its great and fundamental articles. Hence have arisen all those odious names with which particular sects have stigmatized one another, while they have thrown away that badge of charity by which the true disciples of Christ are most effectually distinguished. Justly, then, does the apostle say that strong meat belongeth only to them who, by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern between good and evil. R. W.

1. The Bible exhorts us to search, to meditate, to "dig for wisdom as for hid treasures," which must mean that we should bring out the fresh and unexplored. It compares truth to a running well, which must be because it should be in movement, visiting and watering new pastures. It is, indeed, certain that the principles of the doctrine of Christ always remain the same, and yet the apostle exhorts us that we are "to leave them and go on unto perfection," that is, to leave them and yet never to abandon them, as a tree leaves its root and yet never quits hold of it, as it has the vital sap from that constant source, and yet spreads away into branches and blossoms and fruit, without which it could never be a tree, and might as well lie dead. If we think that we honor the Bible by reiterating certain formulas caught from it without taking in the manifold illustrations of God's word, and the manifold applications in human life, we shall find that the divine life deserts these formulas, and that a class of men spring up who deny in them the truth they have. *Ker.*

Looking only at God's works of creation and providence, we could infer that sanctification, one of the greatest of his works, would also be one of progress—giving us no more reason to expect that a sinner on his conversion would suddenly grow up into a perfect saint than a seedling into a perfect tree, or the field sown to-day be to-morrow flashing with the sickles and joyous with the song of reapers. Grace has its dawn as well as day; grace has its green blade, and afterward its ripe corn in the ear; grace has its babes and its men in Christ. With God's work here, as with all his works, progress is both the prelude and the path to perfection. Therefore we are exhorted to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Imitating him whom faith receives both as our propitiation and our pattern, we are by pains and prayer to grow in holiness and humility; in sweetness of temper and heavenliness of mind; in active obedience and patient suffering; in conformity to the will and delight in the ways of God. No doubt, whether our aim be high or humble, we always come short of the mark. Yet let us be thankful, though we have not reached, if we are nearing perfection; if, like the harbor lights, we see it ahead of us, not vanishing on the stern, but growing on the bow; if our course shows marks of progress. *T. G.*

The maturest manhood or saintliest womanhood ought to be seeking still, and for ever seeking—because the best are weak, truth is boundless, and the highest soul stands at an infinite remove from God. They that have not yet steadfastly set their faces as though they would go up higher are encouraged and solicited. They that have gone some way are bidden to press on. They that have mastered the

worst enemies are cheered forward to be more than conquerors through him who hath loved them—whose face they have beheld, whose breath they have felt. Nor is it said to one of them more than to another, "Seek, and ye shall find." From all the fountains of religious feeling, whose living waters leap as if an angel troubled them—from all trees of wise thought, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations—from all the lights in the starry heavens of the elder time, the ages of faith—from the spirits about us, on the right and the left, purer and calmer than our own, and shaming our uncertain steps—from our own failures and mortifications—from prayer and communion, from Bible and Providence, from Church and life—above all, direct from that mighty and loving heart of Jesus, out of which flows the spirit without measure—let us continually and faithfully seek—seek summit above summit of gracious attainment—seek depth below depth of God's unfathomable love. So shall we not lose the way and miss our Father's house, nor come halting and maimed there, but erect and healthful souls, save as we are bended in gratitude at the mercy that forgives, in penitence for the sins to be forgiven, and in reverence at the vision of him who makes his people whole. *F. D. H.*

4. A reason is here given by the writer why he will not attempt to teach his readers the rudiments of Christianity over again, namely, that it is useless to attempt, by the repetition of such instruction, to recall those who have renounced Christianity to repentance. The *impossibility* which he speaks of has reference (it should be observed) only to *human agents*; it is only said that *all human means of acting on the heart* have been exhausted in such a case. Of course no limit is placed on the divine power. Even in the passage 10: 28-31 (which is much stronger than the present passage), it is not said that such apostates are never brought to repentance; but only that it can not be *expected* they ever should be. *C.*

5. Revelation lays a solemn stress on the fact itself of immortality. It creates a conviction in every Christian that he ought to pass through his whole course here with the eyes of his faith and hope turned forward—a purifying influence from his future home perpetually breathing upon him: what Paul calls "the powers of the world to come." *F. D. H.*—They are influences emanating from objects and realities which preceded the very existence of this world, and will remain after it shall be demolished; from God and Christ and angels; from eternity; from everlasting truth; from whatever region is that of the sublimest glory in the universe. They are "*powers*" of influence which all the best beings conspire to send. For even the departed saints are placed in combination with God,

the Mediator, and the angels, in sending a beneficent influence on us below ; by their memory, by their example, by their being displayed to our faith as in a blissful state above, and (we may believe) by their kind regard and wishes for those below. All these "*powers*," these forces of influence, are sent through the medium and in virtue of the work of the Mediator, and bear in them a peculiar character, derived from him. They are "*powers*" which attract toward where they come from ; which discipline, and refine, and prepare the soul for its grand future destiny, and to which it may surrender itself without reserve. They are powers from a world where our own great final interest lies. J. F.

6. If they shall fall away. It is obvious that the writer does not think of actual apostasies of this fatal sort *among his Hebrew converts*. Observe what he says, verse 9 : "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation" (literally things *having* salvation, involving, insuring it), "though we thus speak." Do not understand us to imply that any such cases are occurring or will occur *among you*. It is therefore certain that in the writer's view it might be proper to throw out this fearful warning against apostasy, although a case of real apostasy was not thought of as actually occurring. We may go further and say that, *in the nature of things*, such warnings against apostasy do not necessarily conflict with the revealed certainty which Jesus puts in these words : "My sheep hear my voice ; I give them eternal life, and *they shall never perish*." Such a warning as this is one of God's appointed means to forestall fatal apostasy. The case for illustration often appealed to is always in point—that of Paul and his fellow seafarers (Acts 27 : 22-25). The Lord proposed to use the help of the sailors and never thought of saving all the souls on board in any other way than with their help. So Christ does not propose to save his sheep without many a solemn warning against apostasy. For apostasy must be fatal, and Christians must therefore fear it, shun it, as they would be saved at last. H. C.

4-6. This passage of God's word belongs to all who have ever enjoyed the privilege of fully hearing the gospel, being enlightened by the word of God. There is not one specification in it which may not enter into the divine indictment against the whole multitude of men in Christendom, who from Sabbath to Sabbath have heard the word of God proclaimed and expounded. That good word of God, and those powers of the world to come, and those precious influences of the Holy Spirit accompanying them, have lifted them into a condition in which salvation was accessible and very near. But if, from all these advantages, these ladder-tops of means and grace, they fall away, or if, under all

these influences and privileges, they remain unmoved, then there is no more hope. What possibility remains, after all the round of God's applied expedients is run through and is ineffectual ? Light, knowledge, love, warnings, threatenings, promises, invitations, commands, arguments, entreaties, gifts, powers, providences, the word, the Spirit, convictions, awakenings, the cross, the sufferings, the death of Christ, and the glories of heaven, and the terrors of hell, all applied in vain ! What is there left, what more powerful, what as a last resort ? What is there of hope or possibility to throw yourself back upon, after all the agencies of mercy in God's universe have been tried in vain ? G. B. C.

Some may go on grieving Christ and crucifying him afresh for as much as seventy years ; and he will bear with them all that time, and his sun will daily shine upon them, and his creatures and his words will minister to their pleasure, and he himself will say nothing to them but to entreat them to turn and be saved. This may last to some for seventy years ; to others it may last fifty ; to many of us it may last for forty, or for thirty ; none, perhaps, are so old but that it may last twenty, or at the least ten. But as these ten, or twenty, or fifty, or seventy years pass on, Christ will still spare us, but his voice of entreaty will be less often heard ; the distance between him and us will be consciously wider. Year after year the world will become to us more entirely devoid of God. If sorrow, or some softening joy, ever turns our minds toward Christ, we shall be startled at perceiving there is something which keeps us from him, that we can not earnestly believe in him ; that, if we speak of loving him, our hearts, which can still love earthly things, feel that the words are but mockery. Alas, alas ! the increased weakness of our flesh has destroyed all the power of our spirit and almost all its willingness ; it is bound with chains which it can not break, and, indeed, scarcely desires to break. Redemption, salvation, victory—what words are these when applied to that enslaved, that utterly overthrown and vanquished soul, which sin is leading in triumph now, and which will speedily be given over to walk for ever as a captive in the eternal triumph of death ! T. A.

It is not with open disavowal that the votary of fashionable worldliness disclaims the Lord of glory. A peril such as this might be met and warded off. But society does its work surely because slowly. Religion is not proved to be absurd, but *assumed* to be so ; the world would not harshly ask us to disbelieve in Christ, but merely to forget him. Principles are lost for ever before we have dreamed they were in danger, and the poor victim of the world's opinion has learned to "crucify afresh the Son of God," without relinquishing one outward characteristic of

discipleship! There are apostasies of the social table, of the fireside and the market-place, the refined apostasies of our own daily life, as real as the imperial treachery of a Julian or the cold-blooded abandonment of a Demas. To every one of these the same impress belongs; it may be branded more or less deeply, but it is branded on all. They are all alike rife with the spirit of Caiaphas's council-chamber; they are all echoes of the voice that cried aloud, "Crucify him, crucify him!" W. A. B.

10. God is "not unrighteous to forget your work of faith and labor of love." Whatsoever we are capable of doing for him, depend upon it we shall get the opportunity of doing. The way to get ready for, and the way to insure the possession of, the widest field for service and the loftiest opportunities of doing his will, is faithfully to fill the narrow sphere in which he at present sets us. Do the little, and God will provide the great. You have always as much to do as you have strength to do it with. If, by patient faith, by simple dependence upon Christ and his mercy, feeling yourself encompassed with an awful and impartial law of right which makes everything dreadful that is wrong, and everything noble that is obedience, you seek to execute God's will, loving the Lord that has done the smallest things for you, the narrow sphere will widen and open itself, and lofty tasks and glorious work shall be given you. A. M.

11. All who come to Christ, making voluntary covenant with him, and continuing faithful to the end, are *saved*; not because in this life they necessarily become perfect, or free from the infection of original sin, but because they are in him who *is* perfect, and who will ultimately perfect *them*, when, after the blessed trials and the loving discipline of time, he brings them to the full vision of God, and presents them, *at last*, "faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." It is evident that this is not a gospel, nor a view of the gospel, which encourages indolence in the divine life, or allows men to rest satisfied with mere half-way attainments in grace. It puts every renewed heart to panting after perfection; it sets every foot which has been turned to God's testimonies boldly and determinedly on the race *toward* perfection; and it throws unwonted terrors on the way of him who, having thus started, carelessly suffers a pause in his progress or a rest to his pantings after perfection. Still, it is a gospel, or a view of the gospel, which sheds not only *hope*, but "the *full assurance* of hope" on the way of him who, having been renewed by the Spirit unto repentance and faith in Christ, thus sets forth and thus perseveres on the Christian course, even though, amid the weaknesses of nature and the intensities of the conflict with evil, he come to the goal of death with something

still of remaining sin within him. He has the beginnings of the "life hid with Christ in God"; and he knows, to his deep joy, that when he comes to see *him* he shall be *fully* "like him; because he shall see him as he is." J. S. S.

12. He refers more directly to those Old Testament worthies, of whose names and deeds he gives so splendid a catalogue in a subsequent chapter. But the exhortation has relation to the examples of all believers, of every age, who, by the same means, have attained the like triumphs and rewards. They are described under the twofold ideas of the *end* at which they aimed, "*they inherit the promises*," and the means by which they achieved their bliss, "*through faith and patience*." T. E. V.—The gate of heaven is no wider now than it was seventeen hundred years ago. The law of God extends as far as it did when the apostles lived. We are bound to the same strictness and purity, to the same zeal and steadfastness, which distinguished the primitive Christians. They were all men of like passions with ourselves; they had the same corrupt nature to strive against, the same temptations to resist, the same enemies to overcome. Their advantages for performing their duty were not greater than ours; on the contrary, besides all that they possessed, we have the benefit of their example and experience. God's hand is not shortened, the blood of Christ hath lost none of its virtue, his intercession is no less prevalent, nor is the power of his Spirit in the least impaired by length of time and constant exercise. So that we are entirely without excuse, if we do not both aim at and actually attain the same degrees of holiness and purity with any of those that have gone before us. R. W.

In the catacombs of Rome you behold the long tiers, or alcoves, of the graves of those who, *having died in faith, inherit the promises*. No symbols of hateful passion, no tokens of revenge for the wrongs they smarted under, no wails of heathenish despair, no signs of bloody altars; but, instead, the tokens of peace, hope, and joy; pictures of love; legends of reconciliation; a monogram of the Saviour; a lamb; a branch of palm; a cross; some epitaph commemorating a "friend of all men," "an enemy of none," "one meek and lowly," those that "sleep in Jesus," or others "borne away by angels." Everywhere you see traces and proofs of that heavenly temper, that pure and prayerful spirit, that disinterested and self-denying piety, that influence from on high which you know was never the product of the Roman nature, never caught from Roman philosophers, never fostered by the Roman armies, never ordained by Roman law, never inspired by Roman mythology, the gift of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ, the heritage of his Church, the new creation, the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. F. D. H.

Section 341.

HEBREWS vi. 13-20; vii. 1-28.

13 FOR when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he
 14 swore by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply
 15 thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily
 16 swear by the greater : and an oath for confirmation *is* to them an end of all strife. Where-
 17 in God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his
 18 counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath : that by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible
 for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold
 19 upon the hope set before us : which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and
 20 stedfast, and which entereth into that within the vail ; whither the forerunner is for us
 entered, *even* Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.

1 For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham re-
 2 turning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him ; to whom also Abraham gave a
 tenth part of all ; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also
 3 King of Salem, which is, King of peace ; without father, without mother, without descent,
 having neither beginning of days, nor end of life ; but made like unto the Son of God ;
 4 abideth a priest continually. Now consider how great this man *was*, unto whom even the
 5 patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. And verily they that are of the sons of
 Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the
 people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins
 6 of Abraham : but he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham,
 7 and blessed him that had the promises. And without all contradiction the less is blessed
 8 of the better. And here men that die receive tithes ; but there he *receiveth them*, of whom
 9 it is witnessed that he liveth. And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid
 10 tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.
 11 If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received
 the law,) what further need *was there* that another priest should rise after the order of Mel-
 12 chisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron ? For the priesthood being changed,
 13 there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For he of whom these things are spoken
 14 pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For *it is* evident
 that our Lord sprang out of Juda ; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priest-
 15 hood. And it is yet far more evident : for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there
 16 ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after
 17 the power of an endless life. For he testifieth, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order
 18 of Melchisedec. For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before
 19 for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the
 bringing in of a better hope *did* ; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

20 And inasmuch as not without an oath *he was made priest* : (for those priests were made
 21 without an oath ; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord swore and
 22 will not repent, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec :) by so much was
 23 Jesus made a surety of a better testament. And they truly were many priests, because
 24 they were not suffered to continue by reason of death : but this *man*, because he continueth
 25 ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the
 uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.
 26 For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,
 27 and made higher than the heavens ; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer
 up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's : for this he did once, when he
 28 offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity ; but the
 word of the oath, which was since the law, *maketh* the Son ; who is consecrated for ever-
 more.

To have the great object of *our thoughts* placed beyond the chances of human life is to place ourselves
 beyond them ! Our hope "entereth into that within the veil" ! The Christian lays hold of a chain
 which is bound to the throne of God ; the immutable attributes of the God of the universe are pledged
 for his security ! The laws that bind together the elements of the universe may vanish and give place

to new relations and connections; the law that binds together the eternal sovereignty of Christ with the happiness of his people is unchangeable as God himself! W. A. B.

In the grand mystery of Christ and his eternal priesthood—Christ, who ever liveth to make intercession—the righteous will be set in personal and experimental connection with all the great problems of grace and counsels of love, comprised in the plan by which they have been trained, and the glories to which they are exalted. Their subjects and conferences will be those of principalities and powers, and the conceptions of their great society will be correspondent, for they are now coming to the stature necessary to a fit contemplation of such themes. The Lamb of redemption and the throne of law, and a government comprising both, will be the field of their study, and they will find their own once petty experience related to all that is vastest and most transcendent in the works and appointments of God's empire. Oh, what thoughts will spring up in such minds, surrounded by such fellow intelligences, entered on such themes, and present to such discoveries! How grand their action! How majestic their communion! Their praise how august! Their joys how full and clear! Oh, this power of endless life! great King of Life, and Priest of Eternity, reveal thyself to us, and us to ourselves, and quicken us to this unknown future before us! H. B.

17. God hath not left us to spell out our privileges or to reason ourselves into the hope of good things; he hath plainly told us what is in his heart; he hath put his merciful designs into the form of a covenant, and expressed them in a variety of gracious promises, by the help of which we may lay hold upon his truth. This privilege is common to all believers in Christ; the Lord of hosts is their guardian as well as their friend; he chargeth himself with their protection; he adopts them into his family; and not only dignifies them with the title of children, but doth likewise enrich them with all the immunities and privileges which that high and endearing appellation imports. And what may they not expect from such a father? whose wisdom is infinite, whose power is irresistible, whose "mercy is everlasting," and whose "truth endureth to all generations." R. W.

18. A true and blessed hope is the gift of a heavenly Spirit, a peculiar work of God the Holy Ghost in the heart. It is like holiness and love, the fruit of faith; of faith in God's promises made to a world of sinners in Christ Jesus. It very much resembles faith, resting on the same foundation and exercising itself on the same objects, and yet it differs from it. Faith believes the promise, hope looks forward to the fulfillment of it. "There is a world of glory," says faith, "for pardoned sinners, for all who are washed and cleansed in the blood of Christ." "I am going to that world," says hope; "that glory will be mine." Faith discovers the treasure, hope rejoices in the expectation of gathering it up. C. B.—The work of grace may evidence to you the truth of your hope; but the ground it fastens on is Jesus Christ, in whom all our rights and evidences hold good: his death assuring us of freedom from condemnation, and his life and possession of glory being the foundation of our hope. If you would have it immovable, rest it there; lay all this hope on him, and when assaulted, fetch all

your answers for it from him, *for it is Christ in you that is your hope of glory.* L.

19. Changing the figure, or rather adding another, this hope is thought of as an anchor to the soul. As the huge iron anchor goes into the great deep and fastens its flukes upon the moveless rocks, holding the ship "sure and steadfast," so the Christian anchor ["hope"] goes up into the heavenly sanctuary (the place within the veil), for there our Jesus dwells; our forerunner, gone on before, sits there enthroned for ever, our great high priest; and upon him our immortal hope fastens itself, and we are held safely for ever, "sure and steadfast." H. C.

—Hope is an anchor of the soul! Among all the emblems of Scripture, is there one more beautiful or more just than this? A ship without anchor, a prey to the billows and the breakers, threatened on all sides by rocks and reefs; behold in this a soul without true hope! Assuredly the greatest poet of the middle ages could have engraved no more striking inscription on the place of eternal punishment than the famous "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here." Van O.

Faith believes the truth of the word, hope waits for the fulfilling of it. Faith lays hold of that end of the promise that is next to us, to wit, as it is in the Bible; hope lays hold of that end of the promise that is fastened to the mercy-seat. For the promise is like a mighty cable that is fastened by one end to a ship, and by the other to the anchor. The soul is the ship where faith is, and to which the hither end of this cable is fastened; but hope is the anchor that is at the other end of this cable, and "which entereth into that within the veil." Thus faith and hope getting hold of both ends of the promise they carry it safely all away. Bun.—The habit of living in the future should make us glad and confident. We should not keep the contemplation of another state of existence to make us sorrowful, nor allow the transiency of this pres-

ent to shade our joys. Our hope should make us buoyant, and should keep us firm. It is an anchor of the soul. All men live by hope, even when it is fixed upon the changing and uncertain things of this world. But the hopes of men who have not their hearts fixed upon God try to grapple themselves on the cloudrack that rolls along the flanks of the mountains; while *our* hopes pierce within that veil, and lay hold of the Rock of Ages that towers above the flying vapors. Let us then be strong, for our future is not a dim peradventure, nor a vague dream, nor a fancy of our own, nor a wish turning itself into a vision, but it is made and certified by him who is the God of all the past and of all the present. It is built upon his word, and the brightest hope of all its brightness is the enjoyment of more of his presence, and the possession of more of his likeness. That hope is certain. Therefore, let us live in it. A. M.

Indisputably, the firm believers in the gospel have a great advantage over all others; for this simple reason—that, if true, they will have their reward hereafter; and, if there be no hereafter, they can but be with the infidel in his eternal sleep, having had the assistance of an exalted hope through life, without subsequent disappointment, since “out of nothing, nothing can arise,” not even sorrow. *Byron.*

20. That same Jesus who died on Calvary has ascended, in our nature, to carry on the purposes of his grace in the hearts of his people. Having left his mediatorial throne to suffer for sins, he reassumed it, on his ascension, in a new character, man for men: as such he reigns “a PRIEST upon his THRONE” (Zech. 6 : 13), our true Melchisedec, king and priest both in one person; having all power given him in heaven and in earth to give eternal life to his people, and pleading their cause, as their ever-living “advocate with the Father.” *Goode.*

1, 2. **Melchisedec.** That he was a type of Christ, is affirmed: “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” The points of accordance are many and striking. The very name, which signifies “King of righteousness,” points directly to Him who, righteous in himself, wrought out for his people a justifying righteousness, works a sanctifying righteousness within them by his Spirit, and sways them with a scepter of righteousness. His designation “King of Salem,” that is “King of peace,” fitly enough points out one who, whether as regards the disposition for which he was distinguished, the blessing he died to procure, or the effects of his administration, is well entitled to be called “the Prince of Peace.” But the point which, most of all, marks him out as typical of our mediatorial king, is his combining in his own person the regal and sacerdotal offices. Besides being “king of Salem,” he was “priest of the most high God.” He was a royal priest—a sacerdotal king—and thus an eminent type of Him who, as exerting his power on the foot of his purchase, sits “a priest upon his throne.” W. S.

3. **Without descent.** This explains the two preceding words: the meaning is, that the priesthood of Melchisedec was not, like the Levitical priesthood, dependent on his descent, through his parents, from a particular family, but was a personal office. **Neither beginning,** etc. Here, as in the previous *without father and mother*, the *silence* of Scripture is interpreted allegorically. Scripture mentions neither the father nor mother, neither the birth nor death of Melchisedec. C.—He had no genealogy on the Hebrew records. He stands there a priest, and this only; a priest for ever, for there is no hint that he ever ceased to be a priest. So far, therefore, as the Hebrew records go, he is made like the Son of God and abides a priest for ever.

4-15. The real clew to the sense of this whole case of Melchisedec is this: We must take him as he stands in Hebrew history, and on the old genealogies of their nation. We are to know nothing more; to ask nothing further. Taking him as he stands there, he is fatherless, motherless; never born, never dying; a priest only, therefore, and a priest for ever; greater than Abraham, and consequently greater than Levi, than Aaron, than any or all of Aaron's line. All these points are turned to account as illustrating the priesthood of Jesus. To the ancient Hebrew people, how striking must have been that ancient figure in their history which stood, as Melchisedec did, alone in sublime, isolated grandeur, towering above their oldest patriarch, Abraham, and standing loftily apart from the long line of their national genealogies! H. C.

16. The priesthood of Christ is graduated by the wants and measures of the human soul as the priesthood of the law was not; the endless life in which he comes matches and measures the endless life in mankind whose fall he is to restore. Powers of endless life though we be, falling principalities, wandering stars shooting downward in the precipitation of evil, he is able to bring us off, reestablish our dismantled eternities, and set us in the peace and confidence of an eternal righteousness. Nothing meets our want in fact, but to see the boundaries of nature and time break away to let in a being and a power visibly not of this world. Let him be the Eternal Son of God and Word of the Father, descending out of higher worlds to be incarnate in this. As we have lost our measures, let us recover them, if possible, in the sense restored of our everlasting brotherhood with him. Let him so be made a priest for us, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life—the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person—God manifest in the flesh—God in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. H. B.

As a priest He ever lives, and the efficacy of his work is dependent upon the circumstance that he is incapable of death. His Divine Person is essentially immortal, and that assumption to itself of the entire nature of man by virtue of which he becomes a priest involves a union which can never be disturbed. He can never cease to be God and man in two dis-

tinct natures and one Person for ever. *He is a priest after the power of an endless life.* The victim which he offered was his human nature, which was susceptible of death by the separation of its parts, though the union of neither part with the divine Son could be dissolved. Here, then, the Priest, as living, lays down a life upon which death may seize without affecting the integrity of his own being. He lays it down and he takes it again. Both are his own acts, and the inconsistency of attributing to the dead the properties of the living is fully resolved. How he could die and yet be ever alive; how, as dead, he could resume a life which supposes him not to be dead—these are contradictions which can only be explained by the mystery of the incarnation, in which the union of the natures is maintained, each in its integrity, without confusion, amalgamation, or mixture. The priest lives, the victim dies; the priest is the actor, the victim the sufferer. J. H. T.

It is a magnificent conception, *the power of an endless life!* Life worthy to be called life; life holy, beatific, glorious, divine; life participant of God's own holiness and blessedness. The power of such a life! endless, unchangeable, save only from accumulating glory; perpetual in its energy and freshness, with the boundlessness and security of infinitude before it for ever and ever! The mighty conflict which agitates the universe is a conflict for eternity, a conflict between two eternities, between the power of an endless life and the power of an endless death. Nothing less than this could range the Son of God incarnate on the one side and Satan on the other. Nothing less than the certainty and dreadfulness of an endless death could bring from heaven a divine Redeemer, the Lord of eternity, to take upon himself our flesh and blood that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death. G. B. C.—Whatever may be the force of other arguments, our faith in immortality actually takes its stand on divine testimony, rather than on abstruse reasons. In truth, we have need of this testimony to put an end to some doubts which reason could never solve. There are lines of argument which, although they might seem fairly to establish the doctrine of *a life* after the dissolution of the body, would not absolutely include the notion—amazing idea!—of *Endless Existence*. It is one thing to awake at death to a new life, and another to inherit absolutely a never-ending life. It is fearful, if we reflect upon what it implies, to bear relation in any way, even remotely, to infinitude—for who shall calculate the whole result of such a connection? How fearful then to carry infinity in our very bosoms! to be wedded inseparably to that which has no bounds! In comparison with this power of eternal life all powers are nothing; or should we not rather say that every faculty which is

linked to this borrows from it an incalculable importance? I. T.

Verse 19 should run thus: ("for the law made nothing perfect), and there is a bringing in of a better hope, by which," etc., putting *no stop* at end of verse 18. A.—**The law made nothing perfect.** It only told what the perfect was—did not inspire the motive, the love to keep it. If kept at all as law, it would be by fear or a selfish seeking for safety from its penalty, not by self-forgetting loyalty. "If ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law, but under grace." Law is compulsory; grace is free. Law is obligatory; the gospel is attractive. Law is command; the covenant in Christ, which "the law can not disannul," is promise. Law is terrible; the Spirit is animating—pardon, peace, love, joy, gentleness, goodness, faith. Here stands the anxious conscience, troubled, discouraged, looking far up at the blazing standard, the commandment, and then looking back at its disordered and miserable self; no way of bringing the two together. It needs a Reconciler, who shall not lower the law, but keep it, honor it, magnify it, and at the same time lift up, forgive, reinvigorate man, and breathe a new life of the Holy Spirit into him. This is *the bringing in of a better hope*. F. D. H.

22. Jesus, as the Mediator between God and man, is the "Surety of the better covenant," who has fulfilled all the terms upon which it rests. It has no terms for *us* to fulfill beyond the acceptance of the blessing, because, in his infinite love to man, he accomplished in his own person all that was needed, that God might be a just God and yet a Saviour. *Goods.*

25. The dignity of his person as the "eternal Word made flesh," the perfection of his obedience, the merit of his sacrifice, his resurrection from the dead, and his exaltation to the right hand of God, leave no room to doubt of his saving power; while his own account of the errand upon which he came into the world, his free choice of the office of Redeemer, his generous offers of mercy to the chief of sinners, together with the regret he always expressed when these offers were rejected, may justly lead us to conclude that he is no less *willing* than "he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him." These encouraging truths are written as with a sunbeam in the sacred Scriptures. R. W.—Christ saves to the uttermost because he suffered to the uttermost. He was not spared one blow, one drop, one sigh, one sorrow, one shame, one circumstance of all or any one of those which justice could demand as a satisfaction for man's sin. *Caryl.*

It is as our great High Priest that he hath "passed into the heavens," "where he ever liveth to make intercession for us." Because he continueth

ever, he "hath an unchangeable priesthood"; he is "consecrated for evermore." Heaven is full of sacrificial recollections. Christ dies no more for ever, yet for ever he "appears in the presence of God for us," his hands filled with priestly oblations, and his bosom covered with the sculptured names of his tribes. J. W. A.—Since Christ is an intercessor, believers should not rest at the cross for comfort: justification they should look for there; but, being justified by his blood, they should ascend up after him to his throne. There you shall see him wearing the breastplate of judgment, and with all your names written upon his heart. Then you shall perceive how he prevails with God the Father of mercies for you. Stand still awhile and listen, yea, enter with boldness unto the holiest, and see your Jesus as he now appears in the presence of God for you; what work he makes against the devil and sin, and death and hell, for you. This then is our High Priest; this is intercession—these the benefits of it. It lies in our part to improve it; and wisdom to do so—that also comes from the mercy-seat or throne of grace where he, even our High Priest, ever liveth to make intercession for us. To whom be glory for ever and ever. *Bun.*

26. Holy. With all other men there is some discrepancy in the inner life. The two poles of intellectual life, knowledge and feeling, head and heart; the two powers of the moral life, thought and will—in whom are they fully agreed? But in Jesus reigns perfect harmony of the inner spiritual life. His soul is at absolute peace. He is all love, all heart, all feeling; and yet he is all intellect, all clearness, all majesty. All is quiet greatness, peaceful simplicity, sublime harmony. *Lutherdt.*

Separate from sinners. When we appeal to his humiliations under the flesh and as a man of sorrows, we really do not count on the flesh and the sorrows as being the Christly power, but only on what he brought into the world from above the world by the flesh and the sorrows—the holiness, the deific love, the self-sacrificing greatness, the everlasting beauty; in a word, all that most distinguishes him above mankind and shows him most transcendently separate from sinners. How great a thing is it that such a being has come into our world and lived in it—a being above mortality while in it; a being separate from sinners, bringing unto sinners, by a fellow nature, what is transcendent and even deific in the divine holiness and love! Yes, we have had a visitor among us, living out, in

the molds of human conduct and feeling, the perfections of God! What an importation of glory and truth! Who, that lives, a man, can ever after this think it a low and common thing to fill these spheres, walk in these ranges of life, and do these works of duty, which have been raised so high by the life of Jesus in the flesh! The world is no more the same that it was. All its main ideas and ideals are raised. A kind of sacred glory invests even our humblest spheres and most common concerns. H. B.—And now, to draw closer to this Son of God evermore, and to feel the tide of life that comes from him, pouring with fuller flood around and through us; to have him in our heart and eye, and to follow in his steps of free, unselfish love to God and man; to be true and transparent as he was, saying the thing that is, and doing the thing that should be; to struggle toward this mark where we do not reach it, and send after it, from every fall, more earnest aim and effort: this, with the help of God, will deliver us from the bitter scoff that all the world is hollow, and man, at his best, a vain and frivolous thing. The groveling and the false will sink away beneath our feet, and we shall rise to that hold of God which gives his own unassailable peace within, and to that calm, though it may be sad, look on a fallen world and on poor tossing humanity, as still in his hand, and as destined to work out his purposes of free and everlasting grace. *Ker.*

26-28. This forcible grouping of the grand points in the priesthood of Jesus brings the long argument in this chapter to its consummation. Such a Great High Priest every way befits us; is adapted to our case and to all our wants. The Mosaic ritual made the utmost account of the *symbols* of purity in the priesthood; yet how could mere ritualities secure the purity itself? But Jesus was the embodiment of purity itself. Exalted, moreover, higher than the heavens; gone up into the upper sanctuary, at the very center of influence, before the throne of the Infinite Father, at the summit of dignity and glory, having no need, like those priests, to offer daily for his own sins ere he could offer for the people. And daily offerings for his people were superseded by his offering of himself *once for all*. Finally, to fill out this magnificent contrast to its utmost strength and glory, the old Mosaic law ordained for its priests men full of all infirmities; but the decree of the solemn oath which succeeded and supplanted that law ordained the very Son of God who is for ever infinitely perfect. The word "consecrated" is too weak to express the full force of the Greek which means *perfected*, holding the full consummation of all the glorious qualities of a High Priest before God. H. C.

Section 342.

HEBREWS viii. 1-13.

1 Now of the things which we have spoken *this is* the sum: We have such an high priest,
 2 who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of
 3 the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every
 high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore *it is* of necessity that this
 4 man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing
 5 that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: who serve unto the example and
 shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make
 the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, *that* thou make all things according to the pattern shewed
 6 to thee in the mount. But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much
 also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.
 7 For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for
 8 the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord,
 when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:
 9 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them
 by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my
 10 covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For *this is* the covenant that I will
 make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into
 their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be
 11 to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his
 brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.
 12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I
 13 remember no more. In that he saith, A new *covenant*, he hath made the first old. Now
 that which decayeth and waxeth old *is* ready to vanish away.

WITH respect to every one of these promised blessings, whether of *divine renewal*, *divine relationship*, or *divine enlightening*, God has said, I will do it for them, "*for* I will be merciful" to them. In other words, I will sanctify and bless them, for I will freely justify them. It is very important to begin in this matter where God begins: to know that the justification of a sinner, in the sight of God, is wholly independent of personal holiness as the procuring cause of it. He first "*justifies the ungodly*," that he may sanctify; and thus justification, or that state of a sinner wherein God lays no sin to his charge, though it be so intimately *connected* with holiness that the one can not be without the other (for those whom God promises to justify he covenants also to sanctify), is yet wholly *independent* of it: the one is not the *cause* of the other; the finished work of Jesus, without holiness of any kind in the sinner, gives him perfect reconciliation and peace with God, when in a sense of his own ruin he goes to God and pleads it for acceptance. Many mistakenly regard acceptance with God as that of which they can not be sure, until they finish their course and get beyond the dangers of this scene of trial. This is to confound two things which we can not be too careful to distinguish—our justification and our sanctification: it makes the former to rest upon the latter. Complete justification is perfectly consistent with incomplete sanctification. The one rests on the simple acceptance of Christ's work, *finished and accepted of God for us*; the other is a *gradual* work of the Spirit of Christ *in us*; sure indeed in its issue, but vehemently opposed by the devil and corrupt nature; and the sensible measure of it perpetually varying, in the daily conflict of the believer, while he is in the body. It is the great secret of the believer's peace to know that his acceptance with God is not to be measured by his own experience, his spiritual comfort or dejection. The established Christian knows and blesses God that he has something *quite distinct* from his own experience, something that is *incapable of change*, wherein to glory. As a believer, being justified through the faith of Christ, he is always "*accepted in the beloved*." The firm persuasion of this soul-supporting truth forms his great encouragement to persevere in his pursuit of holiness under all difficulties. If he be cast down in the deadly strife against corruption, in this strength of the Lord he is enabled to get up again. It is his privilege to know that "*there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*"—a truth of which the believer, in his present condition, often needs the comfortable assurance. *Good.*

1-4. Christianity recognized the Jewish religion as from God; and it was a ground of its rejection by the Jews that it destroyed their law or ritual. Hence it became necessary to show that it was in perfect harmony with the Jewish religion when rightly understood, and was indeed necessary to its completion. Did the Jews insist that Christianity had no priesthood? The apostle affirms that it had such a high priest as became us, "who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." Did the Jews affirm that Christianity had no tabernacle? The apostle asserts that Christ was the minister "of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man"; that he had "not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself." Was it objected that Christianity had no altar and no sacrifice? The apostle affirms that "now, once in the end of the world, Christ had appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Thus did the apostle show that the Jewish religion, having dropped its swaddling-clothes of rites and ceremonies, was identical in spirit with Christianity. The same correspondence was either attempted to be shown or taken for granted by all the New Testament writers. M. H.

The knowledge of God enjoyed under the old dispensation will scarcely bear a moment's comparison with that which shines forth under the gospel. All its institutions, its paschal lamb and other sacrifices, its meats and drinks and divers washings, its tabernacle or temple, with the holy of holies, and the ark of the covenant, and the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy-seat—all these were "patterns of things in the heavens," types and symbols of divine mysteries, chiefly of the person and work of Christ. Believers under the gospel can see in these an exact and beautiful representation, given by the wisdom of God, of the good things that were to come. But, before the actual incarnation of the promised Messiah, they were a mystery, of the real meaning of which the best instructed among the Jews had but little accurate perception. Their knowledge was at the best but shadowy, ours real and substantial.

6. That active ministry, commenced with His incarnation, the apostle here declares to be "more excellent" than that of Aaron, above which it is one great object of this Epistle to exalt it. The main intention of this earthly ministry of Christ was to make atonement. And remission of sins being the foundation-stone upon which the whole covenant of grace rests, the blood of the surety was necessary to ratify it, and so confirm its blessings to the sinner. He appeared, therefore, upon earth in the double character of Offerer and Offering, Priest and Victim; and his infinite sufficiency for both these characters rests upon the union of the divine and human nature in the one person of Christ.

A better covenant. It must be carefully observed that the covenant to which this is here preferred is the national covenant made with Israel at Mount Sinai, the mediator of which was Moses, and the ministry of which, throughout the term of its continuance, was committed to the sons of Aaron. That this is the covenant referred to here is clear from verse 9 of this chapter, where God calls it "the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt." This covenant was *faulty* (v. 7), except as introductory to

that which was to succeed it. It was partly a covenant of works, resting its blessings on Israel's fulfillment of certain conditions (for instance, the possession of the promised land on their national adherence of the worship of the true God), and further, as reviving the moral law, in all the exactness of its requirements and the terrors of its curse. It is on this account chiefly, as having the original covenant of works incorporated in it, that the gospel covenant is here so greatly preferred to it. At the same time it differed from the original covenant of works, inasmuch as it had provisions of grace, ordinances typical of the mercy designed for men in the gospel, and ministering this grace and mercy, though by shadows only, to the people of God. It may thus be considered as a republication, for a particular temporary purpose, of the old covenant of works, with appendages intended to mark man's need of some *better way*, and symbolizing that way. The new covenant, of which Christ is mediator, is that better way itself. "A better covenant, established upon better promises." *Goode.*

7. If the first covenant—that of which the whole Mosaic system, the ritual, the priesthood, and the sacrifices, were the component parts—had been faultless, if it had done its work with entire success, leaving nothing more to be desired, then no place would have been sought for a second; there would have been no occasion to think of it, much less to provide it. But ages of experiment had shown the deficiencies of the first covenant. It had failed to regenerate Israel. Its priests and spiritual guides had become wofully corrupt; the people were fearfully far from God and righteousness—as their reception of Jesus in the flesh most conclusively proved. A better scheme was demanded. H. C.

8-12. This is quoted, with little variation, from the prophecy of Jeremiah (31 : 31-34), and relates primarily to the *literal* Israel, in whom, as a nation, it is to have a grand and ultimate accomplishment. *Goode.*

10. The faith which enables the soul to abide in Christ is nothing else than an assured trust and confidence on our part that, as he has already wrought out for us our acceptance with God, so he will work in us every gracious disposition (be it repentance, or faith itself, or humility, or hope, or love) which is necessary to qualify us for glory. It is not enough to supplicate these graces; we must lean upon him for them, and fix the eye of expectation upon the promise of his new covenant: "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts"; being well assured that he will fulfill to us the terms thereof. E. M. G.—The law is not given in *this* covenant, as at Mount Sinai, on tables of stone, but graven on "fleshy tables of the heart." It is the creation of a new divine principle of holiness that is here promised, which shall rule in the soul, enlightening the understanding, and captivating the affections to willing obedience. Hence, while the believer is eternally delivered from the law as a covenant, in which respect it "gendereth to bondage," while he receives the life he once

sought to merit by it as a "*free gift*" of God in Christ, he yet "delights in this law of God after the inward man"; he walks conformably to it in love, "being not without law to God, but *under the law to Christ*." God is himself the immediate agent in this mighty work of renewal. "*I will put*"—"I will write."

Divine relationship, too, is renewed between God and the soul of man. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." The covenant founded on mercy to unrighteousness has in it the promise of *restoration* to the divine favor, and that to the largest possible extent. God says here, not only, "I will be to them a father," or any such *finite* relation, but, to include these in a name which contains the sum of all that is glorious and gracious, "I," saith he, "will be to them a God."

11. All shall know me. Under this "better covenant" we have the *substance* of the shadows, the *reality* of the types: Jesus Christ; "him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write," "full of grace and truth." The manifestation of the Father's love. "The brightness of his glory, the express image of his person." Moreover, the Spirit of God is himself the great teacher of his covenant people. There is now, therefore, an enlarged knowledge of God; such a knowledge of the mystery of his person as the Triune Jehovah, of his character and grace in the gospel of Jesus Christ, as "in former ages was not made known unto the sons of men." Now, there is *not one* in covenant with God who has not his measure of this blessed knowledge; the *least* as well as the greatest is privileged to enjoy it; the babe in the school of Christ has a clear understanding of those things which the holiest of the Old Testament saints saw but darkly, if at all, under the law.

12. Three parts are distinguishable in the application of "mercy to unrighteousness" through Christ: *The gift of faith*, whereby the penitent sinner is brought to believe God's record of his Son; to receive and rest in Christ and his righteousness, as the all-sufficient gift of God to men. *The imputation of Christ's righteousness* so embraced. Faith takes it as given of God, in the gift of Christ; and thus it is called "the *gift* by grace." "the *gift* of righteousness." The man has it to present to God, and God therefore imputes it because he has it. *Justification* in virtue of that righteousness. God is "*just* in being the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus"; and that with regard to no other condition of the sinner that comes to him than that he *does so come*, believing God's record of his Son, and thereby *possessing* that "righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe." The administration of the Christian covenant, with its free, full, sure, and everlasting grace, is

in the hands of Christ as Mediator between God and man. It owes its gracious *character* to his *engagements* entered into from eternity; its *establishment* with man to his sacrifice, the blood of which ratified it; and its perpetual *efficacy* in the experience of elect sinners to his all-prevailing *intercession*. And the foundation-stone upon which all its blessings rest is unconditional mercy to sinners and everlasting oblivion of all possible offenses. Contemplate, then, this covenant, in the amazing *freeness* of its forgiving grace, in the exceeding *fullness* of its promised blessings (divine renewal, divine relationship, and divine illumination), in the absolute *security* given for their enjoyment by the pledge of God that he *will* and that *man shall*, and in the *everlastingness* of its continuance—and say if its treasures of goodness do not surpass all that heart of man could have conceived. *Goode.*

13. Is ready to vanish away. It *did* vanish away. It became useless; it lost its significance; it was superseded and put aside as a thing that was "done with, that that which could not be shaken might remain." Every attempt to make Christian ministers into priests; to give them a place between the people and Christ, as He stands between the people and God; to ascribe virtue to their acts, instead of attaching importance to instruction; everything like trying to address the eye instead of the understanding; the notion that holy Christian "mysteries" are things to be *done*, instead of things that are *taught*; attempts to lead the people to depend on what can be performed for them, or *by* them, instead of cultivating their reason and conscience, and raising them to the manly apprehension of the spiritual—all this is but the modern form of the Judaizing errors which the apostle met with his indignant condemnation.

TRUE or false, the Jewish and Christian religions are the most wonderful things of which there is any account in the records of the race. What an extraordinary people that Hebrew people must have been, who in the wilderness commenced, and in subsequent ages perfected, a ritual system embodying in its significance some of the profoundest truths afterward to be demonstrated by logicians and philosophers—and who did this by no divine or supernatural assistance, but simply from the impulses of their own inward religious life, which struggled to express itself, and which found utterance in this way! How wonderful that this rude people should go on, perfecting their ideas and multiplying their myths, till they took a new form in the history of Jesus, and in the spiritual or transcendental interpretation of the old ritual system which that introduced! What a marvel it is, too, that the whole thing should have been so constructed and so carried out as to seize on the human mind *beyond* Judea—to subdue the most cultivated portions of the race—to supersede all other myths, theologies, and philosophies with which it came in contact—and to be spreading in the world as a regal power to the present day!

The extraordinary nature of the Christian interpretation of the Hebrew ritual is itself worthy of specific remark. The idea of taking the tabernacle or temple, the altar and priesthood, with all the ac-

cessories of the ritual service, and giving them a significance—finding for them a design and a reality that should at once fill the earth and reach up to heaven! think of *that*. After the prophecies, or supposed prophecies, which for ages had stirred the national heart, filling it with splendid anticipations of a regal and conquering Messiah—after he was supposed to have come, and then to have departed, and to have so departed as to have disappointed the hopes cherished to the last by his immediate followers—after this, what an idea it was to turn the very fact which shattered their expectations into a fulcrum on which to fix an engine that should move the world! What an intrepid and sublime *daring* there is in the thought of Messiah the Priest being placed in the foreground of Messiah the King! the wide earth the place of sacrifice, the cross of ignominy the altar of propitiation, the upper world the holy of holies—the way into it being opened and

sanctified by the resuscitated Redeemer, who passes through the veil of the visible heavens as into the interior of a temple, “there to appear in the presence of God for us”—for *us*, for humanity, and for the accomplishment of those spiritual objects which humanity spiritually needs!

On any supposition, it is a most marvelous coincidence that, exactly at the period when Judaism must necessarily fall as a practicable system, there should *happen* to arise a new mode of interpretation by which a hidden significance was discovered in it, its great idea found and developed, its departure provided for—*itself*, as it were, immortalized by a divine apotheosis at the moment of its martyrdom, transformed from body to spirit, raised from earth to heaven, associated with the interests of the race—the highest interests of man as immortal, liberated from local and national limitations, and made large enough to embrace the world! T. B.

Section 343.

HEBREWS ix. 1-28.

1 THEN verily the first *covenant* had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein *was* the candlestick, and the
2 table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the
3 tabernacle, which is called the Holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the
4 covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein *was* the golden pot that had manna, and
5 Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory
6 shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. Now when these
7 things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing
8 the service of *God*. But into the second *went* the high priest alone once every year, not
9 without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people: the Holy
10 Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while
11 as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which *was* a figure for the time then present, in
12 which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service
13 perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; *which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers
14 washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on *them* until the time of reformation.

11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the
12 blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place,
13 having obtained eternal redemption *for us*. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and
14 the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how
15 much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without
16 spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are
16 called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament *is*, there
17 must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament *is* of force after men
18 are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither
19 the first *testament* was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept
20 to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water,
21 and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This
22 *is* the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled
23 likewise with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost
24 all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.
25 *It was* therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with
26 these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.

24 For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, *which are* the figures of
25 the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that

he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year
 26 with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the
 world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the
 27 sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judg-
 28 ment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for
 him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

THE pieces of prophecy respecting Messiah, when all are put together, compose a figure unique and mysterious. There is something about it not to be confined to the limits of a nation, nor connected with temporal sovereignty or secular successes; and yet there is the constant employment of language partial to the Hebrew people, and indicative of mundane magnificence! King, priest, prophet, martyr; conquest and defeat; triumph and tears; songs and sovereignty; stripes and blood—pieces thus cut, as it were, out of different figures, irreconcilable, as it would seem, in attributes and fortune, have to be gathered up and put together by the severely tasked pupil of the law. The enigma at length finds its solution, the strange, mysterious picture, its reality, in the Person of a suffering yet conquering Messiah, who redeems the soul from sin, beautifies the Church with salvation, defeats the spiritual adversary of the race, and opens the kingdom of heaven to all believers! who “is made of the seed of David according to the flesh, but declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead”; who—exalted at length to “the right hand of God,” “angels, authorities, and powers being made subject to him”—lives and reigns, “from thenceforth expecting, till his enemies be made his footstool.” With new views of the central figure, the whole of the Levitical system undergoes a change. It comes to be looked at as constructed for a purpose, which gives to it a deeper and diviner significance than was at first suspected. Priest and sacrifice, altar and propitiation, cease to be realities; they are understood to be only shadows and signs of what was to be found, substantially, in the Person and work, the acts and offices, of “the great High Priest of our profession.” The Tabernacle and Temple seem to enlarge their proportions, as if to become a fitting sphere for the presentation of such a sacrifice, and the services of such a functionary, as are conceived of now. The earth is the court in which death is inflicted; the overhanging sky is the mysterious veil; and high heaven, the dwelling-place of God, is the holy of holies! The only sacrifice is understood to be that of “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world”! The pomp and splendor of the temple service fade away; its songs and anthems come to symbolize diviner joys than they ever could impart. The infliction of death on unconscious animals, with their throes and contortions under their sharp but transitory suffering, sink into something like fictitious agony, and have to give place to the terrible reality of *His* mighty and mysterious anguish whose “soul was made an offering for sin.” The purifications and washings, the cleansing of the body by water or blood, enjoined by the law, prepare the way for the evangelical announcements of the “fountain opened for uncleanness,” and of “the laver of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.” T. B.

IN this chapter the old covenant and the new are laid side by side for comparison and contrast, to show that the former was designed to illustrate the latter, the former being the symbol and the latter the thing symbolized; the former being of little value in itself, and useful mainly as throwing light in advance upon the great purposes and work of the latter. H. C.

1-5. The outward impressiveness and material splendor of the ancient religion, “the ordinances of divine service and worldly sanctuary” of the “first covenant,” were in reality but indications of imperfection and weakness. The ceremonial plainness, the literal, unsymbolic character of the new economy, is the exponent of its true dignity and glory. *Caird.*

It is very easy to discern in the tabernacle service, *first*, a proximate or external and secular in-

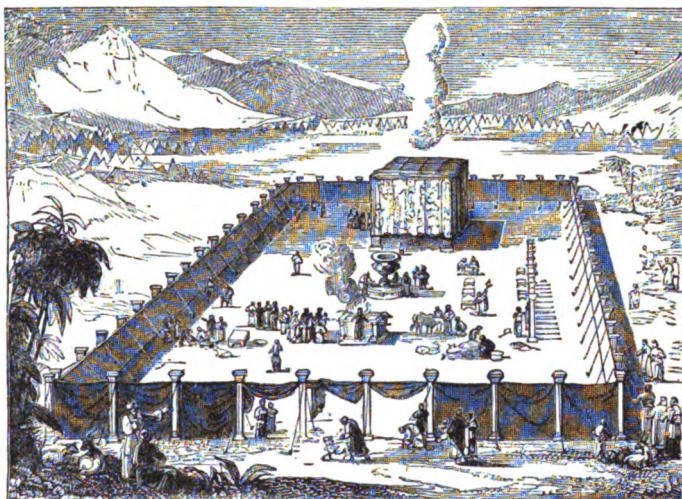
tention, which reached its end in its immediate influence upon the people. But besides this, and compatibly therewith, the same worship held forth from age to age a mute prophecy of “good things to come”; that is to say, of the mediatorial scheme, afterward to be brought into effect and made known. Yet a *third* intention (as we suppose) ran through every article of the “worldly sanctuary,” adumbrating the unearthly and spiritual system. Thus, in the farthest recess of that sacred Pavilion of the God and King of Israel, was displayed the visible splendor of the Divine Presence; high above it, without and in view of all, towered the cloudy column, alternately dark and resplendent. Before the Shechinah crouched the cherubic symbols of the *incessant adoration* of the celestial orders. To this inner chamber the mediator alone had access; and there, by his intercession, maintained propitious intercourse be-

tween the Divine Majesty and the remoter worshippers. Without the veil were seen the seven lamps—the cheering radiance of spiritual illumination; and thence also went up the perpetual incense of prayer. Far spread around this “house not made with hands,” not raised by labor or of solid materials, were ranged the assembled thousands of Israel, in devout expectation, while they took part in the loud, responsive anthem of praise. I. T.

In the ordering of the temple worship, some line of the Messiah is graven on everything. From the door whereby you enter until you approach the Shechinah between the cherubim on the mercy-seat; from the blood of the victim to the flashing breast-plate on the high priest's robe; from the daily offerings of the morning and evening sacrifice to the annual ceremony of atonement, every object and every rite foreshadows the great propitiation. T. D. A.

9. Were offered gifts and sacrifices. *Sacrifice*, in one or other of its many forms, was

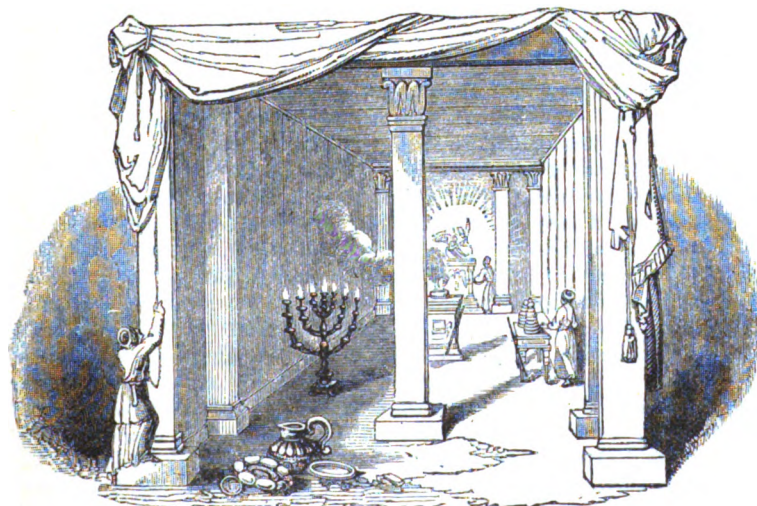
tuted the first class. They, or a part of them, were burned upon the altar, or table of God, and regarded as Jehovah's portion. They typified Christ the God-



The Tabernacle, Altar of Sacrifice, Laver, and Inclosure.

man yielding to God the devotion of a pure heart and an unsullied life; meeting the requirements of the law in every particular; and so yielding to God that which humanity never yet had yielded—a perfect righteousness. No thought

of sin enters here; it is humanity giving to God his portion and his due. The second class are the offerings not of sweet savor (of which the sin- and trespass-offerings are the two varieties). They were not offered for the acceptance of the worshiper, but for the expiation of his sin. Accordingly, the body of the victim was not burned upon the altar, but cast forth without the camp as an accursed thing, and there burned upon



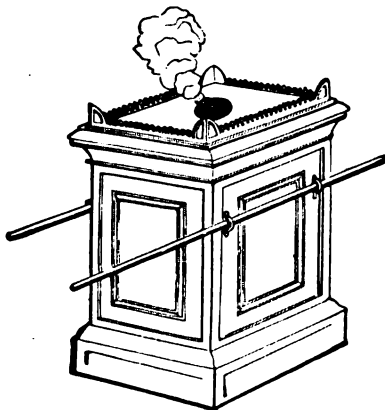
The Holy Place, with Candlestick, Table of Shew-bread, and Altar of Incense; and (the veil removed) the Most Holy Place, with Ark, Cherubim, and Shechinah.

the great feature of the Jewish worship. There were two grand divisions of sacrifice, typifying different aspects of the work of Christ. The sweet-savor offerings (or offerings for acceptance) consti-

the earth. These emblemized Christ in his cross and passion—Christ the sin-bearer, identified for the time with sin, and enduring sin's malediction—Christ the brazen serpent, identified for the

time with the principle of evil, and therefore suspended upon the tree. The mere observation of this distinction supplies an easy answer to one of the weak cavils brought against the doctrine of the Atonement. E. M. G.

Could not make perfect. They sufficed to relieve him from the ritual disabilities growing out of ceremonial defilement; they gave him his place among the recognized people of God; but the deep and dreadful sense of guilt they could not allay; the burden of sin that would lie heavy on his soul they



Supposed Form of the Altar of Incense.

could in no wise remove. The voice of inspiration even then proclaimed: "Thou delightest not in sacrifice, else would I give it; thou hast no pleasure in burnt offerings, but the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." H. C.

12. Jesus, the High Priest, goes before thee into the holiest of holies with his blood. Dost thou not believe that his intercession covers thee? Then I thought: It is for all except me. I have done too wickedly. I have sinned again, after having received grace and forgiveness. I dare not again approach the throne of grace; and yet—yet fain would I draw nigh! As my soul thus held converse with herself, Jesus the High Priest opened to me the door of his word, and I read there: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Through the open door of his word I beheld the spear-pierced side of my Priest and his sacrifice, and I believed, "for me." As I this believed, I found myself within with the Father; my High Priest covered me with his intercession, and I was no longer afraid. From that moment I knew that Jesus Christ was my High Priest. A. C.

14. **He offered himself.** They accounted it an ill-boding sign when the sacrifices came constrainedly to the altar and drew back; and, on the contrary, were glad in the hopes of success when they came cheerfully forward; but never sacrifice

came so willingly all the way, and from the first step knew whither he was going. The beasts, if they came willingly, yet offered not themselves; but he *offered up himself*; and thus, not only by a willingness far above all those *sacrifices of bullocks and goats*, but *by the eternal Spirit*, he offered up himself. L.—**To serve God.** A consideration of what Christ's death declares to us should have power to melt the hardest heart and to sober the lightest; when we think of Christ dying, dying for us, and so purchasing for us the forgiveness of sins, and everlasting life, such a love, and such a prospect of peace with God, and of glory, should in the highest degree soften and enkindle us; and from love for him, and confidence of hope through the prospect which he has given us, we should be able to overcome all temptations. T. A.—The blood of Christ, sprinkled upon our consciences, and purifying them from dead works, takes the sting out of sorrow, and brings a "peace which the world can neither give nor take away." As there is peace in heaven, the peace that comes of purity, confidence, and love, so there is peace in us when our guilt is purged away, and confidence and love are springing up as the free breath of life from the dead. H. H.

15, 16. For "*the new testament*," read "*a new covenant*"; for "*by means of death*," "*death having taken place*"; for "*redemption*," "*propitiation*"; for "*testament*," "*covenant*"; for "*eternal*," "*the eternal*." In verse 16, "*testament*" would better, perhaps, be "*testamentary covenant*." It is the same Greek word as that rendered "*covenant*" before, but now signifying a testament of bequest. A.

22. It was ordained from the beginning that life must be paid for sin. This was the reason for appointing the blood of victims as the emblem of atonement. While there is no value in the blood of animals, as there is in their skins and flesh, the Scripture says, The life is in the blood, and the appointment of blood, therefore, to make atonement, signified that life must be paid for sin. N. A.—The honest heart cries out in its shame and fear: "Let me suffer for my sin." Suffering for it there must be somewhere; transgression is a costly business; so it must always be and always look; right must stand at any rate; law must be sacred, or all is gone; and since nothing is so dear as life, and blood is the element of life, life itself must be surrendered, and "without the shedding of blood is no remission." Just because this life is so dear, he who loves us infinitely, and to whom it is dearer than to us, will be willing to lay down for us his own. He will not even wait for our consent; but, in the abundance of that unspeakable compassion, in the irresistible freedom of that goodness, he will do it beforehand, only asking of us that we will be-

lieve he has done it, and, accepting our pardon, be drawn by that faith into the same self-sacrificing spirit. Herein is love indeed. Suffering for our peace! Sacrifice not that our service may profit and pay him, but that our transgression of a perfect law may be pardoned, and the noble life of disinterested goodness may be begotten in ourselves. The atonement of Christ thus becomes the inmost and grandest power of the world. It is the one peculiar, characteristic, crowning, glorious truth of the gospel. F. D. H.

27, 28. One more analogy completes this chapter of his argument. It falls to men to die once; after this, to go to the judgment. So it falls to Christ to die once for the sin of many, and to come a second time, for the final judgment. The more particular purpose of his second coming, as put here, has respect to the grand consummation of his redemptive work in behalf of his people. He appears for the final and complete salvation of those whose faith looks humbly to him for such salvation. This statement does not attempt to exhaust the objects and results of that great final judgment. It simply designates those particular results which were in point then for the consolation of his Christian readers. H. C.

27. Once. Observing this word "once," and reading it more exactly, "once for all," we discover an aspect of finality in the declaration—implying, in fact, a fixed belief that our present probation, or state of trial, is to be both first and last, a trial once for all. Enough that there is no severity in having but a single trial, and that, if more than one were offered, we should do well to petition against it. Beyond a question, God, in giving us our one opportunity and no more, fixes this close limit because one will do more for us than many. A greater number—two, ten, twenty—we could not have without unspeakable damage and loss. H. B.—**Appointed to die.** We must look higher than a natural agency for the account of the death of a single individual. Here, as in other departments of his administration, our Lord works by second causes. Disease, violence, and natural decay are his instrumentality. But who calls the instrumentality into play? who sets it at work? who first touches the hidden spring? Undoubtedly the great Redeemer. Death is a solemn thing, a thing of vast moment, and can not be decreed except immediately by him. The key is in his hand exclusively; the great summons goes forth from his presence, and is spoken by his lips. Death is the transaction of an Individual with an individual, of Christ the Lord with one single member of the human family. The span of each one is measured out by considerations purely personal to himself. E. M. G.

If, when the connection with matter is dissolved,

an immediate consciousness is to be had of the Divine Presence, there can be no more room left for mixed or ambiguous moral sentiments. The spirit, quick throughout with the feeling of good and evil, is surrounded on every side with the GREAT OBJECT of all such feelings; even as the mote that swims in the brightness of the upper skies is encompassed with the effulgence of noon. To DIE is to burst upon the blaze of uncreated Light and to be sensitive to its beams—and to nothing else! I. T.—He who beholds Christ in death beholds with him also an infinite multitude of friends; the sky is as it were thick set with stars, one star differing from another star in glory, but all glorious; first the holy angels, then God's earthly children, Christ's redeemed who have gone before us. But, if the greater light be hidden, the lesser lights vanish also; and not the faintest glimmer of the smallest star relieves the infinite void. We need not carry forward our thoughts to the judgment; death itself with its awful darkness and loneliness is appalling enough to us, if we have not learned to fear Christ. But, fearing Him, we lack nothing, nothing in earth or heaven, in life or in death, in time or in eternity. Nothing shall in any wise hurt us; for we are then Christ's. T. A.

After death the judgment. At death probation ceases and retribution begins; a retribution whose lines run on without a break or a bend. And yet the retribution must needs be incomplete. The disembodied soul is not the whole man. In order to perfect fullness of retribution our complex humanity must be reconstructed. The soul must be reëmbodied in order to encounter the completeness of its doom. Whatever there may be of heaven for the dying saint, or of hell for the dying sinner, the day of final reckoning will open and shut gates of glory and of gloom, through which only the reëmbodied can pass to the consummation of their weal or woe. It is this final goal of history toward which the finger of prophecy in the New Testament ever points. Paul, John, Peter, and our Lord himself are all agreed in this, that the great day for every single member of the human race, as for the race as a whole, is that solemn day when the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall rise. It is then that the wicked are to "*go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.*" R. D. H.

After the judgment an *eternal too late* to such as have not then employed aright the day of grace! Well may we, when images of terror such as these arise, with clasped hands implore beseechingly the thoughtless to awake at last out of their slumber, since the sun of their short day already stands high in the heavens; nay, it may be, sinks to the western horizon. Well may we, when on so many sides we hear around us the lullaby, "Never too late, there is

time to wait," ask ourselves, as in the presence of Omniscience, if we have yet accepted the offer of mercy, and where we should be found if suddenly the day of grace came to an end. *Van O.*

28. When he cometh again, he shall appear "*without sin*," without that guilt which was charged upon him, while he sustained the character of Surety and stood in the place of sinful man. It shall not be such an appearance as his first was, when he "made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant," and submitted to all the indignities attending that mean condition. No; he shall come in the clouds with great power and glory; he shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels; he shall appear in all the splendor of Zion's King, arrayed with that glory which he had with the Father before the world was. Then shall the reproach of the cross be wiped off, and all his sufferings fully recompensed. R. W.—For the death of the cross God hath highly exalted him to be a Prince and a Saviour. The cross links on to the

kingdom—the kingdom lights up the cross! The Saviour comes—the Saviour comes a king! The kingdom that he establishes is all full of blessing and love and gentleness; and to us (if we will unite the thoughts of cross and crown) there is opened up, not only the possibility of having boldness before him in the day of judgment, but there is opened up this likewise—the certainty that he "shall receive of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." Oh, remember that, as certain as the historical fact, he died on Calvary, so certain is the prophetic fact, he shall reign, and you and I will stand *there*! Take it into your own hearts and think about it—a kingdom, a judgment-seat, a crown, a gathered universe; separation, decision, execution of the sentence. And oh! ask yourselves, "When that gentle eye, with lighting in its depths, falls upon *me*, individualizes *me*, summons out *me* to its bar, how shall I stand?" "Herein is *our love* made perfect that we may have boldness before him in the day of judgment." A. M.

Section 344.

HEBREWS x. 1-39.

1 For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make
2 the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because
3 that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in
4 those *sacrifices* *there is* a remembrance again *made* of sins every year. For *it is* not possi-
5 ble that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he com-
6 eth into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou
7 prepared me: in burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said
8 I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above
9 when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *offering* for sin thou wouldest
10 not, neither hadst pleasure *therein*; which are offered by the law; then said he, Lo, I
11 come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.
12 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once
13 *for all*. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacri-
14 fices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for
15 sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his ene-
16 mies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are
17 sanctified. *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said
18 before, This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord,
19 I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins
20 and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these *is*, *there is* no more
21 offering for sin.
22 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by
23 a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say,
24 his flesh; and *having* an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true
25 heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and
26 our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without
27 wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another to provoke unto
love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner
of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approach-
ing. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there
remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery

28 indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without
 29 mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he
 be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the
 blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite
 30 unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me,
 31 I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. *It is a*
 fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

32 But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured
 33 a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches
 34 and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For
 ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, know-
 35 ing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not
 36 away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need
 37 of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For
 38 yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall
 39 live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we
 are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of
 the soul.

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering. We must find the meaning so precious
 to every soul that really has laid hold of it, in those strange words, "The Lord Jesus Christ died for me."
 We must see the Jesus of the cross on the cross. And what then? Full of profoundest gratitude, the
 soul looks round to see what it can give to the Saviour in token of its feeling of his love. And, hopeless
 of finding anything, it simply gives itself. It is its own no longer. It is given away to Christ. It lives
 his life and not its own. Can you imagine *that* becoming real to a man and not changing his relation to
 the temptations that beset him? He feels now with Christ's feeling, and corruption drops away from him.
 Shame, love, hope, every good passion wakes in the soul. It walks unharmed, because it walks in this
 new sense of consecration. That seems to be the perfect ransom of a soul. When I am so thankful to
 Christ for all he suffered in my behalf that I give up my life to him to show him how I love him, and by
 my dedication of myself to him am saved from the world's low slaveries and stains, then my heaven is
 begun, its security and peace I have entered, and all my happy, restful life takes up already its eternal
 psalm. P. B.

THE writer resumes his great theme—the comparison of the old covenant with the new—the sacrifices under the law of Moses with the one great sacrifice of Christ—and brings it to its close and its practical application. H. C.

1-4. By *ceasing* to apply the term "*sacrifice*" in its proper sense under the gospel to everything save the death of Christ as an atonement for sin, the inspired writers evidently designed to embody this vitally important teaching, that the one great and only propitiatory sacrifice having been offered once for all, the whole system of *typical* and *representative* sacrifices *is at an end for ever*, and is for ever to remain without successor and without substitute. Under the old dispensation, when the great atonement had been neither publicly offered nor fully revealed, it was necessary to keep up a lively idea of *sin*, and of the *necessity* of atonement, by a system of most speaking types. Hence *living* victims were ordered to be slain, and *animal* blood to be sprinkled, amid all the solemnities of an imposing ritual; a ritual carrying, nevertheless, on its very face the truth that "those sacrifices, which were offered year by year *continually*," could not of themselves "take away sin"; while, at the same moment, it served to keep alive both a *sense* of sin and the idea that a *real* and *efficacious* atonement was necessary. But, *now* this real and efficacious atonement having been both publicly offered and fully revealed, the whole system of *typical* and *representative* sacrifices is abolished, and the pall of

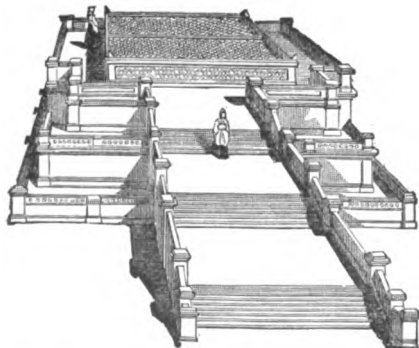
significant silence is, under the gospel, thrown over the dead body of that system, in order that there may be nothing, not even a *word*, to turn away our eye from the sacrifice on the cross, the true "Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world," as he stands forth luminously manifest in the gospel, the only hope of the sinner. J. S. S.

5-9. The Psalmist affirms the inadequacy of animal sacrifices to fulfill the divine requirement; personal surrender is the thing demanded. This statement involves a principle which the inspired author of the Hebrews makes use of to establish the point that he is arguing, viz., that the Mosaic sacrifices are superseded and abolished by the one all-perfect and atoning sacrifice of Christ. If the only true sacrifice, and that which alone is acceptable to God, is a personal surrender, then, in order to a perfect and thoroughly acceptable sacrifice, this surrender must be complete. There is but one of our race who can claim that his submission to the will of God has been unreserved, and that he has fulfilled that will in every particular. It is he who came down from heaven not to do his own will but the will of the Father who had sent him; and who did always those things that please him. Here, and here only, is a subjection to the will of God that completely fills the true idea of a sacrifice. Language that David and other servants of God employed in their own feeble measure could be adopted by him in its highest sense without abatement or alloy. The words which the Psalmist used

to express his own devout feelings first find their adequate embodiment in the incarnation and atoning work of Christ. The Psalmist was not specifically thinking of Christ when he penned these words. He did not at the time intend them as the utterance of Messiah. But, if the meaning of Christ's act in coming into the world is to be put into words, these are its true expression. And hence the writer of this Epistle represents him as saying when he came into the world just what that act in effect did say. W. H. G.

7. He became Mediator and reconciling Peacemaker between God and men, having offered himself up to God the Father for a sweet-smelling savor. For what offering or sacrifice could he have needed for himself, when, being God, he was already far above all sin? Then what room is left for doubting that on our account and for us he was sacrificed as the true Lamb? *Cyril of Alex.*—The freeness of the sacrifice was its efficacy. It was not the offering of the Father alone, nor of the Son alone, but of the divine heart of God in them both—a heart that was loving before the foundation of the world, and finding this overwhelming utterance at last. F. D. H.

9. At the table, in the temple, on the mount, by the wayside, weary, hungry, defamed, by night, by day, in every state and place, weeping over the grave of Lazarus, riding triumphantly into Jerusalem, praying in the garden, hanging on the cross, Jesus was still the same—he did the will of the Father who sent him. Fancy can imagine nothing more sublime than the unity of that great purpose. *Bowdler.*—"He taketh away the first," viz., the sacrifices, "that he may establish the second," viz., the will of God. C.



Altar of Burnt Offering, from Surenhusius's *Mishna*.

11. For four thousand years the animal tribes, by their appointed representatives, paid for man the forfeiture of his life by their own. For thousands of years the priests of God stood daily offering the same sacrifices, all holding forth the same truths: The wages of sin is death; and, Without shedding of blood, is no remission. N. A.—12. Under the law there was no end to the priest's work; for,

besides the two great public sacrifices at morning and evening, any man might bring his sin-offering or trespass-offering at any hour to the temple, and there must be a priest waiting to receive and present it. And all this went on year after year for ages. The fire on the altar was kept continually burning, and the blood of victims almost as continually flowing—significant but awful emblems of the unceasing, ever-burning displeasure of Jehovah against man's transgressions, and the utter insufficiency of all that man can do to remove it. "But this man," the Lord Jesus, our great High Priest, "offered one sacrifice," one only, and when he had offered that, his work was done. His precious blood once shed, all is over. The fire on the altar goes out, and the altar itself is soon thrown down and destroyed. C. B.—He obtained by one act that which mankind, from the beginning of the world, had been endeavoring in vain to accomplish by innumerable and continual sacrifices, the pardon of sin and reconciliation with God. After this universal and effectual expiation, in every country that embraced the gospel, all sacrifices, both animal and human, immediately ceased; a sudden and absolute period was put to that incredible effusion of blood which had deluged the world almost from the very creation down to that time. P.

As the virtue of his death looks backward to all preceding ages, whose faith and sacrifices looked forward to it, so the same death is of force and perpetual value to the end of the world. The cross on which he was extended points in the length of it to heaven and earth, reconciling them together; and in the breadth of it to former and following ages, as being equally salvation to both. L.—**For ever sat down.** The mediatorial dominion stands in inseparable connection with the sacerdotal offering of Christ. He sits a *Priest upon his throne*. Nor will any enlightened, unprejudiced subject of Zion's King feel that there is any incongruity, in his case at least, between the miter and the crown, the altar and the throne, the censer and the scepter, the smoking incense and the shout of victory. "We have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens. This man for ever sat down on the right hand of God." W. S.—In his wonderful personality, uniting the divine with the human constitution—after his amazing and unparalleled experience, of the endurance unto death, of resurrection and ascension—as the head of the system which represents him among men, he abideth henceforth in the presence of God. He there awaits the extension through the earth of his spiritual kingdom. R. S. S.

14-18. "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." That this is so, saith he, the Holy Ghost himself witnesses by the express terms of the new covenant. For, after

promising to be the author of sanctification to the heirs of promise, he adds, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." "Now," argues the apostle, "where remission of these is," such a remission as is complete and *final*, "there is no more offering for sin." *Goode.*—**Perfected.** They lie no longer under a sense of condemnation. They are really accepted before the infinite throne as redeemed and saved children of God. More than merely forgiven, they are renewed in heart to love and obedience; born of God unto a new and heavenly life of soul. The work of salvation is for them made perfect. In a blessed sense they are "perfected for ever." H. C.

15-17. (See Section 342, verses 10-12.) In this covenant, life and every blessing is freely made over in Christ; it is a covenant founded on free forgiveness of all iniquity, consisting of exceeding great and precious promises from him who is able to make them good, and having no other conditions to be fulfilled, on man's part, than simply to accept its grace. *Goode.*

19. The meaning of this is, that the flesh (or manhood) of Christ was a veil which hid his true nature; this veil he rent when he gave up his body to death; and through his incarnation, thus revealed under its true aspect, we must pass, if we would enter into the presence of God. We can have no real knowledge of God but through his incarnation. C. —The blood by which we now enter into the heavenly sanctuary is the blood of him who hath life in himself; who, though he voluntarily submitted to death for a season, yet soon rose again from the grave by his own power; "who liveth for evermore." His *flesh*, or human nature, gets the name of a *veil*, through which the new and living way into the holiest is consecrated for us. It is such a veil as doth not exclude from but opens to give us admittance to a throne of grace; nay, Christ himself is the true propitiatory or mercy-seat: the sacrifice, the altar, and the high priest are all united in his wonderful person. In short, "he is the way, the truth, and the life"; the true, the living, and the only way to the Father. R. W.

22. **Draw near.** The outer temple was the figure of the whole Church upon earth; like as the holy of holies represented heaven. Nothing can better resemble faithful prayers than sweet perfume. These God looks that we should send up unto him morning and evening. The elevation of our hearts should be perpetual; but, if twice in the day we do not present God with our solemn invocations, we make the gospel less effective than the law. Now, every man is a priest unto God; every man, since the veil was rent, prays within the temple. What are we the better for our greater freedom of access to God under the gospel, if we do not make use of

our privilege? *Bp. H.*—**In full assurance.** We have the promise of God confirmed by his oath; we have the gift of his own Son to be the propitiation for our sins; we are not only permitted, but invited, nay, commanded, to come to the Saviour, with this most endearing declaration, that such as come to him shall in no wise be rejected or cast out by him. And shall not this accumulated, this superabundant evidence produce in us that *full assurance of faith* with which the apostle exhorteth us to draw near to God by the blood of Jesus? R. W.

Hearts sprinkled. Pardoned sins can not hurt the sinner, and, though it troubles him that he hath sinned, yet his sins can not trouble him. Free grace in justification takes all our sins off the file as if they were not at all. Pardon is the blotting of transgressions out of God's book, and, if they are once blotted out of God's book, we need not care who writes them in their book, nor what books men or devils write against us. *Caryl.*—What the apostle subjoins, *having our bodies washed with pure water*, ought to be transferred to the following verse; in which case, without any straining, they obviously apply to the ordinance of baptism, and are urged, with great propriety, to enforce a steadfast, unwavering adherence to that faith which the converted Hebrews had professed with such solemnity, when, at their admission into the Church of Christ, their *bodies were washed with pure water*, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. R. W.

23. There are four things ascribed to God in Scripture which may assure us he will be just in performing all his promises: he remembers them all, he is unchangeable, he is furnished with power to perform them, he is most faithful, and will not deny nor falsify them. To keep commandments is our work—to keep promises is God's work; though we may fail much in our work, God will not fail at all in his work. To believe this is our highest and truest work of faith. *Caryl.*—"God," it is written, "is faithful," as promising to save; he will save assuredly, yet so as he has promised. But in what way has he promised? On our *willing* it and on our hearing him; for he does not make a promise to blocks of wood and to inert stones. *Chrys.*

24, 25. I do not know anything more impressive than the sight of a congregation evidently in earnest in the service in which they are engaged. We then feel how different is our lonely prayer from the united voice of many hearts, each cheering, strengthening, enkindling the other. We then consider one another to provoke unto love and good works. How different are the feelings with which we regard a number of persons met for any common purpose, and the same persons engaged together in serious prayer or praise! Then Christ seems to appear to us in each of them; we are all one in him. How

little do all earthly unkindnesses, dislikes, prejudices become in our eyes when the real bond of our common faith is discerned clearly! T. A.

Should you be really and lawfully hindered by works of necessity and love from attending public worship, you break no law whatever by absenting yourself from it; nay, because God sends the hindrance in the order of his providence, you shall none the less realize his presence and receive his blessing in the sanctuary of your heart. Whereas, on the other hand, when there is no such hindrance, and when opportunities offer, you do forsake the assembling of yourself together with your brethren, if you do not avail yourself of them. The precept is free enough to give dispensation in circumstances of necessity, while at the same time it is strict enough to secure obedience where there are no such circumstances. E. M. G.—We should be alarmed to know that the prayers of God's house are proceeding without us; that the songs of the temple are sung, and our voices are dumb; that the treasury of benevolence is filled, while our money cankers and eats our flesh; that dying souls need us not, while others search them out as gems for our Redeemer's crown. R. T.

25. The day approaching. The Church being in *all ages* kept uncertain how soon Christ is coming, *the day* is, and has been in each age, practically always near, whence believers have been called on always to be watching for it as nigh at hand. The Hebrews were now living close upon one of those great types and foretastes of it—the destruction of Jerusalem. *Fausset*.—That day is the day of days, the ending day of all days, the settling day of all days, the day of the promotion of time into eternity, the day which, for the Church, breaks through and breaks off the night of the present world. *Delitzsch*.

26-31. This and the similar passage, 6:4-6, have proved perplexing to many readers; yet neither passage asserts the *impossibility* of an apostate's repentance. What is said amounts to this: that for the conversion of a deliberate apostate, God has (according to the ordinary laws of his working) no further means in store than those which have been already tried in vain. It should be remembered also that the parties addressed are not those who had already apostatized, but those who were in danger of so doing, and who needed the most earnest warning. C.

26, 27. God is now merciful; he deals with us through the medium of his Son. If we will be reconciled to him as he is to us through Christ, we shall have peace, and the blood of Christ shall cleanse us from all unrighteousness; but, if not, God will have judgment without mercy. This is a result of evil proportioned to the cost and precious-

ness of the good we decline; and both reason and conscience give forth this "looking for of judgment and fiery indignation." This is the handwriting of conscience upon the wall which we need no prophet to divine. H. H.—God will punish sin in a way corresponding to the infinite wonders of his love and grace in redemption; and they who neglect Christ and continue in sin will endure a punishment corresponding to the greatness of the salvation which was provided for them. N. A.

29. Man is voluntary in his departure from God; he is voluntary in loving the creature more than God; and he is voluntary in refusing to return to God by Jesus Christ. A complete atonement has been made for all his sins, and a free pardon is offered if he will repent. But he will not repent. Christ is able and willing to save him if he will come to him, but he will not come. God has built an eternal prison, and the sinner fits himself for it; goes there of his own accord, in spite of all the restraints which God has laid upon him and all the obstructions by which he has blocked up the way to ruin. God has done everything but just to exert almighty power; yet he will not turn. He will die! He shuts his eyes; he stops his ears to prayers and entreaties; he treads under foot the blood of the covenant and does despite to the Spirit of grace; and, through a host of opposing means, and while God and angels and men are entreating him to stop, he forces his way down to ruin. L. B.—Believe it, whoever hewed the cross, or drove the nails, or platted the thorns, or pierced the side, it is indifference, it is ingratitude, it is unbelief, it is selfishness, it is hard, cold, narrow worldliness, everywhere, always, which crucifies the Lord of Glory, and is the agency of his crucifixion. F. D. H.

30, 31. What say we of the penalty? Shall we amuse our leisure by showing the inconclusiveness of certain terrific and probable arguments on this subject? Shall we spend the hours of life that remain in gathering reasons which seem to make it less than absolutely certain that the worst that has been affirmed shall prove to be true? Shall we court those dreams concerning the lenity of the divine government which the miseries even of the present life are enough to dissipate? Nay, rather than any longer debilitate the moral forces of the mind by giving ear to flatteries that breathe the very nausea of sin, let us take up, as the first axiom of our religious notions, the truth—that "it is indeed a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!" I. T.

36. Need of patience. All other virtues and graces have need of patience to perfect or to secure them. Patience interposes herself, and receives and stops every dart which the evil one aims at them. "Patience is the root and guardian of all virtue"

impatience is the enemy of all. Impatience disquiets the soul, makes her weary of conflict, ready to lay aside her armor and to leave difficult duty. Impatience, by troubling the smooth mirror of the soul, hinders her from reflecting the face of God; by its din, it hinders her from hearing the voice of God. Impatience listens to nothing, heeds nothing, fears nothing, hopes nothing, judges aright of nothing, perseveres in nothing except in restlessness. Impatience distrusts man and rebels against God. *Pusey.*

—The active working time in some manner comes to an end. Perhaps health fails, or circumstances change, or doors of opportunity are closed, or fields once white unto the harvest are now reaped and bare, and no other fields are whitening. Arrest, in some way, is laid upon the active power, and there is "need of patience." Or, the work still going on, without abatement of energy in the doing of it, with no slackening of diligence or narrowing of opportunity, there is still, it may be, much need of patience. Work, and have patience. And still work, as long as working power is given, and still have patience. *A. R.*

37. Waiting souls, remember this: assurance is yours, but the time of giving it is the Lord's; the golden chain is yours, but he only knows the hour

wherein he will put it around your necks. Well, wait patiently and quietly, wait expectingly and believingly, wait affectionately and wait diligently, and you shall find that Scripture made good with power upon your souls: "*Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*" *Brooks.*—

Christ came the first time in weakness; he is to come the second time in might; the first time in our littleness, the second time in his own majesty; the first time in mercy, the second in judgment; the first time to redeem, the second to recompense, and recompense all the more terribly because of the long-suffering and delay. *Hildebert.*

39. **Believe to saving.** The faith that saves is the faith that inspires—the faith of practice, working by love, proved by charity, triumphing in integrity, constant unto death, making the Christian ever more and more like the Master, more true to man, humbler before God. *F. D. H.*—It ought to be a joy to us all that a faith which is clouded with ignorance may yet be a faith which Christ accepts. He that knows and trusts him as brother, friend, Saviour, in whom he receives the pardon and cleansing which he needs and desires, may have very much misconception and error cleaving to him, but Christ accepts him. *A. M.*

Section 345.

HEBREWS xi. 1-16.

- 1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by
- 2 it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were
- 3 framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which
- do appear.
- 4 By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead
- 5 yet speaketh. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not
- found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony,
- 6 that he pleased God. But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh
- to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.
- 7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared
- an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir
- 8 of the righteousness which is by faith. By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out
- into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not
- 9 knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange
- country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same
- 10 promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.
- 11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a
- 12 child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore
- sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, *so many* as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.
- 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers

14 and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a
 15 country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out,
 16 they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better *country*,
 that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath pre-
 pared for them a city

THE first of the gifts of the new covenant is faith. The property of faith is to attach itself before all and above all to what God has said, be it command, instruction, or promise. To believe is to repose entirely on the infallibility and faithfulness of God; it is to place his testimony above all kinds of certainty or guarantee; it is to regard every word proceeding from his mouth as more substantial and real than the reality itself; it is in practice to regard duty in the form in which God has enjoined it as the clearest and most imperative of all obligations; it is, consequently, to go forward with unflinching eye, and meet coming events as we would meet God himself; it is to renounce the tyrannical domination of the senses, and uniformly look to the foundation, the very essence of the truth, instead of looking to external accidents or signs; it is to prefer the invisible, which is eternal, to the visible, which passes away, and the possession of the sovereign good to the sensible signs of its presence. A. V.

Throw into one great sum total all that you have ever experienced or can conceive of wisdom and power—the most far-sighted discernment of results, with the most absolute control over them—the keenest intuition into character, with every conceivable influence for molding it—think of a providence not of this earth, which no opposition can surprise, and no device counterplot, calmly and serenely evolving its own designs from the perverse agencies of man, and turning the very arm which is raised to defeat it into a minister of its will—imagine a Being so wonderfully endowed that the whole keyboard of nature, providence, and the human heart lies under his hand, and, smitten by his mystic fingers, gives forth the harmony which pleases him; and then invest him in your conception with an intensity of love which is not discouraged by the deepest moral degradation in its objects, and which clings to the person of the sinner with unchilled devotion even while it condemns his sin with an abhorrence no less than infinite—imagine such a Being, and imagine him accessible to man, and you imagine one to whom in their hour of need all the world, unless indeed the spell of some deadly fascination were laid upon them, would be resorting continually for guidance, help, and comfort. But this is no imagination. It is a reality. God is such a being as we have labored to describe. He not only permits, but invites; not only invites, but commands the approach to him of every comer. E. M. G.

THE citation of the great Pauline watchword (10:39), "The just man shall live by faith," leads to a grand digression on the triumphs of faith, as shown in the holy men and women of old. Thus this chapter constitutes the Hymn of Faith, as 1 Cor. 13 was the Hymn of Love; the two being the highest flights of impassioned rhetoric in the Apostolic Epistles. A.—This magnificent grouping of examples of faith was specially in point for his Hebrew readers. Those heroes and martyrs were the pride and the glory of every son and daughter of Abraham. To turn all this admiration to account, the writer had only to show that their heroism *was the outcome of their faith*—the very same faith essentially which he was exhorting them to cherish and hold fast. Yet this chapter is good, not for that age of stern trial only, but for all the ages to the end of time. Walking and working by faith are the staple of the Christian life, and are to be so long as earthly life is a pilgrimage and a warfare. Therefore let us open our souls to the grand inspirations of these heroic examples! H. C.

1. This is the only place in the Bible where we have what we can call a definition of faith. That

faith which is the foundation of all other Christian graces—the title by which we keep our place as Christians, the inward working which has its fruit in good works, the hand by which we lay hold on God and on Christ—is here said to be the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen; and by substance is here meant firm confidence, and by evidence is meant conviction. Faith is the laying hold of the future in the midst of the present, of the unseen in the midst of the seen. F. T.—Faith is the substance of things hoped for, substantiating them to the apprehension, realizing them to the heart, making them operative motives, as much as the gain, the pleasure, and the fear of our daily walks. One of the most precious gifts which God ever vouchsafes us is a clear, unwavering insight of the soul into future and unseen things, which on God's authority become so sure to us that they stand out palpable and real before us, and, though not by the same evidence, become as influential upon our affections and will as the material objects of our senses. Such faith is no fancy, but self-evidence. J. W. A.—Such was the apostle's own faith. It pierced the veil which hides the other world from

us, and took in, not merely this brief, precarious span that we call life, but the soul's whole duration ; not merely the shadows of the present scene, which we misname realities, but the realities of the spirit-world, which we mistake for shadows. And it interpreted both the pleasures and the crosses of our earthly pilgrimage by the light thrown back upon them from the resplendent walls and towers of the city of the Great King. H. A. B.

3. By revelation we understand that the worlds were brought into being by the word of God. So that the things which are seen (the worlds) were not made of things which did appear before they were made ; that is, the worlds which we see were not made of matter which had existed from eternity, but of matter which God created and formed into the things which we see ; and, having formed them, he placed them in the beautiful order which they now hold, and impressed on them the motions proper to each, which they have retained ever since. M.

4. The institution of sacrifices, immediately that man fell, had no object ; they were of no efficacy, but as they showed forth the Mediator, through whom, as slain for us, we draw near to God. The rejection of Cain's offering was owing to a want of acknowledgment in it of this great truth ; it was one that man might have made *in innocence* ; but it recognized not his guilt and need of mediation as a *fallen* being ; it was not offered, as the "more excellent sacrifice" of Abel was, "by faith" in another for acceptance with God, and "the Lord had not respect unto it." *Goode*.—God had said in effect, once for all, that he would never speak nor be spoken to in a way of friendship by any of the human race but through a Mediator. This was intimated, partly by man's being debarred from all access to the tree of life, partly by the promise of the woman's seed, and partly by the institution of sacrifices. Cain overlooked all this, and approached God without an expiatory sacrifice, as if there had been no breach between them and so no need of an atonement. This was daring unbelief. Abel took God at his word, perceived the evil of sin and the awful breach made by it—dared not to bring an offering without a victim for atonement—had respect to the promised Messiah—and thus, by faith in the unseen Lamb, offered a more excellent offering than Cain. *A. Fuller*.

Dead, yet speaketh. Then the man begins to speak and act through his influence alone. That has gone forth through example, opinions, words, and deeds, thenceforth disencumbered of all mortal hindrance to work directly on the minds and hearts of survivors. It shapes the plan, decides the wavering purpose, lures to the forbidden path, or utters the word of remonstrance—the timely warning. It

lives in the hearts of all that it ever reached, and when they drop away and disappear, it still survives, transmitted to others from generation to generation. E. H. G.—A purely good man, a holy man, a man whose life and nature you saw always luminous with the presence of God in every thought and act and word—have you never been conscious of some power in his presence ? or, if he were dead, of some power in the image of what he was that grew up in you as you read or heard about him, utterly unlike that which far greater men had over you. He was no hero and no teacher. You felt no wonder at his ability, and found no intellectual delight in what he told you, but he brought God close to you. P. B.

6. Faith is the identifying Christian principle, separate and apart from which, whatever excellence men may exhibit, is but mere morality. By faith we submit to the authority of God's law ; by faith we are united to Christ and "receive from his fullness and grace for grace" ; by faith we contemplate the love of God in Christ ; by faith our conduct becomes acceptable to God through Christ. J. A. J.

Whatever faith touches it turns into gold, that is, into our good. If faith looks upon God, it says, *This God is my God for ever and ever, he shall be my guide even unto death*. When it looks upon the crown of righteousness, it says, "This crown is laid up for me." Faith is a sword to defend us, a guide to direct us, a staff to support us, a friend to comfort us, and a golden key to open heaven unto us. Faith, of all graces, is the most useful grace to the soul of man. *Without faith it is impossible to please God*. And there is something very stimulating and encouraging in the thought that we can do that which shall actually *please* God. It throws a light and glory upon all duty. *Brooks*.

What is left of prayer if these two things are abstracted from it—a sense of the personal *presence* and of the personal *friendship* of God ? He that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and that he is a *rewarder*. To feel the reality of God's spiritual presence, and then to speak the language of adoration, confession, petition, thanksgiving, with a *continuous* sense of its being an actual interchange between ourselves and God, a real *conference* of friends, this, surely, is not at all times, in all states of the body, in all moods of sensibility, under all varieties of circumstance, natural to fallen minds like ours. It is not a state of mind to which, without culture, without discipline in Christian life, we spring spontaneously, involuntarily, as we spring to conscious thinking when we wake from sleep. A process of intellect is involved in it which demands exertion. A. P.

Must believe that he is. This belief can not bring the soul in effectual approach to God, unless it be a penetrating conviction that, there being

a God, we have to do with him every moment; that this faith must be the predominating authority over our course through the world, determining our volitions and actions. This actuating conviction must be decided and absolute in him that "*cometh to God.*" He must feel positively assured it will not be just the same to him in the event of things whether he diligently seek God or not. He must be assured that, if God be true, there is something to be granted to such seeking that *will not* be granted without it; that one thing is in God's determination, namely, *to fulfill his promises.* By humble, faithful, persevering importunity of prayer in the name of Christ, I have an assured hold upon—or, by a neglect of it, I let loose from my grasp and hope—all those things which he has promised to such prayer. I am, then, assured he is the "*rewarder.*" inasmuch as I know *it will not be all the same to me whether I seek him or not.* And what is that in which it will be verified to them "*that he is a rewarder*"? For *what* will they have to adore and bless him as such? For the grandest benefits which even he can impart—can impart in doing full justice to the infinite merits of the appointed Redeemer. An inestimable privilege! that those greatest blessings may be asked for, positively and specifically; whereas the minor benefits are to be requested conditionally, and it is better that the applicants should *not* be certain of obtaining them. It is enough for their faith as to these that an infinitely wiser judgment than theirs will be exercised in selecting, giving, withholding, adjusting. But the important admonition is, that all this is for them "*that diligently seek*"; so habitually, importunately, perseveringly, that it shall really, and in good faith, be made the primary concern of our life; so that, while wishes and impulses to *obtain* are incessantly springing and darting from the busy soul in divers directions, there shall still be one predominant impulse directed toward heaven. J. F.

The divine rewards are rewards in kind. They are large just according to the spirituality of our lives, the zeal of our worship, the strength of our faith. They are interior, not visible. They are incidental, not sought. They are of nobleness rather than of happiness. Sometimes "the rewarder of them that diligently seek him" will reward the true Christian soul by giving him a strengthening and encouraging consciousness of harmony with the divine will; sometimes by taking him out from under the power of temptation, or a straitened self-accusation, and setting his feet in a large place; sometimes by redoubling his spiritual energy and quickening his Christian activity, breathing a prompter zeal into all the secret forces of his being, through the unseen agencies of the Holy Spirit; sometimes by giving him a blessed sense of renunciation, of

having given up all to him to whom all of right belongs, together with an exalted sense of liberty from all limitations of appetite and ambition; sometimes by affording us greater satisfaction in our appointed struggles and our every-day drudgery, and sometimes, too, by granting us—provided we do not ask it too eagerly, as if it were better for us than toil—an inward peace, or rest from care and from strife and from fear, passing all understanding, such as the world never gave. F. D. H.

7. Noah's obedience, having indeed so boisterous winds to encounter, had need of a well-fastened root that it might stand and hold out against them all, and so it had. The apostle tells us what the root of it was; *by faith, being warned of God, he prepared an ark.* And there is no living and lasting obedience but what springs from that root. He believed what the Lord spake of his determined judgment on the ungodly world; and from the belief of that arose that holy fear, which is expressly mentioned as exciting him to this work. And he believed the word of promise that the Lord spake concerning his preservation by the ark; and the belief of these two carried him strongly on to the work, and through it. L.

8. Abraham acted upon simple obedience to the divine word and unwavering confidence in the divine promises. He asked no vouchers from God for the fulfillment of his word. He grasped the word, he held it, and trusting to it left his home and went out, not knowing whither he went. Like him, we are to commit ourselves to a whole earthly life of faith in God, and then follow where our faith leads. The sublime height of faith is reached when we cherish a calm indifference, a holy heedlessness where it will carry us in the interim, if it carries us into the presence of God and the home of the good at last. J. D.

10. Heaven for stability is called "a city that has foundations, whose builder and maker is God." The present world is like a tent or tabernacle set up for a time, while the Church is passing through the wilderness; but heaven is the "city of the living God," the place of his happy residence, the seat of his eternal empire. The visible world shall shortly fall, this beautiful scene be abolished; but the supreme heaven is truly called "a kingdom that can not be shaken." The wise maker has framed it correspondently to the end for which it was designed: it is the seat of his majesty, his sacred temple wherein he diffuses the richest beams of his goodness and glory, and his chosen servants see and praise his adorable excellences for ever. *Bates.*

13. **Having received the promises.** If the unseen is ever to rule in men's lives, it must be through their thoughts. It must become intelligible, clear, real. Dreams and hopes and peradven-

tures are too unsubstantial stuff to be a bulwark against the very real, undeniable present. And such certitude is given through faith which grasps the promises of God, and twines the soul round the risen Saviour so closely that it sits with him in heavenly places. Such certitude is given by faith alone. A. M.

Strangers and pilgrims. At the same time the saints of old declared themselves expectants of a land of promise hereafter, they also declared themselves strangers and pilgrims here. And, therefore, let not men mock and deceive themselves by thinking to compass heaven with one hand and earth with the other, and so to reign as princes in both. For the wisdom of God has decreed it otherwise, and judged one world enough for one man, though it gives him his choice of two. R. S.—We ought every moment to be at the disposal of the Lord, and guard against fixing our place here as if we were to be here for ever. Bear in mind that we are really and of necessity *strangers and pilgrims*; and yet let us not do anything slightly or negligently. Let us labor as diligently as if we and our labors were to endure always. Though we endure not, let us do enduring works. Let us employ all our faculties in everything we have to do; let us employ to the best advantage our leisure, our resources, the life which God gives us; let us not live by halves, live with regret, but let us be always impressed with the conditions of our existence. While staying, let us be ready to depart; let us be continually departing in spirit. A. V.

It is equally true that we are strangers and pilgrims *in time*, and that we are living the eternal life. The life of faith is the life which breathes the atmosphere of eternity, which looks on the things unseen and eternal, and beholds the glory of God. And as the heavenly citizenship is ours while we are still walking on earth, so the eternal life is ours though we are still in time. In the midst of cares and sorrows, toil and labor, conflict and struggle, we have a still deeper and more real possession, even that hidden life in which there is no pause and no change, but perennial sunshine and inexhaustible fullness, perfect rest, and the peace which passeth understanding. Part of the daily bread which our heavenly Father gives to his children on earth is to enter daily into the secret place of the Most High, and to be in eternity. Eternity is wrought into time. He who lives in eternity finds time and strength for every good work which God lays before him. A. S.

14. They seek a country. None can use earth well that prefer not heaven; and none but infants can come to heaven that are not prepared for it by well using earth. Heaven must have our highest esteem, and our habitual love, desire, and joy; but earth must have more of our daily thoughts

for present practice. A man that travels to the most desirable home has an habitual desire to it all the way; but his present business is his journey, and therefore his horse, inns, and company, his roads, fatigues, may employ more of his thoughts, and talk, and action, than his home. *Baz.*—The dissatisfaction of the godly man with this earthly life is a feeling which can exist in the highest prosperity, when the wishes are all gratified, when not a cloud is on the sky. It has no reference whatever to external fortunes; no height of prosperity can extinguish it, and the depths of sorrow only increase it. It has a divine source, and is aroused by a sense of absence from communion more precious than any on earth, by a sense of imperfection which no progress in godliness has repressed, by a sense of want of spiritual enjoyment for which no earthly enjoyment can compensate. With such a dissatisfaction the highest contentment is compatible. The man may be willing, yes, he may rejoice, to stay amid his trials and in a world of sin, in the hope of working for God and of fitting himself for everlasting life. T. D. W.

16. Life's promise is, you shall have a Canaan; it turns out to be a baseless, airy dream— toil and warfare—nothing that we can call our own. There are two ways of considering this aspect of life. One is the way of sentiment; a way that is trite enough. Saint, sage, sophist, moralist, and preacher have repeated in every possible image, till there is nothing new to say, that life is a bubble, a dream, a delusion, a phantasm. The other is the way of faith: the ancient saints felt as keenly as any moralist could feel the brokenness of its promises; they confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims here; they said that they had here no continuing city, but they did not mournfully moralize on this—they said it cheerfully and rejoiced that it was so. They felt that all was right; they knew that the promise itself had a deeper meaning; they looked undauntedly for "a city which hath foundations." F. W. R.—They recognized God as their portion, and in turn he was not ashamed to be called *their God*, that is, *not their object of worship, but their protector and guardian*. Well he might thus be called, for he had prepared for them a city. He would not suffer these longings of theirs, which were founded on faith and love to him, to be unsatisfied. He had built a city on purpose for their reception. They were to have, instead of tabernacles, in which they removed from one pasture to another, *a settled home*; instead of a dwelling among strangers, *a dwelling among the truest friends*; instead of a lonely tent, *a thronged city*; instead of a residence without rights or security, *a share in that safe commonwealth, that heavenly polity*, over which God reigns. T. D. W.

Section 346.

HEBREWS xi. 17-40.

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the
 18 promises offered up his only begotten *son*, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed
 19 be called: accounting that God *was* able to raise *him* up, even from the dead; from whence
 20 also he received him in a figure. By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things
 21 to come. By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and wor-
 22 shipped, *leaning* upon the top of his staff. By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of
 23 the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones. By
 24 faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw *he*
 25 *was* a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment. By faith Moses,
 26 when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing
 27 rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a
 28 season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he
 29 had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the
 30 wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept
 31 the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch
 32 them. By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry *land*: which the Egyptians
 33 assaying to do were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were com-
 34 passed about seven days. By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed
 35 not, when she had received the spies with peace.

36 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak,
 37 and of Sampson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: who
 38 through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the
 39 mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weak-
 40 ness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.
 41 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting
 42 deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of *cruel*
 43 mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned,
 44 they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about
 45 in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was
 46 not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the
 47 earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the
 48 promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be
 49 made perfect.

THERE came a faith wholly unknown before; a faith that counted no labor too great to be attempted, no possible sacrifice too great to be made; that believed without argument, endured without remonstrance, happiest under the heaviest cross; that expected success amid whatever disasters; and that no more feared death than did the Lord the waves which he trod on. Such a faith as this had no name for it, in either the Greek or the Roman world, till the gospel touched their very language, and charged it with meanings which they who had formed it had never conceived. No Being had appeared to call it forth. It was not known that the soul of man was capable of it. And well might the hardest and the most practiced wonder, when delicate women, sustained by it, stood unshrinking before the onset of wild beasts; when men, inspired by it, sang praises as destroying fires curled round them at the stake. Such a faith had come to manifestation, and a heroism born of it, of which the world, with all its experience of a strenuous ambition and a passionate courage, had seen no instance. R. S. S.

But how did faith do all this? Why, in the strength of love; faith being properly the eye of the soul, to spy out and represent to it those excellent things, the love and desire of which should be hotter than fire and stronger than death; bearing a man through and above all the terrors of both, for the obtaining of so transcendent a good. In short, faith shows the soul its treasure; which, being once seen by it, naturally inflames the affections, and they as naturally engage all the faculties and powers of soul and body in a restless, indefatigable endeavor after it. And thus, in all those heroic instances of passive fortitude, faith wrought by love, and therefore it wrought wonders. R. S.

17. Abraham offered up Isaac. He was divided between believing the promise and obeying the command! God tried him in his faith: *his faith* was to carry on a conflict with his *natural reason*, as well as *his obedience* with *his natural affection*. But "he accounted that God was able to raise Isaac from the dead"; and he reconciles the command "with the promise." T. M.

24-29. In all the elements of greatness "Moses the servant of the Lord" stands foremost among the heroes of antiquity. Among statesmen none ever wrought such barbarous materials into so perfect a commonwealth. No military leader ever conducted such a host through such a wilderness. But there is one comprehensive fact that blends all the traits of his character into symmetry and strength, explains all the signs and wonders that he wrought, epitomizes his whole career, and imparts an imperishable life to his name. He was the servant of the Lord; his servant in the face of allurements and oppositions, the like of which have seldom compassed the path of man; his servant to the very end of life, laying his gray hairs on the same altar where he had consecrated the dew of life's morning a willing sacrifice. V. D.

29. How happy the hearts which in every situation place unbounded confidence in Jehovah's word! Such may be hedged up on every side, and encompassed, like Israel at the Red Sea, with seemingly insurmountable difficulties; yet even here they will follow Israel's example; they will cry unto God, and rely upon his mercy. If means can be used, they will use them; if not, they will "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." "Speak unto the children of Israel," said the Lord, "that they go forward!" They went: a way was made in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters. Well may it be said, "By FAITH Israel passed through the Red Sea!" A. Fuller.

The Egyptians were drowned. It is difficult to see why the apostle should bestow this notice upon the buried Egyptians, while the people of God had gone triumphantly over, unless there were some additional illustrations of the nature of *faith* to be gained by such a contrast. Accordingly, as it is an instance of precisely the same act, performed by believers and unbelievers, with results precisely and to the uttermost extreme opposite, it shows in the strongest manner the comprehensive and decisive nature and operation of the principle of faith, as determining the character and destiny. The same things done in faith and done without faith are entirely different. In the one case they are righteousness and peace, in the other they are guilt and condemnation; in the one case they are life, in the other death. G. B. C.

36, 37. The description which the writer to

the Hebrews here gives of the saints and prophets of old may, with the strictest truth, be applied to the great multitude of Christian martyrs in the first ages of the gospel, under the various persecutions to which they were exposed. All these barbarities they endured with unshaken patience and firmness, and thereby bore the strongest possible testimony, not only to their own sincerity, but to the divine and miraculous influence of the religion which they taught. It is justly and forcibly observed by Mr. Addison, that the astonishing and unexampled fortitude which was shown by innumerable multitudes of martyrs, in those slow and painful torments that were inflicted on them, is nothing less than a *standing miracle* during the first three centuries. "I can not," says he, "conceive a man placed in the burning iron chair of Lyons, amid the insults and mockeries of a crowded amphitheatre, and still keeping his seat, or stretched upon a grate of iron over an intense fire, and breathing out his soul amid the exquisite sufferings of such a tedious execution, rather than renounce his religion, or blaspheme his Saviour, without supposing something supernatural. Such trials seem to me above the strength of human nature, and able to overbear duty, reason, faith, conviction, nay, and the most absolute certainty of a future state. We can easily imagine that a few persons in so good a cause might have laid down their lives at the gibbet, the stake, or the block; but that *multitudes* of each sex, of every age, of different countries and conditions, should, for nearly three hundred years together, expire leisurely amid the most exquisite tortures, rather than apostatize from the truth, has something in it so far beyond the natural strength and force of mortals, that one can not but conclude there was some miraculous power to support the sufferers; and, if so, here is at once a proof, from history and from fact, of the divine origin of our religion." P.

They consulted not with flesh and blood, but sacrificed *personal ease*, and submitted to hardships and trials of which we know comparatively, most of us, absolutely nothing. They were "men that hazarded their lives for the name of the Lord Jesus." Yes, for their religion they were ready to die, and for it they did die by hecatombs, and by dying for it they often accomplished more than by living and laboring for it. Hence the triumphant remark of Tertullian had quite as much truth as poetry: "The more you mow us down, the thicker we rise; the Christian blood you spill is like the seed you sow: it springs from the earth and fructifies the more." *Slow.*

Lives of heroic faith have stood, and still stand, like pillars of witness, to tell the world what can be built on the gospel corner-stone. Buried in an obscurity that no antiquarian disturbs, and which will

never be dispelled, unless God gives tongues to the stone walls of dungeons, or the rocks of the wilderness, or the scattered dust-atoms of heath, moor, and glen, there are, waiting a resurrection, biographies of unknown men, who in toil and hardship and self-denial, under the consciousness of God's all-beholding eye, have accomplished their lifework, and left in the bosom of their unfrequented valleys the memories of holy faith and love and communion with heaven more precious and beautiful, if we should dig them out even in fragments by our careful research, than anything which buried cities like Nineveh have yielded to the museums of art. E. H. G.

We should have higher views of Christ and of his religion if we could enter more fully into the conflicts of those who have suffered for his sake; if we could trace the growth of Christian martyrdom from its first fainting origin, when the shuddering soul dreaded the hour of coming trial, through the hours, days, weeks, and months of prayer and meditation, up to the critical moment when all was surrendered and all ventured for Christ; if we could comprehend the resignation, the peace, and the victorious confidence of the instant when the soul reached its highest joy in dissolution, and just hovering between time and eternity, forgot its pangs in the visions of God. Oh, what are gibbets, fires, wild beasts, or inquisitorial racks to one who already feels his union with Christ, and knows that death is swallowed up in victory! J. W. A.

39, 40. The *things promised* they did not receive. This refers to the personal Messiah then actually come. This was the main point of difference

between them and us (he would say); they had the promise of a Messiah to come, but not the Messiah himself. We have had the very Christ in person; some of us now living have seen him with our eyes, and our own hands have "handled the Word of Life." This better thing God has provided for us, that they, apart from us, should not reach the complete consummation of their hopes. The argument is: If they, having only the promise, not the reality, of an incarnate Messiah visible to their eye of sense, yet walked by faith, leaving such a record of moral heroism as we see, how much more should we, with the living Messiah still fresh in the recollection of many, maintain an unflinching faith, and stand firm against the fiercest shocks of persecution! H. C.

There are many *dark seasons* in God's providential dealings with us in which we can see no way of escape nor find any source of comfort but the testimony of God. God's friends are not distinguished in this world by any exemption from trying providences. They shall be known by what is far more noble and advantageous, namely, by patience, obedience, submission, and divine support under them. Moreover, as we profess to be friends of God, and to trust the salvation of our souls with all our concerns in his hands, he sees it proper to bring us into such circumstances as shall try us, and show whether we confide in him or not. A. Fuller.—Is the faith, in the possession of which we exult, thus verified? Is ours the life of cross-bearing and watchfulness and prayerfulness? If not, is it a life of discipleship to Christ—is it the race of faith, swift, direct, and onward? and shall it win at last the crown of the triumphant believer? W. R. W.

Section 347.

HEBREWS xii. 1-18.

1 WHEREFORE seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with
2 patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and
3 is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such
4 contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye
5 have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of
6 the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth
7 with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be
8 without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of Spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that

11 *we* might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang 13 down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

We never feel Christ to be a reality until we feel him to be a *necessity*. Therefore, God makes us feel that necessity. He tries us here, and he tries us there. He sends upon us the chastisements which he knows we shall feel most sensitively. He pursues us when we would fain flee from his hand; and, if need be, he shakes to pieces the whole framework of our plans of life, by which we have been struggling to build together the service of God and the service of self, till at last he makes us feel that Christ is all that is left to us. When we discover that, and go to Christ, conscious of our beggary in respect of everything else, we go, not expecting much, perhaps not asking much. There may be hours of prostration when we ask only for *rest*; we pray for the cessation of suffering; we seek repose from conflict with ourselves, and with God's providence. But God gives us more. He is more generous than we have dared to believe. He gives us joy, he gives us liberty, he gives us victory, he gives us a sense of self-conquest and of union with himself in an eternal friendship. On the basis of that single experience of Christ as a reality, because a necessity, there rises an experience of blessedness in communion with God which prayer expresses like a revelation. Such devotion is a jubilant psalm. A. P.

1-11. An exhortation, mixed with reproof, on looking back at all these witnesses, and also at Jesus, who had gone through suffering to glory, not to faint in the conflict with sin; nor to forget the law of our Father, who visits us with chastisement that we may bring forth the fruits of righteousness. This exhortation was begun at 10 : 19, and broken off by the insertion of all those examples of the nature and triumphs of faith. It has acquired new strength by the interruption, and is now pressed directly home upon the reader. A.

1. We are urged forward in the Christian race, not by the fancy that we are surrounded by a throng of spectators, that we and our doings are the center of all eyes, that we draw upon ourselves the gaze of the universe, but by the elevating and exciting reality that we have about us a great cloud of witnesses, in the recorded or attested examples of the good of every age, who testify to the power of faith, who show by their lives what this divine principle can achieve, and especially that we have before us the faithful and true witness, the one perfect exemplar of faith. W. H. G.—The Christian man's life is like a race. The length of the way of the race is the man's lifetime; the actions and passages of a man's life are the steps of the race; our high calling is our starting and on-holding in the race; the prize we run for is holiness and eternal blessedness. There is one that sets the race, even God, who calls and starts all the runners by the voice of his word: he goes on beside them, and exhorts them to run this or that way as may best further them in the race, while he bids them mend their pace; and if they fall behind he encourages, as a friend that stirs up one whom he would fain have winning the race.

Every direction from the word is an encouragement in the race. Every action or word is a step of this race: words spoken to edification are steps; words of thy calling leveled at the mark are steps; for a man may speak of worldly purposes with a heavenly mind, and do worldly actions leveled by a spiritual rule. Albeit God ordains to run this Christian race, yet he ordains every man to continue in his calling, for every point of a man's service done as service to God shall promote him in his race. D. D.

Lay aside. For every new step that we win in the Christian course there must have been the laying aside of something. For every progress in knowledge, there must have been a sacrifice and martyrdom of our own indolence, of our own pride, of our own blindness of heart, of our own perverseness of will, wavering hearts that are drawn away from God by the sweetness of this world. For every progress in strenuous work for God, there must have been a slaying of the selfishness which urges us to work in our own strength and for our own sake.

Every weight and sin. All sin is according to this passage a besetting sin. It is the characteristic of every kind of transgression, that it circles us round about, that it is always lying in wait and lurking for us. But there is something else to be put aside as well as sin. There is "every weight" as well as every transgression—two distinct things, meant to be distinguished. The putting away of both of them is equally needful for the race. The figure is plain enough. We as racers must throw aside the garment that wraps us round—that is to say, "the sin that easily besets us"; and then, besides that, we must lay aside everything else which

weights us for the race—that is to say, certain habits or tendencies within us. The distinction is important. Sin is sin in whatever degree it is done; but weights may be weights when they are in excess, and helps, not hindrances, when they are in moderation. What are the things which may thus become weights? Everything. It is an awful and mysterious power, that which we all possess, of perverting the highest endowments, whether of soul or of circumstances, which God has given us, into the occasions for faltering and falling back in the divine life. Because we cleave to them too much, because we cleave to them not only in a wrong degree but in a wrong manner (for that is the deepest part of the fault), we may make them all hindrances. A. M.

2. Looking unto Jesus. As the example and company of the saints in suffering is very considerable, so that of Christ is more than any other, yea, than all the rest together. Therefore the apostle, having represented the former at large, ends in this as the top of all. *There is a race set before us*; it is to be run, *run with patience and without fainting*. He tells us of *a cloud of witnesses*; a cloud made up of instances of believers suffering before us; and the heat of the day wherein we run is somewhat cooled, even by that cloud compassing us. But the main strength of their comfort here lies in *looking to Jesus*, eyeing of his sufferings and their issue. The true life of Christians is to eye Christ in every step of his life, looking to him as their pattern both in doing and in suffering, and drawing power from him for going through both, being *without him* able for nothing. L.—If you would lay aside every weight, you must look to Christ and let his love flow into your soul. Then self-denial will not be self-denial. It will be blessing and joy, sweet and easy. Just as the old leaves drop naturally from the tree when the new buds of spring begin to put themselves out, let the new affection come and dwell in thy heart and expel the old. “Lay aside every weight”—“looking unto Jesus.” Then, too, you will find that the sacrifice and maiming of the old man has been the perfecting of *the man*. You will find that whatever you give up for Christ you get back from Christ, better, more beautiful, more blessed, a joy and a possession for ever. A. M.

The less that is said about faith—the *mere act* we mean—and the more that is said about its object, the Saviour, the better. There is a discoursing about the mere belief, and an exhorting to the mere belief, the only effect of which is to leave the impression on the mind that it is some “great thing” which people have to do in order to their acceptance with God. Whereas, saying as little as the Bible says about the act and the duty, and all about Jesus himself, his cross and his crown, faith, through the Spirit’s use of this, will spring up as a

thing of course. *Rev. J. Purves*.—It is not well to be often talking about yourself, looking at yourself, making a merit of magnifying your own faults and sins, especially your want of religious enjoyment. Think less of what you have done and more of what Christ has done. Study his life and follow his example by living, not for yourself, but for others; trying every day, and every hour of every day, to do something that shall be like what Christ would do if he were in your house and heart. You will very soon find that the sense of unrest will vanish in the pursuit of the good and useful. *Prime*.

Look unto Jesus, and not to what we do for him. Too much taken up with our work, we may forget our Master; it is possible to have the hand full and the heart empty. Taken up with our Master, we can not forget our work; if the heart is filled with his love, how can the hands not be active in his service? Unto Jesus, and not to the apparent success of our efforts. It is of our work he will require an account, and not of our success; why then take thought about it before the time? It is for us to sow the seed, it is for God to gather the fruit; if not to-day, it will be to-morrow; if not by us, it will be by others. Even when success is granted us, it is always dangerous to let our eyes rest upon it complacently—on the one hand, we are tempted to attribute something of it to ourselves; on the other hand, we thus accustom ourselves to give way to relaxing our zeal when we fail to perceive its effects, that is, at the very time when we ought to redouble our energy. To look to success is to walk by sight; to look to Jesus, and to persevere in following and serving him in spite of all discouragements, is to walk by faith. “Thy work shall be rewarded,” saith Jehovah. *Monod*.

The upward *looking unto Jesus* is our sufficient resource in the trying of faith and fortitude, whatever the cause or force of the trial. The heavens are never closed to the trusting, uplooking soul. Jesus ever stands to behold the peril and to interpose for deliverance or support. So, also, the uplooking unto Jesus naturally excites the sensitive heart to *some* joyous, hopeful *expression*, of adoring praise or gratitude, of trusting affection or high, pure aspiration. And the sustaining privilege of self-commitment to Christ in dying is ours. It rests upon the sure word of promise: *I will come again and receive you unto myself*. As he can and does supply all known living needs, so he can and will give needful grace for the deeper, untried experience of dying. For, as we see him in Stephen’s vision, so is he evermore: TRUE GOD AND TRUE MAN, with love, sympathy, and might adequate for all possible demands of human experience. *Living*, then, and *dying*, should we not, shall we not be habitually

availed of this glad, all-inclusive privilege of *looking away from self, upward unto Jesus?* B.

Despising the shame. Poverty was his fee, and the only recompense of all his cures; he despised a kingship, and regarded not their hosannas. He embraced "a cross," and declined "not the shame." "*Endured the cross, and is set down at the right hand of the throne.*" In the whole narrative of our Saviour's life no passage is related of him as low or weak but it is immediately seconded by another high and miraculous. No sooner was Christ humbled to a manger but the contempt of the place was taken off with the glory of the attendance in the ministration of angels. His fasting and temptation were attended with another service of angels; his baptism with a glorious recognition by a voice from heaven. When he seemed to be overpowered at his apprehension, he exerted his might in causing his armed adversaries to fall backward, and in healing Malchus's ear with a touch. When he underwent the lash and infamy of crucifixion, then did the universal frame of nature give testimony to his divinity—the whole creation seemed to sympathize with his passion. And when, afterward, he seemed to be in the very dominion of death, he quickly confuted the dishonor of the grave by an astonishing resurrection, and proved the divinity of his person in an equally miraculous ascension. R. S.

And as there was a joy set before Jesus, for which he endured the cross, despising the shame, so there is a glorious recompense of reward attached to our sacrifices and labors of love. We can never be other than unprofitable servants; but God, in infinite goodness, measures the expressions of his favor by the intensity with which we have manifested the spirit of allegiance to him. All he asks is that the heart should be in the service; and any effort that really proceeds from love to his name and charity to the race will never be overlooked nor forgotten. The act must proceed from love, be a cheerful and voluntary expression of love, and vindicate its own sincerity by its cost to the flesh. When these conditions meet, there is a reward which becomes the more glorious the less we feel it to be deserved—a reward compared with which the poor satisfaction we obtain in the carnal indulgences which we spare in refusing to make sacrifices deserves not to be named. This reward is twofold—it is the reward of success here and of glory hereafter. J. H. T.

3. Endured such contradiction. In the passion of Jesus, it must be enough that I look on the travail of a divine feeling, and behold the spectacle of God in sacrifice. This I see and nothing less. He is visibly not a man. His character is not of this world. I feel a divinity in him. And when I stand by his cross, when I look on that strong

passion and shudder with the shuddering earth, and darken with the darkening sun, enough that I can say, My Lord and my God! Enough that I can see the heart of God, and, in all this wondrous passion, know him as enduring the contradiction of sinners. He that endures me so, subdues me, and I yield. H. B.

Lest ye be wearied. If He had been "*wearied*," and left but one thing undone! If he had shrunk and failed, what sensation in heaven—hell—earth! Let his followers, when tempted to shrink from service and to say it is too much, go and look at Him! He is the grand transcendent example, to show that a good work must be *gone through with*. "*He that endureth to the end shall be saved.*" J. F.

Since whatsoever befalls us of suffering or ill is, however it comes, the will of God to us, what then should we do when it comes? Surely forget as far as we may all besides, and go up in thought to the Eternal Throne, and behold the heavens opened and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, thence looking down upon us, allotting to us our trials, even through the wrong tempers of men; thence passing down his strength to us to bear them; thence preparing us for the place in heaven which he ascended on high to prepare for us. Oh, how do all the ills of life fade into nothing; how glad may any trial be, though painful to flesh and blood; how should we greet as goods the evils of life; how would its sadness become gladness, its thorns a crown, if we but see in them the eternal hand of God, molding us by them for everlasting glory; refining away through outward ills our own inward evils; chastening us that we might not perish, checking us that we might not go astray; recalling us when astray; alluring us by his goodness; and then again weaning us from the world by its very unrest and suffering, that in him we might find everlasting rest and peace! *Pusey.*

5. If God were to exempt his friends from trial, he would take away one of the most effective means of their training, and one of the most striking ways in which they can prove their likeness to Christ. The righteous is more excellent than his neighbor, but it is not seen in his being saved from suffering; it is in the way in which he meets it. A merely worldly spirit is ready in severe affliction to fall into one of two extremes: either to cast the trial aside in levity and to dissipate thought by some engrossing preoccupation, or to sink into despondency and consider all as lost. The spirit of the Christian, which is also that of the true man, is described by the apostle: "not to despise the chastening of the Lord, nor to faint when we are rebuked of him." A spirit of hopeful patience is that which most of all marks a Christian man in trial, as of one who knows that there is a purpose in God's

providence, if he could discover it, and that, where he can not, it will come out some day, filled with wisdom and kindness. *Ker.*—Conscious of it or not, agencies are at work in us to make ready, if we only will, for the entrance of the Lord of the heart into his home and dwelling-place there. Having created us for Christian service, as the true end and real glory of our being, our Father takes pains to fit and to fashion us for that destiny, with all its honor and all its joy. By secret influences, untraceable as the wind that bloweth where it listeth, silently pressing on the springs of feeling and principle within us; by hours of uneasiness not explained; by sharp twinges of conscience; by open providences, prosperous or painful; by letting us have what we want, to encourage or to shame us; by taking away what we love too well, or love falsely, that we may become wise, and strong, and pure in our grief—this process of personal preparation is in continual operation. *F. D. H.*

Those occurrences which others term crosses, afflictions, judgments, misfortunes, to me, who inquire further into them than their visible effects, they both appear, and in event have ever proved, the secret and dissembled favors of his affection. It is a singular piece of wisdom to apprehend truly and without passion the works of God; and so well to distinguish his justice from his mercy as not to miscall those noble attributes; yet it is likewise an honest piece of logic so to argue the proceedings of God as to distinguish even his judgments into mercies. For God is merciful unto all, because better to the worst than the best deserve; and to say he punisheth none in this world, though it be a paradox, is no absurdity. To one that hath committed murder, if the judge should only ordain a fine, it were a madness to call this a punishment, and to repine at the sentence rather than admire the clemency of the judge. Thus our offenses being mortal and deserving death, if the goodness of God be content to pass them over with a loss, misfortune, or disease, what frenzy were it to term this a punishment, rather than an extremity of mercy, and to groan under the rod of his judgments, rather than admire the scepter of his mercies! Therefore to adore, honor, and admire him, is a debt of gratitude due from the obligation of our nature, states, and conditions. *Broune.*

6. It is not correction, but the hand of God in it and with it, which makes us happy. A cross without a Christ never made any man better, but with Christ all are made better by the cross. As a good heart takes notice of the least comfort, so it will take notice of the least cross. *Caryl.*—His justice might, but his love will not, let us do as we will. It follows us in our waywardness, and when by tenderness it can not, with the rod it procures

our return. It is not our happiness as we choose it, depending on things lower than ourselves, but our happiness as wrought in us, and outstarting in the growth of life, which he is concerned to secure for us. We have virtues and graces to form and establish, and He tries them, and puts force on them to give them strength. *H. H.*

God's children are like stars, that shine brightest in the darkest night; like grapes, that come not to the proof till they come to the press; like trees, that drive down their roots farther and grasp the earth tighter by reason of the storm; like vines, that grow the better for bleeding; like juniper, that smells sweetest in the fire; like the pomander, which becomes more fragrant for chafing; like the palm-tree, which proves the better for preserving; like the chamomile, which spreads the more as you tread upon it. *An.*

7. Know that thy sin, after thou hast received the Spirit of adoption to cry unto God, "Father, Father," is counted the transgression of a child, not of a slave; and that all that happeneth to thee for that transgression is but the chastisement of a father: "And what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" *Bun.*—The art of tasting what is sweet in the will of God, even when that will involves what is in itself bitter, is what we are intended to learn. When one learns to suffer in this childlike spirit, a multitude of moral lessons open to him. Then one need not wait for extraordinary seasons of affliction. Each little daily sorrow, every misunderstanding we experience on the part of our fellow-men, every little disappointed hope, every cross, every care, if only viewed in this light, becomes a great lesson to every Christian soul: he must not bear it as a servant, he must bear it as a son! *A. T.*

8. Woe, woe to that soul that God will not spend a rod upon! This is the saddest stroke of all, when God refuses to strike at all. "Nothing," said one, "seems more unhappy to me than he to whom no adversity has happened." *Brooks.*

10. **They chastened.** They were in the habit of chastening us during the brief days of childhood as it seemed best to their judgment; to meet their responsibilities wisely as they might be able, though imperfectly. But, on the other hand, the Great Father chastens only for our profit—with never a mistake of judgment, and never the least deviation from this most benevolent purpose—*our highest spiritual profit*—that we may share his own perfect holiness. *H. C.*—Whoever well considers the state of the world and human experience can not but conclude that God is more concerned to make man holy than happy; for many are able to rest in their sorrows for the sake of their use and end, but no one finds rest in unholy delights. In sinful

pleasure, God follows man with a scourge ; in sorrow, with balm. *Paleford.*

How great a word is that (spoken in reference to our present state)—to make us partakers of *his* holiness ! It is instanced as an effect and argument of love. And sure the love of God can not be more directly expressed than in his first intending to make a poor soul like him, while he loves it with compassion, and then imprinting and perfecting that likeness that he may love it with eternal delight. Love is here the first and the last, the beginning and end in all this business. *Howe.*—If we duly considered what it is to be partakers of God's holiness, and that every event that befalls us is appointed by his wisdom to promote this end, could we even wish one providential event to be other than it is ? To be a partaker of the holiness of God is the highest point of exaltation—imagination can ascend no higher. If we are partakers of God's holiness, we shall also be partakers of God's happiness. For holiness and happiness are one. God would unite them here, and by his providential appointments would perfect that union for its final consummation in the heavens. N. W. T.

11. God's chastisements lead men to conformity to the will of God (which is righteousness); and this effect of suffering is full of peace. There can be no peace like that which follows upon the submission of the soul to the chastisement of our heavenly Father, if we receive it as inflicted by infinite wisdom and perfect love. C.—**For the present, grievous.** In particular cases of suffering we have to fall back on some reserved fund of faith accumulated in calmer moments. God will not be angry if you fail to see just in that bewildered paroxysm of grief how it is well for you to be so stricken. Yet you can say to yourself, even then, in the midst of your tears, "It is well; somehow it is well; it *must* be wise, and right, and merciful." That will be both the trial and the triumph of faith. F. D. H.—Seek not altogether to dry up the stream of sorrow, but to bound it, and keep it within its banks. Religion doth not destroy the life of nature, but adds to it a life more excellent; yea, it doth not only permit but requires some feeling of afflictions. L.

Afterward peaceable fruit. "Peaceable fruit" is none other than *peaceful*—peace-bearing, that which brings the deep, rich peace of a subdued, penitent, humbled, chastened soul. This is the fruit of righteousness in the sense of rightness—the spirit that is right before God. H. C.—The chastening yieldeth the "peaceable"—that is, peace, happiness, and life-bringing—"fruit of righteousness to *them that are exercised thereby.*" Righteousness, in the measure attainable here below, becomes the inestimable result which it produces; and now—thus

may we well complete the declaration of our text—*now* there is no more cause for sorrow, but only for pure joy. Faith still tastes joy; how strange it sounds even under the sufferings of earth! and many a one has known more quiet gladness in the house of mourning than the worldling at the most sumptuous feast. Yet, especially afterward, often here below, from the seed of tears is produced the most glorious harvest of joy. *Van O.*

Trial brings us into a mood more receptive of blessing: it makes our spirits tender; it softens our hearts; it makes our consciences alive; it empties us of adverse influences; it makes us willing to receive and to learn; it breaks our stubborn wills; it makes us prize the word; it shuts out the world; it bids us look up, and turns our hope to the Lord's great coming. *Bonar.*—Prayer does not directly take away a trial or its pain, but it preserves the strength of the whole spiritual fiber, so that the trial does not pass into temptation to sin. A sorrow comes upon you. Omit prayer, and you fall out of God's testing into the devil's temptation; you get angry, hard of heart, reckless. But meet the trial with prayer, cast your care on God, and the paralyzing, embittering effects of pain and sorrow pass away, a stream of sanctifying and softening thought pours into the soul, and that which might have wrought your fall but works in you the peaceable fruit of righteousness. You pass from bitterness into endurance, from endurance into battle, and from battle to victory, till at last the trial dignifies and blesses your life. S. A. B.

12. The sons and daughters of his afflicting, who come bending unto him, are the privileged spirits who take their sufferings as love-tokens that he remembers them still, has not left them to their folly, but means by all means to number them with his saints in glory everlasting. No Scripture teaches us that this easing and lightening of the Christian life shall be completed *at once*. The learners in that often sad but blessed school, even though sitting solitary, with pale faces, nerveless limbs, and tears in their eyes, will find "rest" flowing in, not in violent floods, but as the dawn trembles into the sky, by gradual and almost imperceptible increments and risings of the light. Gradually but steadily, a tranquil faith sets up its unseen pillars of power beneath and within those hanging heads and feeble knees, till the whole body of character is built up, by this edifying submission, a spiritual house. Gradually but steadily, the blood streams back into the veins; and it is not nature's blood, but is redder and richer and sweeter blood than that, as if the very sweetness and life of the "precious blood" were in it, out of the heart of Jesus, King at once and Lamb, who is the life of every Christian that lives. F. D. H.

13. The conclusion of the whole matter is simply this : God has made us for himself ; made us, that is, to be like himself, to share his perfect blessedness and peace. By smiles or frowns, by prosperity and adversity, he compels us to look up to him ; to rise to the height of our nature ; to place our treasure and affections beyond the reach of change ; to value most that which is worth most and lasts the longest ; to find a deeper peace than we sought, and a more perfect happiness. *Coz.*
—Hence God's personal providence with us is

continually pushing us on, loosening our feet, changing the scene, displacing one or another scheme, or vision, or staff, or companion. He does it for what he would make of us—better men—and for the far-sighted love wherewith he loves us. He does it because he will not let our feet cleave to the dust, our hearts grow thin and weak, our faith dwindle and die out ; the dropping of every such dear delusion liberates our real life, increases our durable riches, replenishes our strength, sets us forward, lifts us up. F. D. H.

Section 348.

HEBREWS xii. 14-29.

14 FOLLOW peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord :
15 looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God ; lest any root of bitterness spring-
16 ing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled ; lest there *be* any fornicator, or profane
17 person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that
afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected : for he found no
place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

18 For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire,
19 nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice
of words ; which *voice* they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to
20 them any more : (for they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much
21 as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart : and so ter-
22 rible was the sight, *that* Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake :) but ye are come unto
mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innu-
23 merable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are
written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,
24 and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speak-
eth better things than *that* of Abel.

25 See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that
spake on earth, much more *shall not* we *escape*, if we turn away from him that *speaketh*
26 from heaven : whose voice then shook the earth : but now he hath promised, saying, Yet
27 once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this *word*, Yet once more,
signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that
28 those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom
which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with
29 reverence and godly fear : for our God *is* a consuming fire.

Is it not true that every man that rejects Christ does in simple verity *reject* him, and not merely neglect him ; that there is always an effort, that there is a struggle, feeble perhaps but real, which ends in the turning away ? It is not that you stand there, and simply let him go past. That were bad enough ; but it is more than that. It is that you turn your back upon him ! It is not that his hand is laid on yours, and yours remains dead and cold, and does not open to clasp it ; but it is that his hand being laid on yours, you clench yours the tighter, and *will not* have it. And so every man that ever rejects Christ does these things thereby—wounds his own conscience, hardens his own heart, makes himself a worse man. The message of love can never come into a human soul, and pass away from it unreceived, without leaving that spirit worse, with all its lowest characteristics strengthened, and all its best ones depressed, by the fact of rejection. If there were no judgment at all, the natural result of the simple rejection of the gospel is that, bit by bit, all the lingering remains of nobleness that hover about the man, like scent

about a broken vase, shall pass away; and that, step by step, through the simple process of saying, "I will not have Christ to rule over me," the whole being shall degenerate, until the soul is lost by its own want of faith. Unbelief is its own judgment; unbelief is its own condemnation; unbelief, as sin, is punished, like all other sins, by the perpetuation of deeper and darker forms of itself. A. M.

14. Perseverance includes not only continuance in well-doing, but fervor and progress toward perfection. There are two fixed states. The blessed spirits above are arrived to the height of holiness. The devil and lost spirits are sunk to the lowest extremity of sin. But in the middle state here grace in the saints is a rising, growing light; and sin in the wicked increases every day, like poison in a serpent, that becomes more deadly by his age. We are enjoined not to remain in our first imperfections, but to "follow holiness" to the utmost issue of our lives, to its entire consummation. For this end all the dispensations of Providence must be improved, whether prosperous or afflicting. And the ordinances of the gospel were appointed that in the use of them we may be "changed into the divine image from glory to glory." *Bates*.—Christ's blood was shed that we might be purified. The Holy Ghost dwells in men that they may be sanctified. The Scriptures are given that we may cleanse our way by taking heed to it according to God's word. The ordinances of the Supper and Baptism, and the rest of the holy Sabbath, are appointed to promote our purity; angels minister to us that we may be holy; and we are cast into the furnace of affliction that we may be refined; we are chastened that we may be partakers of God's holiness—that indispensable qualification for heaven. R. T.

Holiness is not to be confounded with virtue. Nor is any disparagement cast upon virtue by affirming this distinction. They are names of two things, not one and the same. They do not express the same quality in character. They are fed from different fountains—virtue from moral principle, holiness from communion with God in Christ. Holiness requires virtue, for no man can be holy without being virtuous. But holiness is the essential root; virtue the essential fruit. And holiness never was obtained by a few desultory snatches of sober reflection hastily dismissed—a few vague impressions in churches or cemeteries. It must be treated like an interest, a pursuit, a profession. It is the great livelihood of your heart, the vocation of your soul. It must be begun, followed, and never ended. Resolve, deliberation, continuous effort, are its motor powers. All your members are its flexible instruments. The Bible is its text-book. Morning, evening, noon, all the circling hours, are its periods of exercise. Prayer is its rehearsal. God answering is its teacher. Christ is its pattern. Special, express, intentional, must the striving after

holiness be in order to secure it. "God hath called us to holiness." F. D. H.—The man who is not holy does *not* do "about right"; he wrongs himself and his God and his fellow beings. All his works possess the character of himself, as streams partake the qualities of the fountain—or fruit that of the tree. If a man is not holy, his doings are not holy; and the more he does the more he is undone. R. T.—Seeing then there is no other way to happiness but by holiness, no assurance of the love of God without it, take the apostle's advice, study it, seek it, follow earnestly after holiness, *without which no man shall see the Lord*. L.

15. "Lest any fail of the grace of God": that one stroke of the pen sketches to us the figure of a man with whom, after a spring of awakened spiritual life, and after a summer which promised abundant fruit, a season of standing still has intervened, followed immediately by declension, the end of which can not be calculated. With all respect for genuine progress in the sphere of intellectual and social life, we should willfully close our eyes if we denied that the danger of declension in a moral, religious, Christian sense, perhaps never was so great as now. "The grace of God": what is become of it in the inner life of so many who yet call themselves Christians? And even where it is known and treasured, how frequently does it seem as if all within and around us had conspired against our spiritual growth, both in the knowledge and grace of Christ! *Van O*.

16. The birthright which the profane Esau rejected, and which the supple Jacob acquired, was the investiture of the first-born with all the patriarchal privileges, magisterial and priestly, which death conveyed from father to son. B. M. P.—Esau came from the hunting-field worn and hungry; the only means of procuring the tempting mess of his brother's pottage was the sacrifice of his father's blessing, which in those ages carried with it a substantial advantage; but that birthright could be enjoyed only after years—the *pottage was present*, near, and certain; therefore he sacrificed a future and higher blessing for a present and lower pleasure. For this reason Esau is the Bible type of worldliness. F. W. R.—In saying that Esau *sought repentance with tears*, the writer obviously means that he sought to *reverse the consequences of his fault, and obtain the blessing*. If we refer to Genesis, we find that it was, in fact, Jacob's blessing which Esau sought with tears. C.

18, 24. In the course of his exhortation, the writer recurs to the contrast between the old and new dispensations, and in a very grand passage likens it to the difference between Mount Sinai and Mount Zion. The former was earthly, a mount that might be touched, and that was enveloped in the terrors of the law. The latter is the citadel of the Son of David, and is connected with the heavenly kingdom. Sinai is on the way to Jerusalem, no doubt, but far from it. Zion is at Jerusalem, the city of peace. At that "city of the living God" we are come to "myriads of angels in full assembly." The law was given at Sinai "by a disposition of angels"; but the tribes entered not into the company of those heavenly messengers, who brought no comfort to the people who were under the law, but rather increased the terror. Now all is changed under grace, and the worshiping Church is surrounded by the convocation of angels in their myriads, who add their chorus to the song of the redeemed. D. F.—There are the choirs of angels; there the fellowship of the heavenly citizens; there the sweet festival of those who come home from the dreary toils of this pilgrimage; there are the far-seeing choirs of prophets; there the company of apostles; there the victorious host of innumerable martyrs, the more grievous their afflictions here, the fuller their gladness there; there the steadfast confessors, comforted by the enjoyment of their reward. Then let faith grow warm toward that which it has believed; let our desires burn for our home above. *Gregory the Great.*

18, 19. In that momentous day when all Israel were come to it, marshaled in the great plain of Er Rahah, which stretched away to the north from its base, and stood there in front of its vast wall of rugged rock and frowning precipice, it burned with fire enwrapped in blackness and darkness and tempest—as if a thousand thunder-clouds were condensed into one, and that one begirt this awful mountain in its folds—the terrible blackness broken only by the flashes of lightning; and the perpetual roar of the tempest only by the more terrific trumpet-blast and the more awful voice of the Almighty, pronouncing the words of his fiery law. Dr. E. Robinson, standing on the spot, wrote: "Here lay the plain where the whole congregation might be assembled; here was the mount that could be approached and touched, if not forbidden; and here the mountain brow, where alone the lightnings and the thick cloud would be visible and the thunders and the voice of the trump be heard, when the Lord came down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai. I know not when I have felt a thrill of stronger emotion than when, in first crossing the plain, the dark precipices of Horeb rising in solemn grandeur before us, we became aware of the entire adaptedness of the scene to the purposes for which it was chosen." H. C.

20. "For they could not endure that which was commanded." This sentence belongs to and completes that which goes before, and should be followed with a period. Then begins the parenthesis, which

also should be closed with a period (at the end of verse 21). B.

23. The spirits of just men made perfect. The soul's recovery implies its admission into the society of all which is noble and good; for "the saints on earth and all the dead but *one* communion make." It is not only encompassed by a great cloud of witnesses, it is itself one of these witnesses. It has become a part of the great commonwealth of the living and the blessed dead. When it partakes of the spirit of angels, it shares in their sweet ministries of grace, and will triumph evermore in their blissful society. It is drawn upward, not alone by its own impulses, or by the power of its redeemer's arm, but by the consciousness of its glorious companionship, by the encouraging voices which greet the still struggling spirit. B. B. E.—The present life of departed saints is fuller and nobler than that which they possessed on earth. They are even now, whatever be the details of their condition, "*the spirits of just men made perfect.*" As yet the body is not glorified, but the *spirits* of the perfected righteous are now parts of that lofty society whose head is Christ, whose members are the angels of God, the saints on earth and the equally conscious redeemed who "sleep in Jesus." A. M.—Their number is daily increasing. Day by day unbroken columns are passing through the golden gates of the city, and God's elect are gathering from the four winds of heaven. There are no dead saints; all are alive unto God, and "we live together with them. N. M.—More than eighteen hundred years have passed since the Epistle to the Hebrews was written; and how many thousands of just men and women, pure, noble, tender, wise, beneficent, have graced the earth since then, and left their mark upon mankind, and helped forward the hallowing of our heavenly Father's name, the coming of his kingdom, the doing of his will on earth as it is done in heaven; and helped, therefore, to abolish the superstition, the misrule, the vice, and, therefore, the misery of this struggling, moaning world. Yes, many a holy soul, many a useful soul, many a saint who is now at God's right hand, has lived and worked, and been a blessing, himself blest, of whom the world, and even the Church, has never heard, who will never be seen or known again till the day in which the Lord counteth up his jewels. C. K.

Of the future recognition of our Christian friends, it is almost as unreasonable to ask for proofs as for the probable recognition of friends in a different part of the country, after having been separated one from another during a brief interval of time. What! shall memory be obliterated, and shall we forget our own past histories, and therefore lose the sense of our personal identity, and be ignorant of all we have been and done as sinners, and of all

we have received and done as redeemed men? or, knowing all this, shall we be prevented from communicating our histories to others? Shall beloved friends be there whom we have known and loved in Christ here; with whom we have held holy communion; with whom we have labored and prayed for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, and with whom we have eagerly watched for his second coming—and shall we be unable throughout eternity either to discover their existence or associate with them in the New Jerusalem? Oh! what is there in the whole word of God, what argument derived from our experience of the blessings of Christian fellowship, what in the character of God or his dealings with man, what in his promises of things to come laid up for those who love him, that could have suggested such strange, unworthy, false, and dreary thoughts of the union, or rather disunion, of friends in their Father's home? Tell me not that special affection to Christian brethren, from whatever causes it may arise, is inconsistent with unfeigned love to all, and with absorbing love to Jesus. It is not so here, and never can be so from the nature of holy love, and was not so in Christ's own case when he, the Perfect One, lived among us.

24. To Jesus. "I will take you to myself" is the blessed promise. "We shall see him as he is" is the longed-for vision. "We shall be like him" is the hoped-for perfection. To know, to love, to be in all things like Jesus, and to hold communion with him for ever, what "an exceeding weight of glory"! Jesus will never be separated personally from his people; nor can they ever possibly separate their character, their joy, or their safety from his atoning death for them on earth, or from his constant life for them in heaven. It is the Lamb who shall lead them to living fountains of waters. **N. M.—The Mediator of the New Covenant.** He who before all ages proceeded as the only-begotten from the Father, was born of Mary in the end of times. This is he who was foretold by patriarchs, proclaimed by prophets, heralded by angels, accepted by apostles. Rejoice, therefore, and exult, thou Gentile world, now at length converted to thy God. For Israel, as we read, in fear and trembling marveled that Moses, the chief of the people, was talking alone with God, wrapt in the cloud and on the peak of a high mountain. But unto us has Christ with such vast graciousness bestowed himself as to speak to all and be seen by all. Whoever of the people drew near at that time to Mount Sinai, was punished with instant destruction; but whoever does *not* draw near to this Mountain, will die. Do thou, therefore, welcome the graciousness of the Eternal Majesty, for unto all the faithful Christ gives salvation. *Maximus.*

To the blood of sprinkling. Here is a

sacrifice, a sin-offering, for the whole world; and a high priest, who is indeed a mediator, who, not in type or shadow, but in very truth and in his own right, stands in the place of man to God and of God to man, and who receives as a judge what he offered as an advocate. Would you be grateful to one who had ransomed you from slavery under a bitter foe, or who brought you out of captivity? Here is redemption from a far direr slavery, the slavery of sin unto death! And he who gave himself for the ransom has taken captivity captive. **S. T. C.—Speaketh better things.** The blood of Christ proclaims pardon and peace; the blood of Abel cried to God from the ground (Gen. 4 : 10) for the infliction of punishment upon the murderer. Such is the contrast between the former and latter dispensation. *There* all is awful, terrible, and threatening; *here* all is alluring, gracious, and animating. Who now can adhere to the former and reverence the latter? Such is the nature of the argument presented. *M. S.*

25. How escape. Surely were God but for one moment to let this world hear the weeping and wailing of the lost, that sound, more terrible than Egypt's midnight cry, would rouse the student at his books, arrest the foot of the dancer in the ball, stop armies in the very fury of the fight, and, calling a sleeping world from their beds, would bend the most stubborn knees, and extort from all the one loud cry, "Lord, save me, or I perish!" Still it is not terror which is the mighty power of God. This terror is not only subordinate to love, but subservient to it. As the skillful painter fills the background of his picture with his darker colors, God puts in the smoke of torment and the black clouds of Sinai, to give brighter prominence to Jesus, the cross of Calvary, and his love to the chief of sinners. **T. G.—The wrath-principle and justice** have the same place under Christianity that they had before. One of the things most needed in the recovery of men to God is this very thing—a more decisive manifestation of the wrath-principle and justice of God. Intimidation is a first means of grace. No bad mind is arrested by love and beauty till such time as it is balked in evil and put on ways of thoughtfulness. And nothing will be so effectual for this as a distinct apprehension of the wrath to come. Then, when it is brought to a condition of thoughtfulness by the apprehension of damage and loss, the vehemence of God and his judgment starts a correspondent moral vehemence in its own self-condemnations, when it is ready to be melted by the compassions and won by the beauty of the cross that is born of God. **H. B.—To such as answer to his heavenly call,** God shows himself to them only as a loving father, who would be loved by them and love them for ever. But to those who

answer not to it, and, far more, who dare to abuse it—to all such God is still a consuming fire, and their most merciful Saviour himself a judge to try their very hearts and reins. In short, the gospel is to them, not salvation, but condemnation. It does not do away, but doubles their guilt, and therefore brings upon them, and will bring through all eternity, a double measure of punishment. T. A.

28. Receiving a kingdom that can not be moved. We are citizens of a commonwealth that has in it no seeds of dissolution, members of a society that shall have no discordant element, united in a polity whose only law is love, entering on a destiny where all possibility of disaster, all the contingencies of evil, are excluded for ever. There is something inexpressibly touching, as well as sublime, in the idea of the eternal duration of such a kingdom; in the thought of that dear communion which may be held for ever with spirits kindred with your own, not selfish, not isolated, but bound each to each by the common bonds of high intelligence, and the warmest spiritual sympathy, and all allied in undying affection to one common and glorious Head, who feels toward all the most complacent delight, sheds upon all his selectest influence. This mutual communion, this idea of a celestial commonwealth, is founded in the nature of man, on which grace places the seal, and effects its realization. Prophet and evangelist, rapt in vision, could imagine heaven itself in no other way so worthily. B. B. E.

29. God is still (as ever) “a consuming fire” to all who disown his authority and discard his mercy. These words are apparently taken from Moses, Deut. 4 : 24, where they stand in connection with his recital of the scenes of Sinai: “For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous

God.” He means to declare emphatically that God remains for ever the same in his abhorrence of sin; the same in his consuming vengeance toward those who despise his gospel as toward those who disown his law. H. C.—Must not men be blind and deaf who fail to see and acknowledge that the God-Father in revelation, providence, and nature is not all smiles? There are the bursting of a mountain, a stream of fire, and a burning sea on the very spot where yesterday was the blooming of an Italian garden. God is love; penitent hearts find him thus. God is a consuming fire, and impenitent hearts feel him to be such. No one can study his providences without discovering the unyielding justice that forgives not, but holds the impenitent and self-hardened victim aloof for ever. L. T. T.

No man even is a proper man, whose moral nature is not put in armor by the wrath-principle. Much less is God true God, when no such central fire burns in his bosom, to make him the moral avenger of the world. The eternal King is King indeed, and no such dispenser only of the confessions and other sweet delectations of favor, as the feeble gospel of modern philanthropism requires him to be. Oh, the wrath of the Lamb!—there is the rugged majesty of meaning that transgression needs to meet! Smooth and soft things only will not do. If Christ bends low at his cross, no such fearful words of warning and severity as his were ever before spoken. The Old Testament is a dew-fall in comparison with the simply judicial, spiritual, unbending, and impartial wrath of the New. As certainly as God is God, and Christ his prophet, he will not come bringing pardons only, suing and suing to the guilty; but over against all obstinacy he will kindle his fires of justice, and by these he will reign—even where by love he can not. H. B.

Section 349.

HEBREWS xiii. 1-25.

1 **LET** brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some
2 have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with
3 them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body. Marriage is
4 honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.
5 **Let your conversation be** without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye
6 have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly
7 say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. Remember
8 them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose
9 faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation: Jesus Christ the same yesterday,
10 *it is* a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have
not profited them that have been occupied therein. We have an altar, whereof they have

- 11 no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is
 12 brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Where-
 fore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the
 13 gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For
 14 here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. By him therefore let us offer
 15 the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to his
 16 name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is
 well pleased.
- 17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your
 souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for
 18 that *is* unprofitable for you. Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all
 19 things willing to live honestly. But I beseech *you* the rather to do this, that I may be
 restored to you the sooner.
- 20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great
 21 Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect
 in every good word to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight,
 through Jesus Christ; to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.
- 22 And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter
 23 unto you in few words. Know ye that *our* brother Timothy is set at liberty; with whom,
 24 if he come shortly, I will see you. Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the
 25 saints. They of Italy salute you. Grace *be* with you all. Amen.

Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. From out of the blazing heart of the glory, the same tender face looks that bent over sick men's pallets, and that turned on Peter in the judgment-hall. The hand that holds the scepter of the universe is the hand that was nailed to the cross, and that was stretched out to that same Peter when he was ready to sink. The breast that is girt with the golden girdle of priestly sovereignty is the same tender home on which John's happy head rested in placid contentment. All the love that ever flowed from Christ flows from him still. To him, "whose nature and whose name are love," it matters nothing whether he is in the house at Bethany, or in the upper room, or hanging on the cross, or lying in the grave, or risen from the dead, or seated on the right hand of God. He is the same everywhere and always. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." A. M.—O sons of men! perplexed by all the apparent contradictions and cross purposes and opposing powers and principles of this strange, dark, noisy time, remember to your comfort that your King, a man like you, yet very God, now sits above, seeing through all which you can not see through; unraveling surely all this tangled web of time, while under his guiding eye all things are moving onward, like the stars in their courses above you, toward their appointed end, "when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power, for he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." And then, at last, this cloudy sky shall be all clear and bright, for he, the Lamb, shall be the light thereof. C. K.

4. If you regard the necessity of marriage, God found it good to give man a wife; if the antiquity, it was ordained in the beginning of the world; if the place, in Paradise; if the time, in the innocence of man. If you regard anything the rather because of him that ordained it, God was the author of marriage. . . . If you seek the allowance, Christ approved it by his birth in marriage and by his presence at marriage; if the dignity, it is honorable; if among whom, in all men of all estates, of all callings, in prince, in subject, in minister, in priest, and in people. *Bp. Jewell.*—Christianity has exalted marriage to the highest dignity, and crowned it with the most sacred beauty: it is the symbol of the union of Christ and his Church; and the consummation of hope, purity, and joy in heaven, is typified under "the marriage-supper of the Lamb." Marriage is the festival of love, and as such, should be attended with all that represents beauty and felicity; it is the festival of joy, and, as such, should

be a time of preëminent joyousness to all who assist in its solemnities. But it is also a festival of consecration; and it should be hallowed with the word of God and prayer. J. P. T.

5. The word "conversation," as used in our version, illustrates the instabilities of language. The translators seem to have had a special partiality for this word, using it once (in this verse) for the Greek *tropos*; thirteen times for the Greek *anastrophe*; twice (in Philipians) for *polis* or its compounds. They did not foresee that within two and a half centuries it would have lost every one of those meanings, and have settled down into a sense quite remote from any one of them. H. C.

Without covetousness. Covetousness generates discontent; and this is an element with which no Christian grace can long be held in affinity. It magnifies trivial losses, and diminishes the most

magnificent blessings to a point; it thinks highly of the least sacrifice which it may grudgingly make in the cause of God, feels no enterprise in his service, and never considers itself at liberty to leave its little circle of *decent* selfishness, in which its murmurs on account of what it has not are always louder than its thanks for what it has. "Let your conversation," therefore, says the apostle, "be without covetousness." J. H.—**Be content.** One thing which we have to do in the pursuit of holiness is to be satisfied as regards our condition, so as not to indulge a wish for the change of it. Let our whole care be to serve God in the *present* moment of our lives; to taste the peace of the *present* pardon offered to us freely through the blood of Jesus Christ; to meet faithfully the obligations and responsibilities which the passing hour devolves upon us; to improve to the utmost *present* opportunities either of doing or receiving good. E. M. G.

"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." There are five negatives in the Greek, to assure God's people that he will never forsake them. Five times this precious promise is renewed in the Scripture, that we might have the stronger consolation, and that we might press and press it again, till we have gotten all the sweetness out of it. Brooks.—All other things may forsake you. Riches may take wings and fly away; friends may desert you, or they may die; your health and strength may fail and decay; yea, memory, judgment, and all the faculties of your mind may be weakened or destroyed: "But I will never leave you, I will never forsake you"; my friendship is unchangeable; "And whom I love, I love to the end." All this, saith the apostle, God hath said; but he doth not tell us when or where he hath said it, because he hath said it so often. R. W.

7, 8. "The end of whose life considering, imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same," etc. A.—The Biblical representation is that for evermore, by an indissoluble union, the Human is assumed into the Divine, and that "to-day and for ever" He remains the man Christ Jesus. That truth is the very hinge on which turn our loftiest hopes. Without it, that mighty work which he ever carries on of succoring them that are tempted, and having compassion with us, were impossible. Without that permanent manhood, his mighty work of preparing a place for us and making heaven a home for men because a man is its Lord, were at an end. Without it he in his glory would be no prophecy of man's dominion, nor would he have entered for us into the holy place. Grasp firmly the essential, perpetual manhood of Jesus Christ, and then to see him crowned with glory and honor gives the triumphant answer to the despairing question that rises often to the lips of every one who knows the

facts of life, "Wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?" A. M.

The true view regards Christ as showing forth not only a perfect humanity, but also and primarily God himself; representing God to man, as well as man to himself; being the express image of God's person; being God in the act and character of revealing or manifesting himself, creating and saving the world; separate at no point from God's sovereignty, nor knowing, in his divinity, any limitation or abridgment from the fullness of God; exhibiting, as in God's behalf, through a union of nature with the Father not explicable to us, the divine attributes; and reconciling alienated souls by manifesting God in his flesh. According to this doctrine, he survives in his Church to this day, and will survive, not only by influence and memory, but by the presence of his person; a distinct and everlasting person in himself, without beginning of days or end of years, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Consult the inmost faith of the truly believing heart, which has once given all to him who gave himself for us, and see what a bleak bereavement would fall like midnight upon it if you were to sweep away from it this perpetual privilege of confiding, loyal, adoring fellowship with its ascended, crowned, and yet ever condescending King. F. D. H.

9. **Carried about.** The allusion is to ships at sea. Like these driven by contrary winds, are unestablished minds under the influence of *diverse and strange doctrines*. They are in doubt as to the truth of what they had believed; they profess now one thing and now another; and some at last "make shipwreck of the faith and a good conscience." The doctrines referred to are described as being *diverse*, as they are inconsistent with each other, and *strange*, as they are inconsistent with the gospel—unknown or not received by the church of Christ and its accredited teachers. This explanation is suggested by the words immediately following, "It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace." The gospel is a scheme of grace. Whatever doctrines deny, conceal, or frustrate the grace of God in the salvation of his people—his grace in their effectual calling by the working of his power—his grace in their justification through the redemption of Christ—his grace in their preservation by his indwelling spirit unto eternal life—are diverse and strange. It is therefore "good," approved of God, and for the peace and salvation of the soul, "that the heart be established" in a firm reliance on the grace of God, as here revealed, and not on a distinction of meats as clean or unclean, according to an abrogated ritual. N. P.

10. As the Lord's body was broken on the cross once for all, so is that breaking symbolized when we break the bread in the communion: but as it is

heresy to regard the holy communion as a repetition of the Lord's sacrifice, so is the term "altar," in any strictness, quite inapplicable to the Lord's table. And no such application is sanctioned here. The altar spoken of is the cross, on which the one victim suffered once for all. A.—Whether in a Pagan, Jewish, or Christian dress, the world's religion is ever the same thing, a substituting of man for God, of pretense for reality, of form for substance, of bodily observance for spiritual obedience, for the subjugation of the soul to the law and will of God. Such a religion must go, and go entirely, if we would become the real disciples of Jesus Christ. It will not blend with the gospel, and we must not attempt to make it blend with it. "We have an altar," says the apostle, "whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle"; they will not eat of it, and if they would, they are prohibited; they can not.

11, 12. The blood of these animals was shed, that it might be taken "into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin," as a propitiation for sin; their bodies were burned as a testimony of the divine indignation against sin. When these two ceremonies had been gone through, God is said to have been reconciled to his people; the whole camp was considered as purged from its transgressions. And what was the end for which our Lord suffered? It was that his people, his spiritual Israel, might have sin removed from them: "Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." 13. He is still without the gate, beyond the boundary of the world's tents, and we must be content to leave the world behind us, or never go to him. His own language on this point is some of the plainest and strongest that ever fell from his lips. He calls upon us to forsake all we have for him, and tells us that if we do not forsake it, we can not be his disciples. C. B.

14. The man of God dwells in a tent or tabernacle in this world, and not only *wants* no *city* here, but feels that he can *find* none. Still his nature longs for something abiding. Death, decay, change, uncertainty are alien from his nature; they run counter to the longing for immortality which is within him. Such an abiding-place God, his God, hath provided for him. It is a city which *hath foundations*, whose builder is the everlasting one, and which the skill of such a builder has made indestructible. It is a permanent home. He who is admitted into its gates is no more an emigrant or a pilgrim. This city henceforth is to be his continual home, and his rest. T. D. W.—The country or city of Christians is not here. The true and eternal happiness of Christians is not here. He that seeks happiness in the world will not have it in heaven. Our country is Paradise, our city is the heavenly Jer-

usalem; our fellow-citizens are the angels, the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles and martyrs; our king is Christ. Let us therefore lead such a life in this pilgrimage, that as long as we are here we may be able to long for such a country as that is. *Aug.*—Christian life is meaningless if it is not a thing separate from the life of the world, in its springs and its manifestation. Christian character has nothing distinctively to commend itself, if it read not its title clear to mansions in the skies. To speak of ourselves as pilgrims and strangers is but a wordy utterance, unless, in truth, we do look for a city of God and a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Men never grow unworldly whose hopes are bounded by earthly horizons. They never grow upward toward God in reaches of spiritual aspiration and enjoyment till they put their chief good where Christ bids us all to lay up our treasure. *Haydn.*

15. The Christian sacrifice is a "sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving," contrasted with the propitiatory sacrifices of the old law, which were forever consummated by Christ. C.—That in the sacred supper there is a sacrifice in that sense wherein the fathers spake, none of us ever doubted; but that is eucharistical; that is, as Chrysostom speaks, a remembrance of a sacrifice; that is, as Augustine interprets it, a memorial of Christ's passion celebrated in the Church. And from this sweet commemoration of our redemption there arises another sacrifice—the sacrifice of praise; and from thence a true peace-offering of the Christian soul. *Bp. H.*—All our graces are His free gift, and are given as the rich garments of this spiritual priesthood, only to attire us suitably for this spiritual sacrifice of his praises; as the costly vesture of the high-priest under the law was appointed to decorate him for his holy service, and to commend (as a figure of it) the perfect holiness wherewith our great High-priest *Jesus Christ* was clothed. What good thing have we that is not from the hand of our good God? And receiving all from him, and after a special manner spiritual blessings, is it not reasonable that all we have, but those spiritual gifts especially, should declare his praise and his only? L.

Be much in the angelical work of praise. The more heavenly the employment, the more will it make the spirit heavenly. Praising God is the work of angels and saints in heaven, and will be our own everlasting work; and if we were more in it now, we should be more like what we shall be then. The liveliest emblem of heaven that I know upon earth, is when the people of God, in the deep sense of his excellency and bounty, from hearts abounding with love and joy, join together both in heart and voice in the cheerful and melodious singing of his praises. These delights, like the testimony of the Spirit, wit-

ness themselves to be of God, and bring the evidence of their heavenly parentage along with them. *Baz.*—Let not merely thanksgiving, but praise, always form an ingredient of thy prayers. To be large and fervent in praise counteracts the natural tendency to selfishness which is found in mere prayer. And it shall often happen that when thy heart is numb and torpid, and yields not to the action of prayer, it shall begin to thaw, and at last burst, like streams under the breath of spring, from its icy prison, with the warm and genial exercise of praise. The deadness, the distractions thou deplorest, shall flee away as the harp is taken down from the willow, and strung to celebrate the divine perfections. For how much is there to kindle the heart in the very thought of praise! Praise is the religious exercise—the only religious exercise—of heaven. Angels are offering it ceaselessly, resting not night or day. Saints are offering it ceaselessly in Paradise. Nature in her every district is offering it ceaselessly. And the sense of sympathy in the exercise shall kindle life in thee, and the soul shall recover its benumbed energies, and prayer shall be no more a painful wrestling with thy own mind, but a solace, and a strength, and a light, and a healing. E. M. G.

16. The true philosophy or method of doing good is, first of all and principally, to be good—to have a character that will of itself communicate good. There must be and will be active effort where there is goodness of principle; but the latter we should hold to be the principal thing, the root and life of all. H. B.—The joy resulting from the diffusion of blessings to all around us is the purest and sublimest that can ever enter the human mind, and can be conceived only by those who have experienced it. Next to the consolations of divine grace, it is the most sovereign balm to the miseries of life, both in him who is the object of it and in him who exercises it; and it will not only sooth and tranquilize a troubled spirit, but inspire a constant flow of content and gaiety of heart. P.

When mercy is shown and done as duty, and according to the manner God hath required, it is a *pledge* of mercy from on high. "To distribute, forget not, for with such sacrifices *God is well pleased.*" Alms must be sacrifice, given to men for God's sake. The right spring of mercy is from a sense of God's

mercy; it is a *thank-offering*, not a *sin-offering*. T. M.—By leaving the poor always with us—and not only the poor, but the sick and the sorrowing, the depraved and the ignorant—and by making the disciple the salt of the earth, the light of the world, Jesus virtually says to each follower: "It is a world of poverty, be ye my almoner; it is a world of darkness, be ye my torch-bearer; it is a mighty lazaretto—a world of disease and sickness, of agony and pain—be you my ministering angel; it is a world of ignorance and depravity, be you my missionary." *Hamilton.*

There are many interests in society to which we are under continual obligation—not to our fellow-men merely, not to ourselves merely, but to God—to give them whatever of aid and furtherance it is possible for us to give. Enterprises that seek the intellectual culture of mankind, the founding of a library, the building up of schools and institutions of learning, the circulation of a true and enlightening literature; enterprises which seek to further the secular and social interests of the community; enterprises that concert for the public welfare in the matter of health, in the matter of public order, in the matter of just and liberal government; patriotic enterprises which seek to advance and establish the well-being of a nation—all these, and many others of a like nature, are as obligatory upon the Christian as a duty which immediately concerns the instruction of men in religious truth. R. S. S.

THIS book should be read and interpreted throughout, under a recollection of the fact that it was addressed to Hebrews, and skillfully adapted to the condition of the native Christians in Palestine a few years before the downfall of Jerusalem. Nevertheless the Epistle is most profitable to Gentile Christians also. The Bible of our religion is formed of the books of the Old and New Testaments; and it concerns us, even though our fathers never were under Moses, to know the order in which divine truth has been revealed to mankind, and divine privilege conferred on believers. Invaluable, therefore, to us is the book which explains more clearly than any other how the New Testament was unfolded in the Old, and the Old Testament is unfolded in the New. D. F.

Section 350.

JAMES i. 1-12.

1 JAMES, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are
 2 scattered abroad, greeting. My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers tempta-
 3 tions; knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have
 4 *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack
 5 wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it
 6 shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is
 7 like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that
 8 he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A doubleminded man *is* unstable in all his ways.
 9 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: but the rich, in that he is made
 10 low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen
 11 with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace
 12 of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways. Blessed
is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of
 life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

WE shall not find a phrase that better describes the real end and purpose of our discipline in this world than the one James has given us: "The trying of your faith." It is for the trying of your faith that your will is suffered to be free, that limits are set to your strength, that your desires outrun your ability, that your aspiration transcends your performance, that your energy so often has to droop its tired wings and sink back baffled, that the flesh lusteth against the spirit and your passions chafe against your principles. It is for the trying of your faith that unexpected joys rise up and flock about you, that mornings of consolation break after nights of sorrow, that the alarm of pain sounds through your chambers at midnight, that inward admonitions point you forward to a day when all costlier garments shall be exchanged for a shroud and strange hands shall lower your dust into a grave. It is for the trying of your faith that your little island of knowledge is embosomed in an ocean of mystery; that the Bible is not all plain to the understanding, nor God's voice audible when we are perplexed, nor the way-marks of duty always visible; that the brightest lamps are often quenched first; that moral purity is not outwardly rewarded, and righteous plans seem to fail. And, what is perhaps unlikelier to be believed than all, it is for the trying of your faith that markets fluctuate and crops grow or fail. It is for this God places us in the world, schools us in it, takes us out of it. For are we not immortal? And is not the principle of our immortality faith in the Father of our spirits, in his Son who manifests him and is the way to him, in his spiritual truth, in the kingdom of heaven? F. D. H.

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES.

FROM the Pauline writings we pass to the collection of the Catholic Epistles. For all internal reasons they are better read in the place which they occupy in our Bibles than that in which the older manuscripts generally assign them, preceding the Epistles of Paul; for they are in effect the confirmation and the supplement of his doctrine. The personal characteristics of these writers are unlike those of Paul; the aspects of the truth are different, but the substance and the features are the same. Each writer, by the strongly distinguished lines of his own individuality, makes still more conspicuous the unity of the common faith. The Epistle of James alone makes at first sight an opposite impression, and instead of harmonizing with the full development of evangelical doctrine, may appear to belong to an earlier, or rather a retrograde stage. But the careful and candid student sees that the language employed distinctly presupposes the evangelical doctrine, and by

supplementing other expositions of it does in fact acknowledge and confirm them. T. D. B.

I assume that James, the writer of our Epistle, was the famous brother of the Lord; not the apostle, the son of Alphaeus. That Paul appears to call the brother of our Lord an apostle (Gal. 1: 19) is no argument against such an assumption; for there were others so denominated besides the twelve; and it is very doubtful whether the phraseology of that verse need imply that James was called an apostle at all. In Acts 1: 13 we find the Lord's brethren expressly mentioned as forming part of that band who, with the apostles and the mother of our Lord, were assembled in the "upper room" after the ascension. An appearance of our risen Lord to "James" is mentioned by Paul (1 Cor. 15: 7). A.

In support of the opinion that those named the "brothers" and "sisters" of Jesus were such by a real physical relationship (as children of Mary), these arguments present themselves: that this accords with what Matt. 1: 25 and Luke 2: 7 naturally

imply, and that it accounts perfectly for the closeness of their association with Mary, as described in the various statements made regarding them in the gospels. Moreover, on the view that they were children of Joseph by a former wife, these "brothers" must have been, at the time when our Lord was engaged in his public ministry, considerably over thirty years of age, the eldest probably not much under forty. But the statements made regarding them in the gospels appear naturally to imply that they were still unmarried and residing with Mary. Now, considering how early the Jews usually married, and that at least two of these "brothers" did actually marry (see 1 Cor. 9: 5), the supposition that they were so old at the time of the incidents recorded by the evangelists appears unlikely. Further, the genealogies of the Lord given by Matthew and Luke both, in form at least, show our Lord's connection with David through Joseph, his reputed father, thus proving him to be, according to the ordinary principles of Jewish law, the heir to David's throne. The argument on the genealogies seems to imply that there was no older son in Joseph's family. *Johnstone.* (See Vol. I., p. 231.)

James the Just we know already as a strict legalist, who after Peter's removal to other lands, A. D. 44 (Acts 12: 17), presided over the Church of Jerusalem and of all Palestinian Christianity down almost to the great catastrophe, and stood as mediator between Jews and Christians. In conformity with this character, education, and office, he conceives *objective* Christianity as *law*, thus standing on the ground of the Mosaic system, while at the same time he rises above it in representing Christianity as the "*perfect law of liberty*." He views the law in its deep moral import, and as such an organic unit that whoever transgresses a single precept violates the whole, and incurs the full penalty. The law requires actual observance and fulfillment, a conduct conformed to its precepts. Hence James's hostility to all lifeless, intellectual, and nominal Christianity, and his earnest stress on works, the fruits of faith, the palpable proof of justification. And as he sees in the law an indivisible unit, so he requires the Christian life to be one effusion, one complete and faultless work. Finally, as with him the sum and substance of the law is love, so the fulfilling of the law consists in undivided love to God and our neighbor, with which the love of the world and of self is absolutely incompatible. Consequently James places the essence of the Christian religion in a holy, irreproachable walk of love, and of a love, too, based ultimately on a new birth (1: 17, 18, 21) and on faith in Christ, the Lord of glory (2: 1, 22). These are the leading thoughts of the Epistle of James. He is the apostle of the law as leading to Christ, regulating the Christian life, and promoting moral earnestness. P. S.

His was preëminently the standing-point of Jewish piety as it manifests itself in the forms of the Old Testament. Christianity appears to his mind as true Judaism. The Spirit of Christ glorifies the forms of the Old Testament, and leads them to their true fulfillment. Something would be wanting had we not James in the New Testament. His standing-point was of peculiar service in bringing over devout Jews to the faith of the gospel. To a Paul, who was elected for the conversion of the Gentile nations, it would have proved a hindrance; to James, in the sphere of action assigned to him among un-mixed Jews, in Palestine and Jerusalem especially,

it was serviceable. N.—Had not a Peter, and, above all, a Paul, arisen as supplementary to James, Christianity would perhaps never have become entirely emancipated from the thrall of Judaism, and asserted its own independence. Still there was a necessity for the ministry of James. If any could win over the ancient covenant people, it was he. It pleased God to set so high an example of Old Testament piety in its purest form among the Jews, to make conversion to the gospel, even at the eleventh hour, as easy as possible for them. But when they would not listen to the voice of this last messenger of peace, then was the measure of the divine patience exhausted, and the fearful and long-threatened judgment broke forth. And thus was the mission of James fulfilled. He was not to outlive the destruction of the holy city and the temple. According to Hegesippus, he was martyred in the year before that event, A. D. 69.

The genial Herler has characterized the Epistle in these striking words: "What a noble man speaks in this Epistle! Deep, unbroken patience in suffering! Greatness in poverty! Joy in sorrow! Simplicity, sincerity, firm, direct confidence in prayer! To nothing is he more opposed than to unbelief, to pusillanimous, destructive subtlety, to double-mindedness. But what a way he has of drawing nigh to God! He speaks of power, the miraculous power of prayer, as of the most certain, unfailing thing, heartily, from experience, with particular instances and proofs—verily, a man full of the Holy Ghost, a praying man, a disciple of Jesus! How well he knows wisdom, and the origin of true and false wisdom in the minds of men! He puts restraint on the tongue, even in its most specious workings, the tongue, which murders by lusts and passions! Disciple of heavenly wisdom! How he wants action! Not words, not (dead intellectual) faith, but free action, perfect, noble action according to the royal law of the Spirit, the free—the purified Pharisee, or Essene—the Christian!" P. S.

1. His humility appears in this, that, though in the flesh he was the kinsman of the Lord Jesus, yet he uses the word "servant," "servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ." There may be this especial reason for so writing, namely, to show his countrymen, the Jews, to whom this Epistle is addressed, that in serving Christ he served the God of his fathers. James was happier too, no doubt, in being Christ's servant than in being his kinsman. T. M.—His use of the expression, "the twelve tribes," shows that he regarded those who were called Jews and Israelites in his time, whether dwelling in Palestine or scattered through the East, not as the mere descendants of Judah and Benjamin, but as the representatives of all the tribes of Israel, the tribal distinction of territory having been lost for many generations. The Epistle to the Hebrews was written to the Christian Jews in Palestine; this to Christian Israelites scattered over other lands; the first Epistle of Peter to those of the Jewish dispersion who dwelt in Asia Minor. These books form a trilogy; and, though written without any concert, were probably composed about the same time, A. D. 60 or 61. D. F.

Which are scattered abroad. More exactly, "that are in the Dispersion." "The Dispersion" was a name in common use among the Jews for the condition in which since the Captivity great numbers of their race had been, or sometimes for those who were in that condition. Not merely did a great number remain in Babylonia; but, of the descendants of those who returned to Palestine, multitudes were led for commercial and other reasons to emigrate to various countries, so that in course of time Jews were to be found in almost all parts of the Roman Empire. This state of things, or those who were in it, had the name of "The Dispersion." James's Epistle, then, is addressed to the Jews of the Dispersion, the Jews living out of Palestine. The whole tenor of the letter shows that it was written to the *Christians* among these Jews. The breadth of the form of address was fitted to proclaim that to *all* Israel, professedly "waiting for the consolation" of their nation, the voice of "a servant of Messiah" ought to be welcome; and at the same time to remind the believing Jews—often, no doubt, charged by their unbelieving countrymen with being renegade Israelites, recreant to the religion of their fathers—that they were the true "children of Abraham," having accepted God's way of fulfilling his promises with like simple faith as Abraham had shown in accepting the promises themselves. *Johnstone.*

2. The use of the word "temptations" shows us that the afflictions of God's people are but *trials*; they are not judgments, but corrections or trials; they are part of God's discipline to mortify sin, or his means to discover grace, so as to prove our faith, love, patience, sincerity, or constancy. Evils are better borne when we *fall into them* rather than *draw them* upon ourselves. We lose the comfort of sufferings when there is guilt in them. T. M.—To venture upon the occasion of sin, and then to pray, *Lead us not into temptation*, is the same as to thrust thy finger into the fire, and then pray that it may not be burned. *Brooks.*—But still temptations are not scattered all about us without a purpose. And if it is true on the one side that we have no right to run into temptations, so is it true on the other hand that temptations are the necessary discipline of our lives. F. T.

3. **The trying of faith.** Of all graces, God delights that the reality of "faith" should be discovered. We work by love, but live by faith. It is faith that makes the soul "stand" to its proof and to its trial here. If, then, we have faith, we must look for trials. Graces are not crowned until they are exercised. Faith must be tried before it is found to praise and honor. **Worketh patience.** To the wicked every condition is a snare, but to the godly every state brings its blessing; their pros-

perity "works" thankfulness, their adversity "patience." Afflictions serve to examine and prove our faith, and by the blessing of God to bring forth fruit with patience. Patience is the quiet fruit of righteousness. T. M.—There may be still some doubt while a man is underset with outward helps, as riches, friends, esteem, whether he leans upon those or upon God. But when all these outward props are plucked away, then it will be manifest whether something else upholds him or not; for if there be nothing else, he falls; but if his mind stands firm as before, it is evident he laid not his weight upon these things he had then about him, but was built upon a foundation, though not seen, which is able alone to stay him. L.

The settled conclusion God obviously wishes us to reach and rest in, and one that he passes us through all this mixed encounter of pain and peace to establish in us, is this: that in every passage of our life there are two parties engaged—God and ourselves. Most of us have to learn it by a long and gradual trying of our faith. A nominal belief in such a truth is common enough. But veritably to realize that God is personally present and interested in the little gettings-on of our virtue, is a rarer attainment, and needs a peculiar training. To achieve that result, the divine methods are wonderful. He buffets and caresses. He gives and takes away. He sends now a providence signal and exceptional, and then the regularity of nature. He answers some prayers according to their request, and others by withholding the boon, but still thereby increasing submission. He twines together motives the most complicated. He keeps generous men poor, and lets the selfish and sensual gain the world. All this for the trying of our faith. F. D. H.—The little trials of an ordinary career—the trials which involve nothing loftier or more sublime than the rubs and collisions of every-day life—the trials, in short, which range themselves under the heads of tongue and temper—make a larger demand upon our patience, and are perhaps a greater drain upon our fortitude and endurance, than even those in which God makes our flesh quiver with the tearing of the pincers of affliction. E. M. G.

4. Never be discouraged because good things get on so slowly here, and never fail to do daily that good which lies next to your hand. Enter into the sublime patience of the Lord. God can afford to wait; why can not we, since we have him to fall back upon? Let patience have her perfect work, and bring forth her celestial fruits. *McD.*—True grace *aims* at nothing short of complete holiness; but for this there must be the exercise of patience, faith, prayer, *hope*—all the fruits of grace! Yes, while we are in the world, we are to go on to a more and more perfect discovery of patience, and follow

them who through "faith and patience inherit the promises."

5. If any lack wisdom. Although all do not lack in the same manner or in the same degree, yet who of all men does not in some measure lack wisdom? God's wisdom suffers the creature to lack, because dependence begets observance. If we were not forced to hang upon heaven and to live upon the continued supplies of God, we should not care for him. Promises usually invite those that are in want, because they are most likely to regard them. T. M.—"To lead his followers into all *truth*" is a most important characteristic of the divine Spirit, which we ought to ask from God, because often wisdom and religion have been parted from each other, and religious zeal and common sense have regarded each other with suspicion. But, in fact, they are most nearly allied. Common sense, discretion, judgment, are high Christian graces. They are God's gifts, to enable us to do the work which is set before us. To be able to see the truth, and to discern the false from the true, and to wish to know the truth, this is a gift which is needed by the highest philosopher; but it is needed also by the humblest man or youth that has to make his way in life, and to serve his God and his country faithfully and truly. A. P. S.

Ask of God. God will have us see the author of every mercy by the way of obtaining it. It is a comfort and a privilege to receive mercies in a way of duty. Prayer coming between our desires and the bounty of God is a mean to beget a due respect between him and us. We usually wear with thanks what we win by prayer, and those comforts are best improved which we receive upon our knees. Well, then, wisdom, and every good gift, is an alms—you have it for asking; mercies at that rate do not cost dear. Who would not be one of God's supplicants? T. M.—Even among those who do pray regularly, the prayer for wisdom does not, I suspect, form a part of their petitions. Many of us seem to have a confused notion that sense, reason, good judgment, or by whatever name we call our intellectual faculties, are quite distinct from spiritual blessings, and are things too worldly to be named in our prayers. Yet what was Solomon's choice but "an understanding heart to judge the people"? that is, a sound and powerful mind capable of discerning the truth and the right in the line of his daily duty. Solomon's choice should be our prayer; in James's words, we should ask of God to give us wisdom. T. A.

6. Ask in faith. Prayer must be regulated by faith, and faith must not wander out of the limits of the word of God. If you have a promise, you may be confident that your requests will be heard, though in God's time. All things are to be asked

in faith; some things absolutely, as spiritual blessings. Other things conditionally. Let the prayer be according to the word, and the success (in God's season) will be according to the prayer.

The doubter is compared here to "a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed"; tossed to and fro—agitated. Until faith gives some certainty, this is *our state*—tossed and driven; and what rest and peace is there for a soul, tossed, agitated, shaken, and driven about? Faith, God's gift (and a gift which he loves us to feel our need of and to ask for)—faith in God's power and love begets a calm. T. M.—The feeling of unbelief, wherever cherished, must, on the principles of the gospel, be fatal to all power. Trust, firm trust, straightforward, childlike trust, is the everlasting condition of all coöperation with God. He will not use, He will not bless, He will not inhabit the heart that, at the moment when it offers him a request, says, "I doubt thee." *Arthur.*

And upbraideth not. God does not reproach his people with the frequency of their addresses to him for mercy, and is never weary of doing them good. Man is wont to excuse himself by what he has already done; the stock of men wastes by giving, and therefore they grow weary. We are afraid to press a friend too much, lest by frequent use kindness be worn out. But the oftener we come to God the welcomer; his gates are always open, and he is still ready to receive us. We need not be afraid to urge God to the next act of love and kindness. "Who delivered us," and "*doth deliver,*" "in whom we trust that *he will yet deliver.*" One mercy is but a step to another. His grace runs in an eternal tenor of love and sweetness. Let us ever be making trial of his untiring goodness. T. M.

8. The Greek word signifies *one who has two souls*—one for heaven, the other for earth; the man who desires to secure both worlds, but will give up neither. It was a usual term among the Jews, to express the man who attempted to worship God, and yet retained the love of the creature. G. T.—Where minds are double, ways will be unstable. A floating belief is soon discovered in the inconsistency and unevenness of the professor's walk; none are so constant in the profession of any truth as those that are convinced and assured of the grounds of it. When we are but half convinced, then we are usually unstable. None walk so evenly with God as those that are assured of the love of God. Faith is the mother of obedience, and sureness of trust makes way for holiness of life. T. M.—In the commencing contest of Christianity with the whole world of evil, such an equivocal, undecided, half-and-half man, if he made any pretensions to be for the cause of Christ, must have appeared a sadly ill-constructed creature. Of all things on earth, he

would not do for a Christian. For *that* character and service a very different man indeed was wanted. Nor will this double-minded man *now* be of any value to himself, to men, or to God. J. F.

9. As God will not favor the rich merely because they are rich, so he will not save the poor merely because they are poor. There is grace to save "through faith" for both rich and poor; and it is this grace that makes the poor rich in faith and the rich poor in spirit! "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted." "Exalted" not in self-worth nor in self-merits, not in rejoicings or boastings contrary to grace, but that, as a brother in Christ, he is brought through faith into covenant with God, and raised to the attainment of all those privileges and dignities which belong to God's believing people.

10. The apostle gives encouragement to the poor and advice to the rich. "Let the poor rejoice" when he is spiritually exalted, and "the rich" when he is spiritually humbled. Thankful for the gifts of Providence we ought to be—oh, how thankful! but we must not make them *objects of trust*. Trust, being the highest respect the creature can show, must not be intercepted, but ascend to God. God would have the rich man know and notice and remember that, though he may have an undoubted security of his estate, he has none of his life; both property and life pass away, and *that* with as easy a turn of Providence as the flower of the field fadeth. T. M.

12. Whenever Luther was asked what made the best divine, he answered *temptation*; and what makes the best divine makes the best Christian. *Hill*.—Temptation is not sin; and not until the will consents to it, not until it is willfully entertained and cherished, does temptation become sin. Nay, we may go further. Temptation is not always even a sign of a sinful nature. It is quite possible that its appeal may be made to feelings which in themselves are perfectly pure and innocent. Our Lord's temptation is a proof of this. E. M. G.—Every temptation resisted weakens the force of all other temptations of every sort. Every time that a Christian acts for the sake of Christ, that motive is made stronger in his soul. Every act of obedience smoothes the road for all that shall come after. *To get the habit* of being faithful wrought into our life, and

becoming part of our second and truer self, that is a defense all but impregnable for us when the stress of the great trials comes, or when God calls us to lofty and hard duties. A. M.

The crown of life. The Lord has promised this crown "to them that love him." So, then, the enduring which is acceptable to God arises from love. The crown which God has promised he does not promise for them that suffer, but for them *that love*. It will be theirs who endure *and* who love. If, therefore, we would have power to endure temptations, we must pray that the love of God in Christ Jesus may rule our hearts. T. M.—To overcome temptation, not in outer act merely, but with heart and soul, that is what wins the crown of life; the crown emphatically of life, for he who has passed through temptations victorious, he it is who emphatically lives. He has in him the richness of his own experience. He is not using words without meaning, or words with a vague, indistinct idea, when he speaks of the battle of the Christian or of the help of his Redeemer. His principles are not mere sentiments, but living powers, whose strength has been tried and proved. His doctrines are not mere forms of speech; they correspond with needs of his soul, which he has probed to the bottom in the hour of difficulty. The Bible is not to him a beautiful and awful book, full of wonderful promises which sound like words in a foreign tongue, full of awful threatnings which seem too fearful to be literally true, but a record of realities into which he has himself entered. God is not to him the ruler of the universe in which he himself is a little unconsidered fragment, but his own Father, who has told him, and still tells him, what he is to do, and who will not and can not forget him, even if himself be all forgotten. Christ is not to him the Redeemer of mankind, but the Friend whose love surpasses all other love, whose sympathy embraces all other sympathy, whose help can not fail, whose indwelling Spirit is ever bringing into his heart, up from the eternal fountains, the waters of eternal life. This is the crown which buds here and blossoms hereafter, and fills all the soul on which it falls with the power of its beauty; and this crown is given to him who, when temptations come, gives himself mind and soul, and will and heart, to fulfill the love of Christ. F. T.

Section 351.

JAMES i. 13-27.

13 LET no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted
 14 with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away
 15 of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and
 16 sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every
 17 good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights,
 18 with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us
 19 with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. Where-
 fore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:
 20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore lay apart all
 21 filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word,
 22 which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, de-
 23 ceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like
 24 unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his
 25 way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the
 perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of
 26 the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. If any man among you seem to be reli-
 gious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.
 27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and
 widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world.

JUDGED of by merely outward tokens, Christianity would seem to be in the ascendant. Imperial edicts no longer assail her thickening ranks, the proudest philosophers have gone down before her doctrines, and the boundaries of heathendom are steadily retreating wherever she plants her invading foot. But these outward tokens are deceptive. They indicate the acceptance of Christianity as an opinion, a polity, a culture, while they fail to witness for the acceptance of it as an inward, spiritual, renovating force. The gospel-preacher, stand where he will, is sure of a respectful, perhaps an applauding, audience; but the chiefest burden of his message is not regarded, and the chiefest longing of his heart is not realized. The cross of Christ is no offense to the understanding of his hearers, but their proud wills are not bowed before it. He faces a masked battery of most orthodox but most resolute impenitence. If now we may venture to hope for a better issue, it must be on the basis of a better experience, on the basis of a better appreciation of the real genius of a true discipleship. We must have the gospel pattern of piety held up before us. Our religion must be more to us than a mere opinion, more than a mere excitement of feeling; it must be a resolute and manly service. Our whole life, from its inmost feelings to its outmost goings, must be subdued to Christ. Personal sanctity, which dreads a blot upon itself, as it dreads the anger of God; love for the Church of Christ, which many waters of strife can not quench, nor floods drown; with labors, wise, earnest, self-denying and abundant, for the souls of perishing men—all these must we lay as a cheerful tribute at the feet of the King of kings. R. D. H.

13-22. The philosophy of sin is given in verses 13-16 in terms that answer exactly to our own experience. God is not the author of sin; God does not subject us to temptation that, through sinning, we may illustrate his grace. Trials as tests of our choice of good or evil, of our faith in himself, of our love and devotion, God does appoint for our moral discipline and culture; but temptations that look toward sin, and lead to sin, are the prompting of our own desires when these are loosed from the control of reason and conscience. The sin does not lie in the fact of temptation, nor in the susceptibil-

ity to temptation; but when we suffer our susceptibilities to natural good to be wrought upon to such a degree that they entice us to forget reason, conscience, duty to God; when these over-stimulated desires come to a head in the decision of the will to gratify them—then do they bring forth sin. The counteractive to such temptation is a just conception of our highest good as in God, and from him; a patient, prayerful, unwavering trust in him, and the keeping his word in our hearts as our law and guide. J. P. T.

13. Outward temptations, of which he has

hitherto made mention, come immediately from the hand of God. In this sense God tempted Abraham and daily tempts us; that is, he makes trial of the qualities of our hearts by furnishing us with an opportunity of disclosing them. But to draw forth to view the secrets of the heart, and to stir up in it perverse and wicked passions, are very different things. Here he treats of internal temptations, or of those inordinate appetites which incite us to transgression, and with great justice denies God to be the author of these. Nothing is more common among mankind than to transfer to others the blame of the evils which they themselves have done; and especially they think themselves then most free from blame if they can turn it upon God. This artifice, handed down to us from the first man, we are too careful to imitate. For this reason James calls upon each of us to confess his own guilt, and not to lay the charge upon God, as if he tempted us to sin. *Calv.*

We charge God with our evils and sins when we blame his providence. In this way God's choicest mercies and blessings may be turned into snares. We charge God also with our evils and sins when we ascribe sin to the defect or faint operation of the divine grace. This is done when men say they could do no otherwise, *because* they had no more grace given them of God! We charge God also with our sins and evils when we have a wrong understanding of his decrees, as if on account of his decrees (*secret* to us) we were under a necessity to commit sin. Men will say, "Who can help it? God will have it so." Whatever God's decrees may be, *this* is *certain* and not *secret*, that he neither infuses evil nor enforces evil. God uses many a persuasion to draw us to holiness, but not a single hint to encourage us in sin. Men tempt each other, but God tempts no man to sin. T. M.—There are manifold doors in the divine purpose which God may open or shut as he pleases; but there is one always shut—that God should tempt any man to evil; and there is one for ever open—that he wills not the death of the sinner, but that he should turn and live. Whatever difficulties may be in these questions of freedom and decree, we can never permit the speck of one to touch the divine purity and mercy. *Ker.*

14. Whatever may have excited them, or whoever may have shared in them, our sins have taken their rise in ourselves. They are as much our own as though there were not one unclean spirit to betray, one evil example to mislead, or one temptation to allure. C. B.—Of all the fatal effects of sin, none looks so dreadfully, none strikes so just a horror into considering minds, as that every sinful action a man does naturally disposes him to another; and that it is hardly possible for him to do anything

so ill but that it proves a preparative and introduction to the doing of something worse. As temptation brings a man to sin, so sin also brings him to temptation. R. S.

15. "*Lust having conceived, it bringeth forth sin.*" Sin hath its conception, and that is delight; and then its formation, and that is design; and then its birth, and that is action; and then its growth, and that is custom; and then its end, and that is damnation. *Brooks.*—"Sin when it is grown gendereth death." J. B. L.—Consider what havoc has been made in the body—that curious and wonderful workmanship of the Almighty. How the unbridled appetites have sown the seeds of disease therein; and how pain, languor, and decay assail the constitution as soon as we begin to live, and cease not their attacks till they triumph over the citadel of life! Consult the history of the world, and what a lazar-house and a Golgotha has it been! Consider its effects upon the immortal mind. Witness its lofty powers bowed down in ignominious servitude to base corporeal appetites, and furious and debasing passions! See how the understanding is darkened, the will perverted, and the heart alienated from all that is holy! See reason and conscience dethroned, and selfishness reigning over them, in gloomy and undisputed tyranny! See how the affections turn away with loathing from God, and what a wall of separation has sprung up between man and his Maker; how deeply and universally he has revolted from his rightful sovereign! These are the genuine fruits of sin. This, this is death! R. D. H.

16. **Do not err.** It means do not wander. Do not wander from the truth. To err here may mean errors of judgment and errors of practice. The mind receives and cherishes error, and then evil practice follows. Paul speaks of first being "given up to a vain mind," and then to "vile affections." To avoid error we must seek truth. T. M.—It may be added that the best mode of opposing error is seldom directly to advert to it, but calmly and attractively to exhibit the opposite right and truth; for truth wins its own way. It affects, it warms, it invigorates, it controls, by its own proper and peculiar energy. It needs not elaborate proof or subtle argumentation. Let it be proposed in fullness and simplicity, with clearness and with affection, and the task is done. We shall thus gain the stronghold of every honest understanding; we shall thus win the citadel of every heart that can be won. *Bp. Jebb.*

17. Not only is God not the author of sin, but he is the author of all good, especially the author of all the spiritual gifts or graces bestowed upon us. "Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above." All good things flow from the upper spring.

There are lower channels or conveyances, such as the written word, sacraments, prayer, meditation. And then for ordinary blessings, there is your prudence, and industry, and care; but your freshest springs are in God, and in all things we may, and we must be thankful, but look up. God delights in this honor of being acknowledged, as he is, the sole author of all our good. T. M.

The greatest excellencies in us do as much depend on God as the light does upon the sun. Here is wisdom, but it is *from above*. Here is some weak love working toward Christ, but it is *from above*. Here is joy, and comfort, and peace, but these are all the flowers of paradise; they never grow in nature's garden. Brooks.—God is most free of his best blessings. He affords salvation in common to all his people. He gives honor and riches but to few of them: he gives Christ and heaven to them all. God sometimes denies a crumb even to him on whom he bestows a kingdom. There are many things that a child of God can not promise to himself, but heaven he may reckon upon. Jenkyn.

18-25. "Of his own will *begat* he us *with the word of truth*, that we should be a kind of *first-fruits* of his creatures"; or, literally, "He *who willed* hath begotten us by the word of truth." God, putting his *will* into, or with, "the word of truth," his own true word, had "*begotten*" the early Christians, and made them "first fruits of his creatures." If this be not the work of our new *birth*, of our being begotten to the new and spiritual life by the sole instrumentality of the *word of truth*, then it is impossible to find that work described or asserted in the Bible as the result of *any* agency or of *any* instrumentality. With a similar meaning, James goes on to exhort those whom he addressed to "receive with meekness the *ingrafted word*, which was able to *save their souls*" (v. 21). The *figure* here is changed, but not the *significancy*. The word ingrafted, the truth implanted by the Holy Spirit, is the instrument of the new birth. Further along the *figure* is again changed, though the same *significancy* remains; with this difference, perhaps, that what is said of the word as "a glass," the mirror of a "perfect law," and of him who "looketh into" it, as "like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass," has a broader application; reaching not only to him who, for the first time, looks into the mirror of the word with a spiritual perception, belief, and love of the truth, but also to him who, having entered on the way of life, "continueth therein," consulting often the same divine mirror, which first, through the Spirit, brought him to a knowledge of the Saviour; and even extending to him who, having the mirror of truth, *looks into it*, but, upon "beholding himself, goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was" (vs. 22-25). The whole passage shows us the true place and position of the word of God, his divine truth, both in its relations to him who uses it as his sole instrument in our regeneration, and in its aspect upon us, in whom it is made to effect his blessed work. J. S. S.—By this he convinces of sin; by this he reveals Christ as a suitable and all-sufficient Saviour; and having thus caused the souls

whom he has touched to discover their own need, and Christ's fullness, he enables them by the gift of precious faith, called "the faith of God's elect," to embrace God's record of his Son; to *appropriate* him and his work as an atonement for their sins, a righteousness for their persons, a sufficient title to the inheritance of eternal life; and henceforth he abides in them as "the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father." In this illumination by the Spirit, this revelation of Christ, and creation of faith in him, through the word, lies the very essence of regeneration. Believers are therefore described as born again, instrumentally, *by the word*. Goode.

19. This is the chief New Testament passage which affirms the principle on which conversation is to be regulated. "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak." Self-restraint in talking and readiness to receive information is to be the regulating principle. The spirit of the Old Testament precept on this subject is the same with that of the New; its letter is even more solemn. It runs thus: "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; but he that refraineth his lips is wise." It is true that the primary reference is in all probability to those words by which *religious* instruction is to be conveyed. But we must not exclude a subordinate but very important reference to the whole range of conversation. *Swift to hear*. An effort should be made to extract from those with whom the occasions of life bring us into contact that portion of useful knowledge which out of the common stock they have appropriated to themselves. "*Slow to speak*" is involved in and would naturally follow from what went before. For if a man be simply desirous to receive instruction, he will not be over ready, although he will not be backward, to communicate it. Let us strive that, as far as may be, each word we drop may have some point in it—some worth and weight and solidity. E. M. G.

20. Wrathful men are most unfit *to act grace* or *to receive grace*: to act grace by drawing nigh to God in worship; for as God is the *God of peace*, he will be served and worshiped with a peaceable mind! So, also, wrathful men are unfit *to receive grace*; angry men give place to Satan, but grieve the Spirit, and therefore are more fit to receive sin than grace! God, in the second psalm, is described *sitting* in the heavens; this posture, while it indicates *dignity*, for all the hosts of heaven stand or kneel before him, so it also denotes a composed and quiet dignity; and as truly as he sitteth in the heavens, so he dwells in the lowly, quiet, humble, tranquil heart! T. M.

21. *The ingrafted word*. He compares the word to a plant of excellent virtue, the very tree of life, the word that is able to save your souls. But the only soil wherein it will grow is a heart full of meekness, a heart that is purged of those luxuriant weeds that grow so rank in it by nature; they must

he plucked up and thrown out to make place for this word. How few consider and prize it as the great ordinance of God for the salvation of souls, the beginner and the sustainer of the divine life of grace within us! And certainly until we have these thoughts of it, and seek to feel it thus ourselves, although we hear it most frequently, and hear it with attention and some present delight, yet still we miss the right use of it and turn it from its true end, while we take it not as *that ingrafted word which is able to save our souls.* L.

22. "Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves," not deceiving God. He sees with what interest you listen, what you think of, what you retain, how much progress you make by means of what he supplies, how earnestly you pray, how you supplicate God on the score of what you have not, how you thank him on the score of what you have. He who will require an account knows all. Do not then deceive yourselves on the ground of your having come eagerly to hear the word, if you do not perform what you inadequately hear. To hear and to do is to build upon a rock. Aug.

23-25. Mere professors have but a slight and glancing knowledge of the word: like a man beholding his face in a glass while passing it, or like the glare of a sunbeam upon a wave, it is seen and gone in a moment. But in meditation, in reflection, there is *this benefit*, that a steady constant light is the result. The expression "looketh into" refers to the bending posture of the cherubim that were over the ark of the covenant: and the anxious search which the angels use to find out the mysteries of salvation: "Which things the angels *desire to look into.*" The word means not a transient glance, but a bending of the body with a piercing inquiry of eye; it means diligence of search and investigation. T. M.

25. This moral law, or "law of love," or "law of liberty," to man in innocence and to man redeemed (being a law of wrath and terror only to man fallen), is that same law which was written on Adam's heart in paradise; the same which brings in the whole world guilty before its precepts; the same which our Lord, in his first sermon on the mount, enforces, and restores to its purity; the same which the apostles hold forth as the invariable rule by which believers, under the influence of faith and love, are to walk. Hill.

"Whoso looketh into shall be blessed." Spiritual emotion is begotten of spiritual knowledge. We can feel deeply no fact we do not apprehend, no truth we do not appreciate: the fact may flash upon us with the suddenness of lightning, or open to our mind's eyes only under patient study; the truth may strike us with the force of intuition, or dawn upon

us by gradual revelation; but fact and truth must be known before they can be felt. A mind filled with God is the necessary preparation for a heart filled with God. Vain for us even to ask him for a deeper soul-life while we give him and his truth no fair share of our reflection; that is asking him to fan into a flame the embers which we have cumbered with earth, and will not uncover to the breath of a kindling spirit. Pierson.

A pure creed is indeed an inestimable blessing. No greater privilege is given to men than to be able to advance in the knowledge of divine things, to learn by slow and patient thought how truth is set against truth, and all the various lines of revelation in the words and works of God converge to one great unity. He who has carefully reflected on what he professes to believe, and pierced to the spirit of his faith, has gained a vantage ground for action. But knowledge is only a vantage ground and not a victory. If we neglect to turn to use the superiority which it gives us, our defeat will only be the more disgraceful because we were so richly furnished for the battle. Religious truth can not be of the intellect only. It must, if it be held vitally, show itself in life. B. F. W.—Orthodoxy may unconsciously be substituted for obedience; there may be a keen, lively interest in the intellectual aspect of Christian doctrine, yet while the deeper essence of divine truth remains uncared for, the subtle, unchastened pleasure may glow into an intellectual sin. The safeguard is mainly moral and spiritual; to realize the facts of the gospel, not only in their outward coloring but in their inward vitality, as forming the process of miraculous love whereby God interposed for a ruined world; to keep before the mind's eye, as *Dorner* expresses it, "the grand total image of the living Person of the God-man," and in that Presence to enter more livingly into the heights and depths of his religion, its awful majesty and its subduing sweetness; to feel, as the greatest doctors have felt, that it is greater than all their words, yet that its highest truths are full of help for daily life, and of comfort for daily trouble, and practically to remember that supernatural truth can not be thoroughly possessed by means of efforts simply natural. And such a relation between a man's doctrinal belief and his devotions will act healthily on both. He will learn what doctrine has to do for him; how practical it is in its effects, what responsibilities it imposes, what splendors it can exhibit, what happiness it can ensure. Bright.—Revealed religion is by its very nature dogmatic to the very core. It has stood the highest of all tests. The heart of man, which it has stirred to its inmost depths, which it has revealed to itself, which it has called out of itself, into which it has infused unearthly powers, powers of humility, powers of endurance, powers of love, is an eternal witness to its truth. It is indeed this—the witness of the present Spirit—which is the highest of all Christian evidences. It is this that breathes life into the dead bones of doctrine, and bids them stand upon their feet, an exceeding great army. It is by this Spirit, by showing in our own lives, if God give us grace, that the doctrines of the Bible, the doctrines of the Church, have a vitality within them imparted by God himself; that they are powerful to purify the heart, to elevate the hopes, to sustain under afflic-

tion, to reassure under doubt, to give peace within, to give strength without—it is by this life that we shall most effectually serve the cause of Christ. *Shirley.*

26, 27. Here is presented the point of contact between Paul and James. The one speaks of the essential of Christianity as faith, the other as works. They are only striking the stream at different points, one at the fountain-head, one far down its course among the haunts of men. They both preach that faith must be "faith that worketh," not a barren assent to a dogma, but a living trust that brings forth fruits in the life. Paul believes as much as James that faith without works is dead, and demands the keeping of the commandments as indispensable to all true Christianity. James believes as much as Paul that works without faith are of none effect. *A. M.*—The soul of religion is the practical part. This Talkative is not aware of; he thinks that hearing and saying will make a good Christian; and thus he deceiveth his own soul. Hearing is but the sowing of the seed; talking is not sufficient to prove that fruit is indeed in the heart and life: and let us assure ourselves that at the day of doom men shall be judged according to their fruits; it will not be then said, Did you believe? but, Were you doers, or talkers only? And accordingly they shall be judged. The end of the world is compared to our harvest; and you know men at harvest regard nothing but fruit. *Bun.*

27. When the apostle here speaks of pure and undefiled religion, he does not set down what is the whole nature of religion, but only some particular evidences of it. Religion requires faith and worship, and the truth of these is manifested by charity and a holy life. A holy life and a bounteous heart are ornaments to the Gospel. *T. M.*—**Before God.** All depends on the great principle from which the self-denial and beneficence here demand-

ed proceed, and this principle is with the upright disciple of the Lord indissolubly one with his sanctifying faith. James speaks, indeed, to such as had already by God's gracious good pleasure been begotten again with the word of truth, which they had believingly embraced, so that they had now passed into a new condition of life as first-fruits of his creatures. *Van O.*

There have been and are such characters as benevolent worldlings. They are tender-hearted and compassionate by the bent of their dispositions, from impulse and not from principle. Such benevolence may not for a moment be confounded with pure religion. In *it* there is an essential element not only of love, but also of self-restraint. While it is easily moved by the sight of suffering, and eagerly springs to its relief, it has none of that moral pliancy which lays it open to the seduction of worldly maxims or of fleshy lusts. It keeps itself unspotted from the world. *E. M. G.*—Conscientious practical activity tends to preserve the inward fervor of the soul, as that fervor again moves and prompts to further activity. The inward and the outward act and react upon each other. Action will not be spiritually beneficial unless it is inspired by what the soul receives through the study of the Word, the light of faith, and the power of prayer—thought and devotion, the clear perception of truth and duty, and the emotions of the heart in relation to both—these are not enough, unless they are combined with the practical endeavor to *be* what is admired, and to *do* what is approved. The prayer of the morning must be the precept for the day; and the duties of the day must expand into praise at the evening sacrifice. In this way, song and service will go together. They will blend into one. Faith and works will mutually strengthen and illustrate each other. *T. B.*

Section 352.

JAMES ii. 1-26.

1 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect
2 of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly ap-
3 parel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that
4 weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the
5 poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: are ye not then partial in yourselves,
6 and are become judges of evil thoughts? Harken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God
7 chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath prom-
8 ised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you,
9 and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by
10 the which ye are called? If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt
11 love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin,
and are convicted of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law,
and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery,
said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become

12 a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law
13 of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and
mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

14 What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works?
15 can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one
16 of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be *ye* warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give
17 them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit? Even so faith,
18 if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have
works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.
19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and trem-
20 ble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abra-
21 ham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?
22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And
23 the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto
24 him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works
25 a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified
26 by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way? For
as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

A MAN of great intellectual powers and ardent but not perfect piety once heard two pilgrims of apostolical authority conversing in the way to heaven. One of them said, Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. The other said, Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. The man went away and reported that there was a quarrel between those two, and that the latter of the two was *strawy* in his sayings. The mistaken man was Martin Luther. Now there is so far from being a quarrel between Paul and James, that there is not even a difference. The two passages are only opposite sides of the same great truth, the great distinguishing truth of the gospel, the truth of justification and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ. One text shows the side toward God in Christ, the other the side toward man; both are equally true. It is at one and the same time an undeniable truth, that faith without works is the only true religion, and yet that faith without works is no religion at all, and also that works without faith are no better than sin. G. B. C.—Paul had said, and truly, “Ye are saved by faith.” James added, “Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.” This is the burden of his doctrine: not works independent of faith, not mere external morality, not dry, legal obedience, with no moisture and no root, but works as expressing faith, manifesting it, its natural fruit, and in turn reacting upon it, to confirm and multiply it. Paul proclaims the immortal truth lying at the very heart of the gospel, “By God’s grace are ye saved, and that not of yourselves; it is free gift.” James accepts this declaration, but urges us to remember that the spirit must have a body; that God’s free grace is granted only on conditions, and may be detected by certain signs; and that, where it really has a vital seat within, it will inevitably bud and blossom into the pure and undefiled religion, which visits the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keeps itself unspotted from the world. F. D. H.

2-4. These three verses form but one sentence—and the apostle principally complains of a proneness to give honor to worldly greatness merely on account of worldly greatness, and paying more homage to exalted wickedness than to oppressed grace. T. M.—He is deprecating that homage to wealth which implies that it is honorable for its own sake alone, and that poverty is disgraceful however borne; a homage which, while it is sinful everywhere, can not be practiced in the sanctuary without offering peculiar insult to the throne of God. J. H.

5. God is wanting to no creature. Though *the*

godly rich have goodly portions here, they *have God for their portion too*. And though the godly poor are without temporal abundance, they have the riches of the gospel, “the unsearchable riches of Christ.” God in mercy warns and teaches (in his word) both rich and poor. Blessed are they who, in lowliness of mind and poverty of spirit, receive the word as from the Lord. **Rich in faith.** Both poor and rich should aspire after that faith which is God’s gift, and which will make *all* the recipients of it *rich indeed*; rich in the pardon, mercy, strength, and righteousness of the Lord!

6. **Despised the poor.** God never made a

creature for contempt. "Whoso reproacheth the poor despiseth his maker"—that is, contemns the wise dispensation of God. The existence of the poor is one of the settled constitutions and laws of Providence; and it is necessary for the uses and services of the world. T. M.

8. The main idea running through the whole Epistle is that of the permanence of the law and of moral obligation under the Christian dispensation. The law is taken in its deepest sense; it is to him the expression of absolute good. He does not speak, in fact, so much of particular precepts of the law as of the law regarded as an indivisible whole, and restored to that unity which is inseparable from spirituality. The royal law is a law of love, a perfect law, and a law of liberty. It is no mere external commandment; it is a spiritual law to be engrafted into the heart of man. It is to be observed that James preserves a complete silence as to the ceremonial law; he says not a single word about it. We find him in his Epistle just as we have seen him in the Acts; he does not attach any universal obligation to the observance of the Mosaic law; he himself conforms to its rites only because of his nationality; but he insists alone on the great and eternal principle of all morality—conformity to the will of God. *De P.*—Many duties may be done on lower motives without a divine respect to the commands and glory of God. But renewing grace subjects the soul to the whole royalty of the law, uniformly inclines it to express obedience to all its precepts, because they are pure and derived from the eternal spring of purity. It mortifies concupiscence and quickens to every good work from a principle of love to God, and in this is distinguished from the most refined unregenerate morality. *Bates.*

Thy neighbor as thyself. The term *neighbor* includes every creature of God that needeth a blessing and can be blessed. Christianity instructs the hearts of her disciples to take home to their warmest charities and prayers every fellow-man, of whatever nation or religious faith. It creates a spirit in man which sends him abroad with both hands full of all that can bless and endow human existence; which sends him especially with proffers of salvation in the name of Christ to the worldly and graceless, who are wont to enter no churches, to read no Bibles, to listen to no mercy. Under the gospel, man is not all inhumanity to man. Heart does meet heart; does warm and grieve at the call of sorrow and need; if another be burdened, feels itself the pressure; if he be delivered, exults in the emancipation. Certainly heaven has not a mightier coadjutor on the earth than man's feeling for man, when baptized under Christianity with the Holy Ghost and with fire. *White.*

Ye do well. God has his measuring lines and his canons, called the Ten Commandments; they are written in our flesh and blood. The sum of them is: "What thou wouldest have done to thyself, the same do thou to another." God presses upon this point, saying: "Such measure as thou metest, the same shall be measured to thee again." With this measuring line has God marked the whole world. They that live and do thereafter, well it is with them, for God richly rewards them in this life. *Luther.*

10. This law is the law of perfection. He who understands it resembles that hero so frequently celebrated in history, who believed that he had done nothing so long as anything remained for him to do. No relation of his life, no moment of his career, no part of his duty, can be withdrawn from this universal empire of the moral law. To obey in everything, to obey always, to obey perfectly—such is the unchangeable rule of his conduct. The question with him is not about enjoyment, or power, or life, but about obedience. The laws of nature may change, those of duty remain. The universe may dissolve, the moral law continues. A. V.—Its precepts are not to be taken severally, but altogether, as they make one entire law and rule of righteousness, the contempt reflecting upon the whole law when it is violated in one point, as he that wrongeth one member wrongeth the whole man or body of which he is a part. It is the *voluntary and allowed neglect* of any part of the law that makes us guilty of the violation of the whole law. All the commands are equal in regard of God; they are all ratified by the same authority which man contemns when he makes his own will the measure of obedience. The law is like a chain which is dissolved by the loosening of one link. True love is called a fulfilling of the whole law; and, on the other hand, *one allowed sin* is virtually a violation of the whole law. T. M.

When men speak of the consequences of a *single sin* as unduly severe, they forget the nature of sin itself. To sin is not merely to rebel against a holy and good being—the law, on obedience to which is suspended the happiness of the moral universe—but it is a deliberate rejection of the authority of God and submission of the soul to the desires of the human heart. F. W.—The law demands absolute control where it enters, and when it moves it moves always with the full weight of its command, condensing the whole strength of its blessing on every point of occupation, and accepting none but unconditional submission. If you single out some one chosen indulgence, however secret—a dubious custom in business, a fault of the tongue or temper—and placing your hand over that reply to the all-searching commandment of the Most High: "This I can not let go; this is too sweet to me, or too prof-

itable to me, or too tightly interwoven with my constitutional predilections, or too hard to be put off"—then the quality of a disciple is not in you. There is a portion of your being which you do not mean, or try, to consecrate to heaven. And that single persistent offense vitiates the whole character. F. D. H.—There is no sin so small but it tends to the utmost wickedness that can possibly be committed. An irreverent thought of God tends to no less than blasphemy and atheism; a slight grudge of another tends to no less than murder; and though at first they seem to play only singly about the heart, yet within a while they will mortally wound it. *Bp. Hopkins.*

11. Here is a proof of the intention of the former sentence: that we are not to look to the *matter of the command*, as to how far it complies with our desires and interest, but to the *authority of the Lawgiver*. The apostle gives an instance in the sixth and seventh commandments. God, that hath said one, hath said both. They are precepts of the same law and Lawgiver; and therefore, in the violation of one of these laws, the authority of the law is violated. He proves that the whole law had an equal obligation upon the conscience, because he that said the one said the other. God's will is motive enough to obedience. Every sin is an *affront to God's sovereignty*, as if *his will* were not reason sufficient; and an affront to *his wisdom*, as if he did not know what was good for men; and to *his justice*, as if the ways of God were unequal!

12. The apostle had been mentioning, in the twenty-sixth verse of the first chapter, *speech*, the guidance of the tongue, and in this chapter *actions*; and now he joins his directions and says, "So *speake* ye and so *do*" (as relating to the case before you) as persons who "shall be judged by the law of liberty." He was addressing Christians—persons not under the law as a covenant, but under grace. Believers are freed from the bondage and terror of the law, yet not from the obedience of it. The law in the hands of Christ is a law of liberty, not a law of license to sin, for Christ is not the minister of sin. T. M.—There is no proper liberty but under rule, and in the sense of rule. It holds high sisterhood with law, nay, it is twin-born with law itself. Even our existence droops and drags a chain if it can not touch some principled way of order, to be ennobled by it. There is, in fact, no bondage so dreadfully sterile as vagabondage; that which strays and straggles where it will, and finds no hand of discipline ever laid upon it. H. B.—No one denies the perfection, the sublimity of the gospel morality; men indeed seem to feel a sort of self-complacency, a satisfaction in celebrating it, with a view to the conclusion, more or less explicitly stated, that morality constitutes the whole gospel. This is, how-

ever, not less than absolutely to mistake the bond that unites in man thought with sentiment and belief with action. Man is grander and less easy to satisfy than superficial moralists pretend; the law of his life is for him, in the profound instinct of his soul, necessarily connected with the secret of his destiny; and it is only the Christian dogma that gives to Christian ethics the royal authority of which they stand in need to govern and to regenerate humanity. *Guizot.*

13. To be unmerciful is a sin most unsuitable to grace. We pray, "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." God's love to us ought to melt the soul, and affect us not only with contrition toward God, but with compassion to our brethren. To be *unmerciful* is unlike God; *he* gives and forgives. Unmercifulness is twofold; it neither *gives* nor *forgives*. T. M.

14-20. True faith evinces itself in fraternal consideration and charity. Dead and formal faith betrays itself in heartless selfishness. Such is the teaching of this famous passage which many writers have been at pains to "reconcile" with Paul's doctrine of gratuitous justification. But we have only to observe with common fairness the scope of each apostle, in order to see that the one in no wise opposes or weakens the other's teaching. Paul, writing against legalists, affirms that a sinner is justified before God by grace through faith in Christ, without deeds of the law. James, writing against formalism, selfishness, and pride within the Church, declares that a Christian who says, "I have faith," and does not live and act as a believer ought, condemns himself. Paul teaches that we must be in union with Christ by faith, as the branch is in the vine, else we perish. James teaches that the branch which appears to be in the vine must bear fruit, else its union is a mere semblance, and it will be, as so much dead wood, cut away. D. F.—Paul says, Faith *only* is that which justifies us, not works. But James says, "Not a faith which is without works." There will be works with faith, as there is thunder with lightning; but just as it is not the thunder but the lightning, the lightning without the thunder, that strikes the tree, so it is not the works which justify. Put it in one sentence: *Faith alone justifies; but not the faith which is alone.* God reckons the trust in him as righteousness, because it is the fountain and the root of righteousness, being, indeed, the life divine in the soul. He reckons it as such (that is, he justifies the soul that has it) without works—that is, before works are done, and not because of the works. But, then, that faith will not be without works; for the fountain *must* flow on, and the tree *must* grow, and the life of God in the soul, sanguine trust in God, *must* spring up with acts. F. W. R.

14. The apostle does not write, "If any man

have faith," but, "If any man say he hath faith"! He that *hath faith* is sure of salvation, but not always he that *saieth* he hath faith! In this whole discourse the apostle's intention is to show, *not what justifies*, but *who is justified*; *not what faith does*, but *what faith is*: and the drift of the context is not to show that faith without works does not justify, but that a persuasion or assent *without works* is *not faith*; and the justification he speaks of is not so much *of the person as of the faith*. Can faith save him? That is, a *pretense* of faith. In the words "and hath not works," the apostle proves it is but *saying* they have faith, if there be not works and fruits of it. Where there is faith there will be works. Three things incline the soul to duty: a forcible principle, a mighty aid, a high aim; all these *are* where faith is. The forcible principle is God's love; the mighty aid is God's spirit; the high aim is God's glory! The *next two verses* show he means such a faith as is in the *tongue* and the lips, such a faith as is *alone and by itself*; in the seventeenth verse he speaks of such a faith as the devils may have, and in the nineteenth such a faith as is "dead," that is, no more to be accounted *real faith* than a dead man can be accounted a man!

15, 16. The apostle compares faith and charity, and shows that pretenses of faith avail no more than pretenses of charity. He says that an excellent way to discover your deceitful dealing with God is to put the case fairly and honestly, and to parallel it with your own dealings one with another. You will not count *words* liberality, neither will God count *pretenses* faith. Yet *words* argue that you have a knowledge of duty, while *bare words* show that you want a heart for it!

17. A naked profession of faith is no better than a verbal charity; God looks upon it as dead, cold, and useless. By "works," the apostle does not only intend acts of charity, but all other fruits and operations of faith. If faith have not works, it "is dead." The allusion is to a corpse or a dead plant, which has only an outward similitude and likeness to those which are living; it is dead in regard of root, and dead in regard of fruits; it is void of the life of Christ, and void of good fruits. Operation or motion is always an argument and effect of life. The words "being alone" denote the emptiness, barrenness, and nakedness of such profession. A living faith will be active, and let itself be seen by some gracious effects. Faith is in truth the life of our lives, the soul that animates the whole body of obedience. Faith is not always alike lively, but where it is true it is always living. T. M.—Our religion is one half the loving adoration of God; the other half is the loving service of the brother whom we have seen—our fellow-man. Get down on your knees, alone, or you will begin

no work aright; and then up and be doing! Our Lord gave it for the *creed* of his Church that faith justifies. He gave it for the *life* of his followers that faith without works is dead. F. D. H.

18. The dispute lies between *faith pretended* and *faith discovered by works*. Works are not a ground of confidence, but an evidence; not the foundations of faith, but the encouragements of assurance. T. M.—The husks of emptiness rustle in every wind, the full corn in the ear holds up its golden fruit to the Lord of the harvest; a good man's faith is manifested by his labors, standing not in words, but in the demonstration of the Spirit, a faith that works by love to the purifying of the heart. Whittier.

19. *Thou believest that there is one God*. From this single expression it is abundantly manifest that the whole of this disputation is not concerning faith, but that common knowledge of God which no more joins a person to God than the sight of the sun elevates him to heaven; whereas it is certain that by faith we draw near to God. Besides, it would be absurd if any one should assert that the devils have faith; but James here prefers them to hypocrites. The devil trembles, says he, at the mention of God, because, while he acknowledges him as his judge, he stands in awe of him: therefore, he who acknowledges God, but despiseth him, is something worse than the devil. Calv.—Devils believe there is a God, that there is a Christ, that he is the Son of God, that Christ died for sinners; but can the devils be *justified* or *saved*? Then never rest in the mere faith of devils. A Christian's faith must go beyond the faith of devils; nay, beyond the faith of other men—beyond the faith of hypocrites and pretenders, who "*say*" they have faith! Bare assent to the articles of religion does not infer true faith. True faith unites to Christ. There is not only *assent* in faith, but *consent*; not only an assent to the truth of the word, but a consent to take Christ, to receive him into our hearts as prophet, priest, and king; to be taught, redeemed, and governed by him! T. M.—Faith, as a grace in us, severed from the righteousness of Christ, is only a beholder of things, but not a justifier of persons; and that, if it lay not hold of and applieth not that righteousness which is in Christ, it carries us no further than to the devils. Bun.

20. The disputation is, not about the *cause of justification*, but what we should think of an empty faith. Works that are gracious are a proper, perpetual, and inseparable effect of faith; they are such effects as *do not give life to faith*, but *declare it*, as fruit does not *give life* to the tree, but *shows it forth*! "O vain man," empty professor, "barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus

Christ," wilt thou not know that an empty barren faith is a dead faith ?

21-23. James speaks of some special justification that Abraham received upon his offering of Isaac; and you will find that *from God* he then received a *justification OF HIS FAITH*, though thirty years before that he had received a *justification* of his person. When he was an idolater and ungodly, *then* God "called him" by his grace and justified him. "He believed, and it was counted to him for righteousness" (Gen. 15). But *now* when he offered up Isaac, his faith was justified to be true and right, for that command was for the trial of it. Therefore, upon his obedience, God did two things: renewed the promise of Christ to him (Gen. 22) and gave him a testimony and declaration of his sincerity. "Now I know that thou fearest God," saith Christ to him, who is there called "*the angel of the Lord*." Therefore Paul and James may be thus reconciled. Paul speaks of the justifying of a sinner from the curse of his natural condition and from the accusations of the law; James speaks of the justifying approbation of *that faith* by which we are thus accepted with God. And to this purpose Diodati remarks, "that justification in Paul is opposite to the condemnation of a sinner in general, and justification in James is opposite to the condemnation of a hypocrite in particular." In Paul's sense a sinner is absolved, in James's sense a believer is approved; and so, without exception, the apostles are agreed.

24. Not justified by a bare, naked profession or a dead, vain faith, such as consists in a mere assent or speculation, which is *so far from justifying that it is not properly faith*. T. M.—When I write of justification before God from the dreadful curse of the law, then I must speak of nothing but grace, Christ, the promise, and faith; but when I speak of our justification before men, then I must join to these good works: for grace, Christ, and faith are things invisible, and so not to be seen by another, otherwise than through a life that befits so blessed

a gospel as has declared unto us the remission of our sins for the sake of Jesus Christ. He, then, that would have forgiveness of sins, and so be delivered from the curse of God, must believe in the righteousness and blood of Christ; but he that would show to his neighbors that he hath truly received this mercy of God must do it by good works, for all things else to them is but talk, as a tree is known to be what it is, whether of this or that kind, by its fruit. Bun.—"We never dream," says Calvin, "either of a faith destitute of good works, or of a justification unattended by them." And there is falsehood in neither of these statements, nor any real contradiction between them. Only the truth has a double front. Facing toward formalism, its front is grace; facing toward the conscience of a pardoned sinner, rejoicing in hope, its front is good works. R. D. H.

25. Purposely he hath joined together two persons so very opposite, that he might the more clearly demonstrate that no person, of whatever condition, family, or rank, was ever accounted among the number of the justified and the faithful without good works. Calv.—She was "justified by works"—that is, approved to be sincere and honored by God before all the congregation, there being a special charge to spare and to save her and her household, when all her countrymen were slain; and she being afterward joined in marriage with a prince of Israel.

26. Here is the conclusion of the whole argument, showing how little is to be ascribed to an empty profession of faith without works. The body without the spirit "is dead," that is, can not perform the functions and offices of life or of a man. So faith without works, or, in other words, *dead faith*; and *dead faith* can not be *true faith* any more than a carcass can be a true man! A true faith can not be without works; so that we must understand the apostle as referring here to an external profession of belief, which, because of some resemblance to what is true, is *called* faith. T. M.

Section 353.

JAMES iii. 1-18.

1 My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed,
 8 and hath been tamed of mankind: but the tongue can no man tame; *it is* an unruly evil,
 9 full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we
 10 men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth bless-
 11 ing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth
 12 at the same place sweet *water* and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive ber-
 13 ries? either a vine, figs? so *can* no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. Who *is* a wise
 man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his
 14 works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts,
 15 glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is*
 16 earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion and every evil
 17 work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to
 18 be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And
 the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

THE tongue may be made an instrument of evil. Many is the mind into which the tongue of the vile has introduced some foul image, that has left a serpent's trail behind it, as it crawled in and coiled itself about the heart's core, folding it like a guardian demon—not angel—for final doom. But preëminently the tongue should be consecrated. The words that we speak should be words of truth and soberness. Liberty of speech is a noble privilege, but God gives no liberty to speak the teachings of sin. Our freedom is linked with accountability. How much holy work, if the tongue was a consecrated thing, might be done for God by it! Not in the pulpit only, or in the hall of debate, or on the lecturer's platform, or in the courts of justice, but in the daily walks of life, in humble scenes, by the fireside, in familiar conversation, in confidential intercourse. If the gospel of Christ dwelt in every heart, and the love of Christ on every tongue, all of us would become evangelists. Our words in the ears of a dying world would be as the message of a prophet, rich with the peace and hope of heaven. E. H. G.

It is an argument of a candid, ingenuous mind to delight in the good name and commendation of others; to pass by their defects, and take notice of their virtues; to speak and hear of those willingly, and not endure either to speak or hear of the other; for in this indeed you may be little less guilty than the evil speaker, in taking pleasure in it though you speak it not. He that willingly drinks in tales and calumnies will, from the delight he hath in evil hearing, slide insensibly into the humor of evil speaking. Until a Christian sets himself to an inward watchfulness over his heart, not suffering in it any thought that is uncharitable, or any vain self-esteem upon the sight of others' frailties, he will be subject to somewhat of this evil humor in the tongue or ear. For the evil of guile in the tongue, a sincere heart, *truth in the inward parts*, powerfully redresses it; therefore it is expressed (Ps. 15: 2), *That speaketh the truth from his heart*. Seek much after this, to speak nothing with God nor men but what is the sense of a single unfeigned heart. Oh, sweet truth! excellent but rare sincerity! he that *loves that truth within*, and who is himself at once *the truth and the life*, He alone can work it there! Seek it of him. L.

1. James is not here dissuading from brotherly admonitions, which the Spirit so often and so much recommends to us; but he is condemning that immoderate desire, which arises from pride and ambition, of exalting ourselves above our neighbor, of reviling, censuring, backbiting, and maliciously inquiring out everything which they can turn to his disadvantage. *Calv.*—Those persons who by uncharitable words and censures condemn others, and yet are the servants of sin themselves, add malice to their hypocrisy, and thus are liable to a double condemnation.

2. When the apostle Paul gives us the anatomy of wickedness in all the members of the body, he stays longest on the organs of speech, and goes over

them all (Rom. 3: 13-15). The sin of the tongue is one into which we easily fall, partly by reason of that quick intercourse that there is between the tongue and the heart, partly because speech is an act which is performed without labor, and partly because the evils of the tongue *are pleasing to many*—pleasing to utter, and pleasing to hear, and marvelously in accordance with unregenerated nature! T. M.

"A perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body." He is entire, powerful, because he has not spent his strength. Few men suspect how much mere talk fritters away spiritual energy—that which should be spent in action spends itself in words. The fluent boaster is not the man who is steadiest

before the enemy. Loud utterance of virtuous indignation against evil from the platform, or in the drawing-room, is wasted, taken away from the work of coping with evil; the man has so much less left. And hence he who restrains that love of talk lays up a fund of spiritual strength. F. W. R.

3, 4. The drift is to show that little things are able to guide great bodies, as a bridle and a rudder; and so the guiding of the tongue, "a little member," may be of as great use and consequence in moral matters. By the bridle the horse is checked and guided; by the rudder the ship is steered and preserved from danger; and to this effect Solomon says, "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles." T. M.

5. For "*how great a matter a little fire kindleth*," read, "how great a forest is kindled by how small a fire." A.—You can not stop the consequences of a slander; you may publicly prove its falsehood, you may sift every atom, explain and annihilate it, and yet years after you had thought that all had been disposed of for ever, the mention of a name wakes up associations in the mind of some one who heard the calumny, but never heard or never attended to the refutation, or who has only a vague and confused recollection of the whole. F. W. R.

6. If vain words, the signs and immediate effects of a vain mind, shall sadly increase our accounts, how much more all the contentious, fierce, and revengeful words; the detracting, false, contumelious, and injurious words; the impure, filthy, and contagious words; the profane, blasphemous, and impious words that "flow from the evil treasure of the heart"? Oh, their dreadful number and oppressing weight! Bates.

Defileth the whole body. When a man speaks evil, he will commit it. When the tongue has the boldness to talk of sin, the rest of the members have the boldness to act. First we *think*, then *we speak*, then *we do*! Men will say it is *but talk*; be not deceived, a pestilent tongue will infect other members! Nay, it sets on fire the "whole course" or circle of nature, diffusing its evils into all conditions and states of life. There is no faculty that the tongue does not poison; from the understanding to the locomotive; it violently stirs up the will and affections, and makes the hands and feet "swift to shed blood." There is no action that it does not reach. T. M.

Set on fire of hell. The apostle means literally what he says—slander is diabolical. The first illustration we give of this is contained in the very meaning of the word devil. "Devil," in the original, means traducer or slanderer. The first introduction of a demon spirit is found connected with a slanderous insinuation against the Almighty, implying that his command had been given in envy of his

creature. And in the magnificent imagery of the book of Job, the accuser is introduced with a demoniacal and malignant sneer, attributing the excellence of a good man to interested motives. F. W. R.

7, 8. Our own art and skill and courage are able to tame the fiercest beasts and make them serviceable. But there is more rebellion and untamableness in our own affections than in the fiercest beast or reptile. The apostle does not say *none* can tame the tongue, but "no man"; no human art or power can find a sufficient remedy or curb for it! The horse, the camel, the elephant do not tame themselves; nor man himself. Man tames the beast, but *God tames man*. T. M.

Full of deadly poison. Formed to be the messenger of peace and love, knitting hearts together in a mutual bond of amity, it has become the fomentor of jealousy, distrust, and ill-will, the lash of uncharitableness, and the weapon of hatred. Intended to be the interpreter of sincerity and the propagator of truth, it has been made the ready instrument of falsehood and deceit. Created to speak the praises of God, and to give utterance to the feelings of thankfulness, it is wasted on the follies of worldliness and self, and profaned by the awful accents of impurity, impiety, and blasphemy. It has become the index of the corruption of our moral nature, the test by which we may, in a great degree, gauge and measure the spiritual unsoundness and sinfulness of our souls; "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." J. J.

9. Here he exhibits the good and bad use of the tongue: the good use, to bless God; the bad use, to curse men. T. M.—Man, he says, was made in the image of God; to slander man is to slander God; to love what is good in man is to love it in God. Love is the only remedy for slander; no set of rules or restrictions can stop it; we may denounce, but we shall denounce in vain. The radical cure of it is charity—"out of a pure heart and faith unfeigned" to feel what is great in the human character, to recognize with delight all high and generous and beautiful actions, to find a joy even in seeing the good qualities of your bitterest opponents, and to admire those qualities even in those with whom you have the least sympathy—this is the only spirit which can heal the love of slander and of calumny. F. W. R.

10. It is obvious that blessing and cursing do not become the same mouth. A good man should be uniform and constant. The same heart can not be occupied by God and the devil, nor the same tongue be employed to such different uses. T. M.

13. The term here rendered "conversation" signifies the whole action of life, the development of character, the way a man works, turns, or behaves himself in the world. The use of knowledge

is to guide and elevate the life. Wise men, or well-educated men, are those that make what they know illuminate and enrich what they do. If you would find out who among you is endued with knowledge, and who is not, you can apply this proof. Inquire who puts his knowledge into a "good conversation"—a noble or beautiful manner of living. F. D. H.

With meekness. Meekness is love at school—love at the Saviour's school. It is Christian lowliness. It is the disciple learning to know himself; learning to fear and distrust and abhor himself. It is the disciple practicing the sweet but self-emptying lesson of putting on the Lord Jesus, and finding all his righteousness in that righteous Lord. It is the disciple learning the defects of his own character, and taking hints from hostile as well as friendly monitors. It is the disciple praying and watching for the improvement of his talents, the mellowing of his temper, and the amelioration of his character. It is the living Christian at the Saviour's feet, learning of him who is meek and lowly, and finding rest for his own soul. *Hamilton.*

15. Earthly, sensual, devilish. The distinction is admirably drawn. The evils of the world may be reduced to these three heads: covetousness, sensuality, pride, suitable to the treble bait that is in the world: profits, pleasures, honors. The three great ends of our creation are our salvation, the good of others, and the glory of God. But, when men melt away their days in pleasure, they neglect the great salvation; covetousness is the bane of charity; and pride and self-seeking do quite divert us from serving God's glory. All sins grow from these roots.

16. Such wisdom as serves envy and strife can not be good wisdom, for it brings forth evil effects. Wisdom from above is for holiness and meekness; wisdom from below is for confusion and profaneness. For an envious, contentious spirit is an unquiet, disorderly spirit. Nothing more discomposes the mind than envy. The contentment and felicity

of others is the very sorrow of the envious. Satan works upon nothing so much as envy and discontent; such a spirit is exactly fit for Satan's lure! T. M.

17. "Lord, set a watch on my mouth; keep the door of my lips": this prayer of David must constantly be ours. If with this be combined the earnest striving after the wisdom which cometh down from above, which James recommends to us, we shall also on this path be preserved from many false steps. *Van O.*—**Without hypocrisy.** The praise of a hypocrite is not of God, but of man; the praise of a Christian is not of man, but of God. The former desires to seem good, that he may be admired; the latter to be good, that God may be honored. *Secker.*

18. They that with their peaceable endeavors unite a care for righteousness shall have a *threefold* blessing—*increase of grace*, with peace for the present, and shall reap the crop of all hereafter. Whatever we do in this life is seed. As we sow, so we reap. The metaphor is used in Scripture both ways, in point of sin and duty. It may be long first, but the crop will be according to the seed. This is our comfort against all the difficulties and inconveniences that holy and peaceable endeavors meet with in the world, *your reward is with God*; you have a pledge of it in your own souls. While strifes lessen grace in others, *you* grow and thrive, and you shall reap in glory. T. M.—God abides none but charitable discussions, those that are well grounded and well governed with Christian charity and wise moderation, those whose beginning is equity and whose end is peace. If we must differ, let these be the conditions. Let every one of God's ministers be ambitious of that praise which Gregory Nazianzen gives to Athaseus, viz., to be an *adamant* to them that strike, and a *loadstone* to them that dissent from him—the one not to be removed with wrong, the other to draw those hearts who disagree; so the fruit of righteousness shall be sown in peace of them that make peace. *Bp. H.*

Section 354.

JAMES iv. 1-17.

1 FROM whence *come* wars and fightings among you? *come they* not hence, *even* of your
2 lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and
3 cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive
4 not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and
5 adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever
6 ture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more

grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.
 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw
 8 nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and purify
 9 *your* hearts, *ye* doubleminded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be
 10 turned to mourning, and *your* joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the
 11 Lord, and he shall lift you up. Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh
 evil of *his* brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law:
 12 but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one law-
 13 giver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another? Go to now,
 ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year,
 14 and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For
 what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth
 15 away. For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.
 16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. Therefore to him that
 17 knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Under the laws of Providence, life is a probation; probation is a succession of temptations; temptations are emergencies; and for emergencies we need the preparation and the safeguard of prayer. We have duties which are perilous. We meet surprises of evil. We struggle with a wily adversary. We feel perplexities of conscience, in which holy decision depends on the mind we bring to them. We encounter disappointments which throw us back from our hopes rudely. We have difficult labors, in which we sometimes do not know what to do. We have an *unknown* experience opening upon us every hour. Providence is thus continually calling for the aids of prayer; and in a soul which is keen in its vigilance, prayer will be continually responsive to providences, often anticipative of them. There is often a beautiful *alliance* between providence and grace in these experiences. A Christian who will be studious of his own history will probably discover that often the *occasions* for such fragmentary communings with God follow hard upon these secret incitements to them. Emergencies come soon for which they are needed. The Holy Spirit has anticipated them, and sought to forearm us. Providence and grace thus hover over us, not far asunder. In this view, those Biblical exhortations to prayer, which men have sometimes deemed extravagant, are transparently rational: "*Continue in prayer*"; "*Continue instant in prayer*"; "*Pray without ceasing*"; "*Rejoice in the Lord always!*" Such exhortations contemplate a state, not insulated acts, of prayer. They *fit in* well to the system of things in which we are living. A. P.

1-5. The apostle had in the former chapter spoken against strifes as proceeding from envy, and pressed them to a holy wisdom; he here speaks against strifes and contentions as proceeding from other lusts, as ambition, covetousness, etc., which made them vex one another, and break out into unseemly brawlings. He proceeds by way of question and conviction, as appealing to their consciences. T. M.—Nothing can be more clear than that far the greater part of the evils we suffer ourselves, and of those we bring upon others, arise from the dominion of the passions. From whence come murders, robberies, oppression, and fraud, breaches of friendship and hospitality, ruin, infamy, and remorse, confusion and distress to whole families, the destruction of health and repose, the dissipation of fortunes, but from the violence of headstrong and unruly desires, bursting forth like a torrent upon mankind, throwing down every obstacle, and breaking through every the most sacred fence that opposes itself to their impetuous course? P.—Unruly

lusts within are the cause of the unquietnesses and contentions abroad in the world. One man will have his corrupt will, and another his, and thus they flock and jostle one another; and by the cross encounters of their purposes, as flints meeting, they strike out these sparks that set all on fire. L.

3. **Consume upon lusts.** We would have something from God to give to our enjoyments: health and long life, that we may live pleasantly; wealth, that we may fare sumptuously every day; estates, that we may raise up our name and families; success in our undertakings, that we may live independently of God's providence. T. M.

4. In every man there is a root of *selfishness*. So long as we follow the impulses of our nature, we are apt to refer everything to some selfish end, to our own pleasure, to our profit, to our advancement and exultation. Again, in every man there is a root of *worldly-mindedness*. Our aims, our purposes, our wishes, our hopes, our fears are all hemmed in by the world, and summed up in it. Moreover, in every

man there is a root of *fleshly-mindedness*. His soul is drugged from childhood upward with the stimulants and opiates of the senses. In every man's heart there is this triple root of sin—no one who knows his own heart will dispute it—the root of selfishness, from which spring self-indulgence, self-will, self-esteem, and the whole brood of vanity and pride; the root of worldly-mindedness, which issues in ambition, in covetousness, in the love of money, in the desire of advancement, of honor, of power; and the root of carnal-mindedness, from which, if it be not cut down betimes, and kept diligently from shooting up again, the lusts of the flesh will sprout rankly, and overrun and stifle the soul. *Hare.*

"The friendship of the world is enmity with God." There is a similar expression used by Paul. "The carnal mind is enmity against God"—*averse and adverse*! So does the world not only withdraw the heart from God, but oppose him. They who would join worldliness with religion seek to unite two of the most unsuitable things in the world! Worldly people are here called adulterers and adulteresses because of their unfaithfulness to God: they give their best affections to the world. Worldliness in Christians is most unsuitable to the marriage covenant, the covenant of grace, wherein God propounds himself to be all sufficient. T. M.

5. Envy is only a malignant, selfish hunger, casting its evil eye on the elevation or supposed happiness of others. The bitterness of it is not simply that it really wants what others have, but that the soul, gnawed by a deep spiritual hunger which it thinks not of, is so profoundly embittered that every kind of good it looks upon rasps it with a feeling of torment, and rouses a degree of impatience and ill nature, out of all terms of reason. It is the feeling of a prodigal, or spendthrift, who, after he has spent all, vents his ill nature on everybody but himself, and hates the good possessed by others because it is not his own. How many human souls are gnawed through and through, all their lives long, by this devilish hunger, envy! H. B.

6. *Giveth more grace.* The world gives a *little*, that it may give no more; but Christ gives "that he may give." He gives a little grace, that he may give grace upon grace. He gives a little comfort, that he may give fullness of joy. Souls that are rich in grace, labor after greater measures of grace out of love to grace, and because of an excellency that they see in grace. Grace is a very sparkling jewel, and he who loves it and pursues after it for its own native beauty has much of it within him. *Brooks.*

Resisteth the proud. Of all the evils of our nature, there is none more natural and universal than pride; the grand wickedness, self-exalting in our own and others opinion. Of that

complicated first sin, certainly pride was a main ingredient—that which the unbelief going before and the disobedience following after were both servants to—and ever since it sticks still deep in our nature. So that Augustine says truly, "That which first overcame man is the last thing he overcomes." Some sins, comparatively, may die before us, but this hath life in it, sensibly, as long as we. It is as the heart of all, the first living and the last dying; and hath this advantage that, whereas other sins are fomented by one another, this feeds even on virtues and graces, as a moth that breeds in them and consumes them; even in the finest of them, if it be not carefully looked to. This hydra, as one head of it is cut off, another rises up. It will secretly cleave to the best actions and prey upon them. And therefore is there so much need that we continually watch and fight and pray against it, and be restless in the pursuit of real and deep humiliation, daily seeking to advance further in it; to be nothing, and desire to be nothing. L.—God abhors other sinners, but against the proud he professes open defiance and hostility. This was the sin that turned angels into devils. You may trace the story of pride from paradise to this day. Other sins are more hateful to man, because they bring disgrace and have more of baseness and turpitude in them; whereas pride seems to have a kind of bravery in it. But the Lord hates it, because it is a sin that sets itself *most against him*. Other sins are against God's laws, but pride is against God's sovereignty. Pride does not only withdraw the heart *from God*, but lifts it up *against God*. Other sins are more patient of reproof, for conscience will frequently consent to the reproofs of God's word, but pride first blinds the mind, and then arms the affections—it lays the judgment asleep, and then awakens anger. T. M.

Those showers of grace that slide off from the lofty mountains rest on the valleys and make them fruitful. *He giveth grace to the lowly*; loves to bestow it where there is most room to receive it, and most return of ingenuous and entire praises upon the receipt. And such is the humble heart; and truly, as much humility gains much grace, so it grows by it. He whom the Lord loads most with his richest gifts stoops lowest, as pressed down with the weight of them; the free love of God humbles that heart most to which it is most manifested. L.

7. There is a *threefold submission* to God: of our *carnal hearts* to his holiness; of our *proud hearts* to his mercy; and of our *revolting hearts* to his sovereignty; and all this that we may be pure, humble, and obedient! T. M.—The submission that makes no merit of its cross; that does not venture to choose one lighter than the Lord lays on us; that does not seek the ability to bear it in the delirium of pleasure, or the drugs of the world, or

the deadening influence of time and change; that does not compare your cross with those borne by others, or ask an explanation of it till the day break and the shadows flee away, but bears it all with a child's love for His sake who did not impose it till He had borne all the might and sharpness of all the world's crosses together—this is the victory. The earth has no fatal fear and no insupportable sorrow in it after you have come to this; you are free in a boundless liberty, strong in immortal strength, and at peace in a peace too deep for the understanding to explain, or any sufferings to disturb. F. D. H.

Resist the devil. It is not more Satan who destroys us than we who destroy ourselves at his bidding. Even in his boldest achievements he still does not create but pervert; he is to the last a subordinate and permissive agent in the territory of God. It is not to infuse new powers that he labors, but by every art to corrupt and poison the old to ruin! W. A. B.—God draws; Satan only tempts. Satan is powerful, but not omnipotent; he is cunning, but neither omniscient nor wise. He has an ally within us, but he has never yet understood a human heart. God alone can search the heart; he alone can draw it, can open, can melt, can fill it. Satan can not draw; he can not reach the inmost depth of yourself; he has no right over you; he has no power except the power you give him. Only resist, only show your face as conscious of your divine origin, only adore God, and Satan, powerless and abashed, will flee from you. There is no *real* connection between us and Satan. A. S.—Whenever one of us, wearied and grieved with the burden of his sins, comes to Christ for salvation; whenever one of us, feeling the yoke upon him of some inveterate evil habit, wicked temper, or deadly lust, kneels down seriously and humbly before God, and asks him for Jesus Christ's sake to forgive and to cleanse him; to pardon all that is past, and to send into his heart that Holy Spirit who is all liberty, and love, and peace, and strength; and when, in answer to this prayer (as will be the case *if he only prays on and faints not*) he is set free—gradually, tardily it may be, but really, decisively, and at last completely—then does Christ conquer Satan. V.

8. There is no exhortation more solemn and profound, more fundamental, reaching into the very beginnings of spiritual life, and more comprehensive, embracing the deepest experience of divine grace, than these words: "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." No frequency of repetition can weaken their force or exhaust their meaning; but they grow in power and sweetness as we obey the command and test the truth of the promise. A. S.—Draw nigh, oh, every solitary soul, to Mary's Son! Let him draw nigh to you; he under-

stands the most reserved. He knows your unutterable secret without the telling, infinite in tenderness. He has watched your silent war, and waited with your waiting, and carried griefs just like yours. "If any heart will open the door to me, I will come in, and my Father will come." F. D. H.—**He will draw nigh to you.** He himself, although he may use various channels and instruments—it may be affliction or prosperity; it may be through the voice of Nature or of Providence; it may be through the word or the example of a Christian—yet it is God himself. But, of all instruments and channels, the written word is of the utmost importance; it stands supreme. It is through Scripture, eminently, that God draws nigh to the soul. But let us never mistake the reading of the Scripture for that real drawing nigh of the living God, toward which it is the great help, and of which it is the great witness. Scripture is not the *substitute* for God's drawing nigh to us, it is only the channel; the written word of the *past* must become the living word of the *present*. A. S.

9. When James says, "Let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy into heaviness," he means that it is a good exchange to put away carnal joy for godly sorrow; for then we have *that* in the duty which we expected in the sin, and in a more pure, full, and sweet way. When the world repents of its joy, the Christian will never repent of his sorrow. T. M.

10. No humility is perfect and proportioned but that which makes us hate ourselves as corrupt, but respect ourselves as immortal—the humility that kneels in the dust, but gazes on the skies! W. A. B.—Bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Order thy life according to the life of Jesus, after Jesus hath put his life within thee. Humble thyself, so shalt thou be exalted. Be poor, so shalt thou be rich. Have nothing, so canst thou receive all things. A. C.—Seek here to be humble with the humble Jesus, and he will exalt thee. *Seek* humility, and thou wilt find it, and when thou hast found it thou wilt love it, and by God's grace wilt not part with it; with it thou canst not perish. Yea, thou wilt reign for ever with Jesus, who was humbled for thee, and with the choirs in the heavenly dwellings. For there, too, thou wilt be humble, not as now in the need of all things, but in the possession of all things, in glory, and honor, and power, and beauty, and knowledge, and wisdom, of which we have but the faintest shadow here; and all from God and in God. Pusey.

11. **Speak not evil.** The bitter root of this iniquity is that wicked self-love that dwells in us. Every man is naturally his own grand idol, would be esteemed and honored by any means; and to magnify that idol *self* kills the good name and esteem

of others in sacrifice to it. Hence is the narrow, observing eye and broad, speaking tongue-upon anything that tends to the dishonor of others. **One of another.** All of you that desire to walk as Christians, be very wary that you wrong not one another, and help not the wicked against you by your mutual misconstructions and miscensures one of another. Far be it from you to take pleasure in hearing others evil spoken of, whether unjustly or though it be some way deservedly; yet let it be always grievous to you and no way pleasing to hear such things, much less to speak of them. It is the devil's delight to be pleased with evil speakings. The Syrian calls him an *eater of slanders or calumnies*. L.

Judgeth the law. There are *three* things exempted from man's judicatory: *God's counsels, the Holy Scriptures, and the hearts of men.* We should not dogmatize and subject men to ordinances of our own making. It is too common for us to condemn everything that does not please us, as if our magisterial dictates were articles of faith. We must judge as the word judges, or else we judge the word!

12. In spiritual things, none else but the Lord can give laws to the conscience; in external policy, the laws and edicts of men are to be observed. But here the apostle speaks of the internal government of the conscience where God alone judges, since God alone can give laws to the conscience. "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king" (Isa. 33: 22). Take these words in a spiritual sense, and they are *exclusive*. *The Lord and none other!*

13-15. Having before spoken against those that contemned the law, he now speaks against those that contemned Providence; promising themselves a long time in the world, and a happy accomplishment of their worldly projects, without any sense or thought of *their own frailty, or the sudden strokes of God.* In this verse the apostle does, as it were, personate them, and gives an accurate representation of their thoughts. T. M.

13. The great Lord of all has no part in this scheme. These little arrogant words, *we will*, thrust him out at once, and occupy his place. The persons here described undertake, without hesitation, to insure their lives against death, their bodies against sickness, and their effects against every casualty or hazard. They promise themselves that to-morrow they shall not only be alive, but in health to set out on their journey; that they shall meet with no cross accidents by the way, and that in due time they shall arrive at the city where their plan of business is to be carried into execution. What is still more extravagant, they promise upon life for a full year, and not upon life only, but on health of body

and soundness of mind during all that time. Nay, more, they assure themselves of success. "We will buy and sell, and get gain." They undertake that they shall have large profits from those to whom they sell, and cheap bargains from those of whom they buy. In a word, they speak as if everything relating to themselves and others were so dependent on their will that they might command the events which they desired, and dispose of all things according to their own pleasure. R. W.

14. Your life. The lowest view of life looks out upon it as no scene of the workings and revealings of the divine Spirit, but only as a hostelry where every guest is to seize on so many of the good things exposed as the laws of the place allow—to consume what the senses crave, regarding no other than sensual penalties—to grasp the largest handful of comfort irrespective of rights or services, and to push pleasure to the utmost pitch of intensity consistent with its continuance. Of course, this selfish hunt will take different directions, according to the ruling appetite; proceeding with some men by a cool calculation, and with others by passionate plunges of impulse. But the characteristic mark on all its phases is, that it disowns God. The whole eager race through which it strains its muscles ignores the spiritual presence. Religious accountability is an element foreign to it. Duty is a word without a meaning. Conscience is only one of the furies. Christ is a veiled figure. Stewardship is a visionary fancy. The curtain that drops over the grave is of stone, as immovable as it is impenetrable. F. D. H.

15. If the Lord will. Not to be fulfilled by the mere use of the words "please God," or of the letters D. V., when we speak of our future projects, but by a deep inner consciousness that the future is wrapped in utter uncertainty, that we can see no further than to what lies under our hand, and that even the cycle of the present day embraces more time than we have any right to calculate upon. E. M. G.—"We shall live, and do this or that." It is not enough, then, that God suffers us to live, but he must also by the same will suffer us to do, or act. The point is, that God's will concurs not only to our lives, but to our actions. It is by his conduct and blessing that all things come to pass. Our very counsels and wills are subject to the divine government, and he can turn them as it pleaseth him; and therefore we must not only *commit our ways* to his providence, but *commend our hearts to the tuition of his Spirit!* In short, all things are done by his will, and must be ascribed to his praise.

17. Sins of knowledge are most dangerous. They are more sins than others, as having more malice and contempt in them: contempt both of

the law of God and of God's kindness. Sins against knowledge have more of God's vengeance upon them. In the reprobate they are punished with great remorse and horror of conscience, or with hardness of heart, or with madness against the truth. Apostates become the greatest persecutors! Not only sins of commission but sins also of *omission* are aggravated by knowledge; "to him that knoweth to do good, and *doeth it not*, to him *it is sin*." Foul acts of sinful commission bring more shame and impress more horror upon the mind than bare neg-

lects; yet here we see that *every omission of a know duty is sin*. The rule, you see, is *positive*, enforcing duty, as well as *prohibitory*, forbidding *sin*; and according to the *knowledge* of it, so is the obligation. T. M.—The neglect of improving all the means, advantages, and opportunities of doing or receiving good will be a great part of that judgment. The Lord called his servants to an account for the talents committed to their trust, and required profit in proportion to their number and worth. *Bates.*

Section 355.

JAMES V. 1-20.

- 1 Go to now, *ye* rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon *you*.
- 2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is
- 3 cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as
- 4 it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the
- labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth:
- and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.
- 5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts,
- 6 as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned *and* killed the just; *and* he doth not resist
- 7 you. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husband-
- man waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he re-
- 8 ceive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming
- 9 of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be con-
- demned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.
- 10 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an ex-
- 11 ample of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure.
- Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is
- 12 very pitiful, and of tender mercy. But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither
- by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and
- 13 *your* nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation. Is any among you afflicted? let him pray.
- 14 Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of
- the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:
- 15 and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have
- 16 committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray
- one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man
- 17 availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnest-
- ly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and
- 18 six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth
- 19 her fruit. Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him
- 20 know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from
- death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

THERE is no more contradiction between a fixed order of laws and special answers to our asking, than there is between a general household arrangement for their children's good on the part of earthly parents, and their daily favors granted in answer to particular requests. Through all this stable and mighty system of irreversible decrees—laws of growth and decay, summer and winter, evening and morning, centripetal and centrifugal forces, regimen and health, cause and consequence—there plays for ever the silent presence of God, the unrestricted action of God's free will. So has he built the world, and organized its constitution. The balance of these two forces—law and liberty—is the wonder of the universe, the supernal sign set upon it. Before we pray, he is love itself; yet he hears the prayer, and sends a

blessing that could not have come without. The uniform shelter of laws that we can rely upon in our every-day business is merciful; and so are those direct, impressive tokens of his listening spirit, which make a part of the experience of devout souls that no reasoning can take away. His care extends to your lowly path each morning from street to street, as much as to the august pilgrimage of Arcturus along the "streets of stars," or to the rise and fall of empires, or the reformation that liberates nations. Believing this, I can no more hesitate to ask a divine direction for the details of my common life than for the salvation of my soul. What companions I shall be thrown among, what tasks I shall have brought me to do, what difficulties I shall have to encounter, what misunderstandings and consequent alienations I shall be rescued from, what words I shall be inwardly prompted to speak, what temptations I may be spared each time I go out of my house or return to it—these, and all the class of events they belong to, are the very material out of which salvation or ruin is wrought; and so they are fit subjects of prayer. They are things wherein God answers. For over the motions of heart and mind—others as well as my own—he holds an unceasing control. And if you watch the history of almost any hour, you will see many junctures in it where two ways parted before you, and the choice was more with God than yourself. In this spirit, and with this faith, a Christian will find no difficulty in asking for earthly good. If he does it regarding its moral connections and influences on character, it is lawful, reverent prayer; such prayer as was often on the lips of righteous men of old, and had signal answers: such prayer as James enjoins, citing Elijah as an example. F. D. H.

1-6. The first six verses are not so much an admonition as a denunciation, wherein the apostle does not so much *direct* them what to do as *foretell* what should be done to them, that the godly might be encouraged to the more patience under their oppressions; for *that* James infers plainly in the seventh verse.

2, 3. They would hoard up their goods and money, and suffer them to be eaten out by moths and dust, and *thus* to be corrupted or perish without any profit at all, rather than lay them out for good uses. God gave wealth, not that men should be *hoarders*, but *dispensers*. Covetousness brings the curse of God upon the estates of men. He sends corruption and the rust and the moth. There is nothing in the end gotten by rapine or tenacity, by greedy getting or close withholding. Learn then the meaning of that gospel riddle, that he that will save must lose; and the best way of bringing in, is laying out!

7. Be patient. The word "patient" is put for long-suffering, which is a further degree of patience; for *patience* is a sense of afflictions without murmuring and of injuries without revenge; but *long-suffering* is patience extended and lengthened out to that which our apostle calls its perfect work. T. M.—God is patient because he is eternal; if by his grace we imbibe something of the spirit of the Eternal One, we must then also in long-suffering patience show ourselves his children, bearing his image. God's work in us and through us stretches from eternity to eternity, and it is completed in the restless but appointed waiting of seconds. *Van O.*

The husbandman has long patience—must have it—till he receives the early and the latter rain. "The winter frost must mellow the seed lying in the genial bosom of the earth; the rains of spring

must swell it, and the suns of summer mature it." So with us. And God is not unjust that he should forget our labor of love. We shall reap all that we have sown, and more than we sowed. For "he that giveth seed to the husbandman, and bread to the eater," will "multiply" the seed we have sown, and give us to eat of the fruit of our toils. Let us be patient, therefore; let us be steadfast, and stablish our hearts before him. *Cox.*

8. The coming of the Lord. This great event is constantly represented in the New Testament as near, and the view is natural and true. Never does the meeting with a beloved friend come so close to us as when we have just parted from him. It is moreover, in the New Testament, the great event that towers above every other. The heaven that gives back Christ gives back all we have loved and lost, solves all doubts and ends all sorrows. It may surely be for us to consider whether our removal of Christ's coming farther from us in feeling does not arise from a less vivid impression of its reality and surpassing moment. Such views depend in no way upon peculiar opinions regarding his advent, for the longing expectancy of his appearance should be as common to all Christians as is their hope, and a thousand years are as a day to the grand event which opens everlasting life. At the same time there is included in the view of Christ's coming the thought of our own death, which brings each one of us close up to his second advent, whensoever it may be. *Ker.*

10. Two ways are the prophets an example to us: in their *sufferings* and in their *patience*. Their *sufferings* are mentioned to allay discontent; their *patience* to stir up imitation. "Let us be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Never any went to heaven but *these*

two graces were first exercised, faith and patience: faith in expectation of the future reward; patience in sustaining the present inconveniences.

11. We count them happy which endure. We that are enlightened by the Spirit of God. God's people and the people of the world have different principles: the spirit of the world and the spirit of God; they have different lights and rules: that of faith and that of sense. All the beatitudes are affixed to conditions of humiliation or suffering. Happy are they that endure, and thrice happy they that "endure unto the end." God has promised bountifully to reward patient endurance. There is a blessing *in hand*, but more *in hope*.

The patience of Job. In all the expressions of his patience, *two* are notable, which run through every vein of the whole book, his *advancing God*, and *debasing himself*. Good thoughts of God, lower thoughts of himself. In all your affliction, then, look upon this spectacle of misery and example of patience! T. M.—As the Lord sustained him under the tremendous trial, so in due time he took his servant out of it. If Job was very patient, the Lord was very pitiful; and the same tender mercy which tempered the trial was in haste to end it. As if from some huge horn of plenty, there poured on his lot unprecedented blessings, and, along with doubled flocks and herds, the seven sons and three daughters came again. And like those stars which take a sudden start, and burn with a broader luster than of yore, Job in his mellow age, and the Lord in his gracious ending, say to every mourner, "Be patient; the Lord is very pitiful." And it is not so much the patriarch's patience as the Lord's piteousness that we perceive. The patriarch's history is fitted to show the afflicted not so much Job the mourner's model as the Lord the mourner's friend. *Hamilton*.

12. Swear not. The nation of the Jews were guilty of three things: frequent swearing; swearing by the creatures; breaking these oaths as not binding and valid; for the Jews, so that they did omit the *great oath*, thought they were safe. *Swearing properly* is an act of worship—it is a solemn appeal to the omniscient God; and, therefore, it must be only done in weighty cases. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and swear by his name" (Deut. 6: 13). T. M.—**Let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay.** He proposes the best remedy for the correction of the vice which he is censuring; namely, that mankind should accustom themselves to truth and constancy in all their words and actions. Since the perfidy, or levity, of man is the source whence the pernicious practice of swearing issues, James, in order to correct the latter vice, warns us that the former ought to be removed.

For the reason of a cure ought to begin from the cause. *Calv.*

13. We should make use of the present condition; of *sadness*, to put us upon *prayer*; of *gladness*, to put us upon *thanksgiving*. The apostle shows the *chiefest season* for singing sacred songs—it is when we are "merry"—but does not mean *that* to be the *only time* for the performance of that duty; for, as *prayer* is to be practiced at other times besides seasons of affliction (though then most needful), so also singing is not only useful when we are merry, but sometimes to beget spiritual joy, and to divert our sadness. Paul and Silas sang in prison; and the disciples sang a hymn after the supper of the Lord, though our Lord was shortly after to suffer. *In that sad hour they sang.*

14. Anointing with oil. Oil among the Hebrews was a symbol of the divine grace, and so fitly used as a sign of that power and grace of the Spirit which was put forth in miraculous healing. As long as the gift remained, the accustomed rite and symbol might be used. But he couples it *with prayer*, which is an act of perpetual worship. In the apostles' time it was promiscuously used and applied to every member of the Church, but with great prudence and caution; for the apostles only anointed those of whose recovery they were assured by the Holy Ghost. James here seems to restrain it to such an object, where they could *pray in faith*, for the effect did not depend upon the anointing, but the prayer of faith. The *rite* ceased when the *gift* ceased, which God has taken from the world these fifteen hundred years (1644). Gifts of healing are coupled with other miraculous gifts, and ceased when they ceased.

15. He does not mention the *anointing*, but "*the prayer of faith*," to show that *this* is the standing spiritual means of cure, the *other* being but an arbitrary rite suited to those times. In primitive times, when miracles were in their full force and vigor, the effect *is always ascribed to faith*. The efficacy of faith in the use of means is not from its own merit, but from God's power and grace. The apostle says, faith saveth, but adds, "the Lord shall raise him up." Faith is but the instrument. It is a grace that has no merit in itself; it is the empty hand of the soul, and deputed to such high services because it looks to all from God. Christ is the true physician. His acts, when upon earth, in taking away sickness, were types of taking away sin. He had "*power on earth to forgive sin also*"; is his power in heaven less? Truly *there is forgiveness with him and plenteous redemption*.

16. *There is a season for confessing our sins, not only to God, but to man.* Sometimes it may be well to confess our faults to some prudent minister or praying friend, that they may help us to plead

with God for mercy and pardon. In like manner it may be of good use to Christians to disclose their peculiar weaknesses and infirmities to one another, where there are confidential intimacies and friendships; and where they may help each other by their prayers to obtain pardon of their sins, and power against them. Those who make confession of their faults one to another should thereupon pray *with* and *for* one another. The thirteenth verse of this chapter directs persons to *pray for themselves*. The fourteenth verse directs to seek for the prayers of ministers; and here in the sixteenth verse are directions for private Christians to pray one for another. So that here we have *all sorts* of prayer recommended to us! T. M.

Pray one for another. No wonder that the heart of man should feel strangely yet sweetly at home in the region of 'spiritual intervention; no wonder that intercession for others, which is but the practical extension of the atonement, the pouring out of one human soul for another in prayer, even as Christ's soul was poured forth for the world in agony and death, should become the natural language of every heart whose highest energies divine grace has touched and kindled into life. Intercession is the mother-tongue of the whole family of Christ. *Keble*.—Seek to make your prayers for others specific, as far as your knowledge of their character and circumstances allows. Bring before your mind their trials and their needs, and endeavor to place yourself in their point of view, from which point you may be sure the trials and needs will look very different than they do from yours. Then offer for them the petitions which, if the case were yours, you would offer for yourself. And if the prayer seem as regards them to be ineffectual, yet it shall be accepted on your own behalf as an act of love. E. M. G.

The prayer of a righteous man that availeth much, which our English Bible so infelicitously describes as "effectual, fervent," is in the original an "*energetic*" prayer, a "*working*" prayer. Some conception of the inspired thought in the epithet may be derived from the fact that the same word is elsewhere used to intensify the description of the power of the Holy Spirit in a renewed heart. Thus: "According to the power that *worketh* in us"—the power that *energizes* us in a holy life; such is the inspired idea of a good man's prayer. What else is the force of the frequent conjunction of "*watching*" and "*praying*," in the scriptural style of exhortation to the duties of the closet? Thus: "*Watch and pray*," "*watch unto prayer*," "*praying always and watching*," "*continue in prayer and watch*"—there is no mental lassitude, no self-indulgence here. A. P.

It availeth much. The apostle does not say *how much*—you will find *that* upon trial and experi-

ence. This we may assuredly know: that prayers rightly managed *can not and will not want effect*. This is one of the means which God has consecrated for our receiving the highest blessings. Prayer is the key by which the saints of God could lock heaven and open it at their pleasure. As *faith* is so *great* among graces, so is *prayer* among duties. It is wonderful to consider what the Scripture ascribes to faith and prayer. Prayer sues its blessings in the court of grace, and faith receives them. T. M.

It is a fact worthy of earnest consideration that Scripture never attempts to remove the doubts and difficulties which human reasoning advances against the efficacy of prayer. If reason therefore says, in various forms, "Prayer is unnecessary, because God knows all things, and is full of goodness to bless and to help," or "Prayer is of no avail, because there is no room for its action, as all things are ordered and under the reign of fixed and all-wise law," the Scripture method of dealing with these erroneous inferences is simply to ignore them. As Scripture always presupposes faith in the existence of God, so it does not prove the reality and efficacy of prayer, but continually takes belief in it for granted, asserting and illustrating it in every variety of form. A. S.—Prayer and the answer of prayer are simply the preferring of a request upon one side and the compliance with that request upon the other. Man applies; God complies. Man asks a favor; God bestows it. T. C.—God commonly answers prayer by natural means appointed for this purpose from the very beginning, when he gave to mind and matter their laws, and arranged the objects with these laws for the accomplishment of his wise and beneficent ends, for the encouragement of virtue and the discouragement of vice, and, among others, to provide an answer to the acceptable petitions of his people. God, in answer to prayer, may restore the patient by an original strength of constitution or by the well-timed application of a remedy. The believer is in need of a blessing, and he asks it; and he finds that the God who created the need and prompted the prayer has provided the means of granting what he needs. *McCosh*.

17. A man of like passions. The greatest saints who ever lived, whether under the old or new dispensations, are on a level which is quite within our reach. If we had the same faith, the same hope, the same love which they exhibited, we could achieve marvels as great as those which they achieved—not, indeed, in marvels which change the outward face of nature, but those higher marvels, whose field is the heart and soul of man. A word of prayer in our mouths would be as potent to call down the gracious dews and the melting fires of God's Spirit as it was in Elijah's mouth to call down literal rain and fire, if we could only speak the word with that

full assurance of faith wherewith he said it. Let us no more say, "God has put the great standards of holiness out of my reach." It is not so. As if with the design of meeting such an objection, he exhibits to us in his word the occasional failures and feebleness of his most illustrious servants. They were "men of like passions with ourselves," though under the empire of principles which brought God into immediate relation with them, and thus lifted them above self and the world. E. M. G.

19. *Brethren may err from the truth.* There is no saint mentioned in the word of God but his failings and errors are recorded. In the visible church there may be errors; God's children may be sometimes led aside, not *totally*, not *finally*, even into *gross errors*. From the words "convert him," we must understand restore him from his error. Among other acts of Christian communion, this is one of the chiefest—to restore those that are gone astray. T. M.

20. To impart to others is to gain for one's self. Every honest effort to bring some other human heart into conscious possession of Christ's love deepens my own sense of its preciousness. Every attempt to lead some other understanding to the perception of the truth as it is in Jesus helps me to understand it better myself. If you would learn, teach. That will clear your mind, will open hidden harmonies, will reveal unsuspected deficiencies and contra-

dictions in your own conceptions, will help you to feel more the truths that come from your lips. A. M. —Is there anything so evident or so inexplicable as the paralysis that affects so great a multitude of professing Christians in their intercourse with those who plainly know not God? Is it that we do not believe that souls can be lost, or is it that we do not care? A. W. T.

Notice the words "shall save." Man, *under God*, has *this honor*, to be a saviour. We are workers together with God. He is pleased to take us into a fellowship of his own work, and to cast the glory of his grace upon our endeavors. It is a high honor which the Lord does us; we should learn to turn it back to God, to whom alone it is due. When the honor of the supreme cause is put upon the instrument, the instrument may well *ascribe all* to the efficacy of the supreme cause. Such is the grace of God, that when thou hast used the means he will *reckon it to the score*: "Thou hast gained thy brother." T. M.

Hide sins. Where no other interest is concerned, where no claims demand a disclosure, where no injury is done by concealment, and no benefit is conferred by giving publicity to a fault—there our duty is to cover it over with the veil of secrecy, and maintain an unbroken silence upon the subject. J. A. J.

Section 356.

1 PETER i. 1-12.

- 1 PETER, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of
- 2 Jesus Christ, Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again
- 3 unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance
- 4 incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are
- 5 kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
- 6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through
- 7 manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory
- 8 at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now
- 9 ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.
- 10 Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied
- 11 of the grace *that should come* unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ,
- 12 and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

If such prospects as these be our covenanted inheritance—everlasting communion with the very Lord of glory, immersion in the very fountain-head of life and light, capacities of knowledge and happiness increased, and still filled and satisfied as they increase, earthly sorrows forgotten, or remembered only that we may feel how they are consumed and lost in the bliss of his immediate presence—if all of us are called, still called to this, entreated by its very Author, besought by Christ himself, as of old from the cross so now from the throne, to share it, and besought upon the one condition of turning to him in simplicity and obedient love, that is, besought to be happy hereafter on the sole condition of being, in the purest and deepest sense, happy now—what words can describe the folly, the fatuity, the madness, of those who, professing to believe this truth, will not turn this truth to account, will resolve—and to delay is to resolve—rather to cling to nothingness, emptiness, uncertainty, to moments of ease, hours of unquiet, a cloudy day at best for their life, an everlasting midnight for their eternity, than to seek the substance of immutable happiness in God, to bid boldly for this mighty prize, to attempt to reach the divine life, and, through good report and evil report, through trial and danger, to seek the one sole aim of reasonable man, the “inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation”? W. A. B.

PETER'S FIRST EPISTLE.

THIS Epistle is written from Babylon, which probably means, not Rome, the mystic Babylon of the Apocalypse, but the ancient city on the banks of the Euphrates. In that region Jews were very numerous, and it is natural that the leading apostle to the Jews should be found among them. Whether he had visited the Christians of Asia Minor, to whom his Epistle is directed, is uncertain. G. P. F. —The date of the Epistle is probably A. D. 60-62, and the place of composition, Babylon—this apostle having gone eastward to spread the gospel among the Jews in ancient Chaldea. He writes “to the strangers of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.” The expression, the *Dispersion*, was a well-understood designation of Israelites scattered among the Gentiles. There are not wanting in the Epistle indications of a recognition of Gentile Christianity; but it is certainly intended as a communication to the Jewish Christians in Asia Minor. There is obvious propriety in this; for Simon Peter was the apostle of the circumcision, as Paul of the uncircumcision. D. F.

A more important indication than that of place is found in the names of the *persons* who were with Peter when he wrote this Epistle, *Silvanus* and *Mark*. The close connection of both with Paul furnishes evidence of intercourse between the two apostles, though severed by the distance between the capitals of the Eastern and Western world. Of *SILVANUS* (or *Silas*) we have lost sight, since we saw him as the companion of Paul's second missionary journey; and there is nothing to show how he came to be in Peter's company. The case of *MARK* is clearer; for he was with Paul in his first imprisonment at Rome, and he was then contemplating a journey to Asia Minor. This intention was no doubt fulfilled, since we find him afterward with Timothy at Ephesus. The interval is just the time at which all indications concur to place Peter's first Epistle, and consequently Mark's companionship with him; and the inference is highly probable that Mark was the bearer of communications from Paul to Peter. The fact is deeply significant that, when Peter wrote this Epistle to the Hebrew Christians of the Eastern Dispersion, two of Paul's companions were his intimate associates, and one of them the bearer of the Epistle which its writer intended as a manifesto of the true doctrine of the grace of God. “By *Silvanus* I have written briefly, exhorting and

testifying that *this is the true grace of God* wherein ye stand.” S.

The individual character of Simon Peter seems to be better known to us than that of any of the disciples of our Lord, illustrated as it is in many incidents of the evangelical narrative, and in the early chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. The book before us was written in his old age, and shows a heart warm as in his youth, a spirit still fervent and courageous, but combined with a deeper self-knowledge and humility. Here is Peter strengthening his brethren, as the Lord enjoined him. D. F. —There is no Epistle in the sacred canon the language and spirit of which come more directly home to the personal trials and wants and weaknesses of the Christian life. Its affectionate warnings and strong consolation have ever been treasured up close to the hearts of the weary and heavy-laden but onward-pressing servants of God. The mind of our Father toward us, the aspect of our blessed Lord as presented to us, the preparation by sufferings for our heavenly inheritance—all these, as here set forth, are peculiarly lovely and encouraging. And the motives to holy purity spring direct out of the simple and childlike recognition of the will of our heavenly Father to bring us to his glory. The entire Epistle is the following out of our Lord's command to its writer, “*And thou, when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*” A.

As James calls Christianity a law, so Peter considers it a promise or prophecy, the precious earnest of a still more glorious future. This is well suited to his purpose of consolation, and of encouragement to persevere under suffering. At the very beginning of the Epistle he presents the Christian salvation as an inheritance reserved in heaven; and with the prospect of the eternal glory of God in Christ, to which we are called, the Epistle concludes. It is in perfect accordance with this conception of the gospel that Peter represents the Christian *life*, in the first place, indeed, as penitent *faith* in the revealed Messiah, the only Saviour, but at the same time as lively *hope* for the glorious return of the Lord, and the consummation of salvation thereby to be accomplished. Hence his predilection for the title “strangers and pilgrims” in addressing Christians. On account of this frequent reference to hope, Peter has been called the apostle of hope. Thus, according to the Petrine type of doctrine, objective Christianity is at once a fulfillment of the

Old Testament prophecy and itself a precious promise; subjective Christianity is at once faith in the revealed Messiah and lively hope in his glorious re-appearance. P. S.

That Peter was not at Rome before the date of the Epistle to the Romans (about A. D. 58), we are sure; that he was not there during any part of Paul's imprisonment there, we may with certainty infer; that the two apostles did not together found the churches of Corinth and Rome, we may venture safely to affirm; that Peter ever was, in any sense like that usually given to the word, Bishop of Rome, is we believe an idea abhorrent from Scripture and from the facts of primitive apostolic history. But that Peter traveled to Rome during the persecution under Nero, and there suffered martyrdom nearly at the same time with Paul, is a tradition which does not interfere with any known facts of Scripture or early history, and one which we have no means of disproving, as we have no interest in disproving it. A.—That he died as a martyr seems evident from John 21:18, 19. The first authority in support of the belief that he died at Rome is Dionysius of Corinth, in an Epistle to the Romans, written about A. D. 170, who says that Peter and Paul suffered martyrdom there at about the same time. Ireneus (A. D. 176 or 177) refers to the preaching of both of these apostles at Rome, without speaking of the mode and time of their death. G. P. F.

The heads of doctrine that are most insisted on in the Epistle are these three: *faith, obedience, and patience*; to establish them in believing, to direct them in doing, and comfort them in suffering. And because the first is the groundwork and support of the other two, this first chapter is much on that, persuading them of the truth of that mystery they had received and did believe, viz., their redemption and salvation by Christ Jesus—that inheritance of immortality bought by his blood for them, and the evidence and stability of their right and title to it. And then he uses this belief, this assurance of the glory to come, as the great persuasive to the other two, both to holy obedience and to constant patience, since nothing can be too much, either to forego or undergo, either to do or to suffer, for the attainment of that blessed state.

2. There is none truly purged by the blood of Christ that doth not endeavor after purity of heart and conversation; but yet it is the blood of Christ by which they are all fair, and there is no spot in them. Here it is said, *elect to obedience*; but because that obedience is not perfect, there must be sprinkling of the blood too. Their estate is that they are *sanctified and justified*. The nearest cause of both these is Jesus Christ; he is made unto them both *righteousness and sanctification*; the sprinkling of his blood purifies them from guiltiness and quickens them to obedience. The appropriating or applying cause is the *holy and holy making or sanctifying Spirit*, the author of their selecting from the world and effectual calling unto grace. The source of all, the appointing or decreeing cause, is *God the*

Father; for, though they all work equally in all, yet in order of working we are taught thus to distinguish, and particularly to ascribe the first work of eternal election to the first person of the blessed Trinity. The Hebrew word of salutation we have here—*peace*; and that which is the spring both of this and all good things in the other word of salutation used by the Greeks—*grace*. All right rejoicing and prosperity and happiness flow from this source and from this alone, and are sought elsewhere in vain. L.

3-9. Most characteristically this apostle rushes at once into an animated passage on the Christian hope and the inheritance of saints. He cheers "the strangers of the Dispersion" among their manifold trials by assurances of the abounding mercy of God, his powerful keeping of believers, and the triumphant issue of well-tried faith at the appearing of Jesus Christ. In this exordium we find faith, hope, and love—these three after the manner of Paul. The saints are "kept through faith"; they have a trial of faith; and the end of their faith is "the salvation of souls." They are "begotten again to a living hope by the resurrection of Christ." They have love to the unseen Saviour in whom they believe. Faith is not enough without hope and love, or hope without faith and love, or love without faith and hope. But from the three issues "joy unspeakable and full of glory." D. F.

3. *Unto a lively hope.* Sons are heirs, but all this lifetime is their minority; yet, even then being partakers of this new birth and sonship, they have right to it, and, in the assurance of that right, this *living hope*. Christ, having conquered death and risen again, is *set down at the right hand of God*, and hath entered into possession of that inheritance. This gives us a living hope that, according to his own will, *where he is there we may be also*. Thus this hope is strongly underset, on the one side by the resurrection of Christ, on the other by the abundant mercy of God the Father. Our hope depends not on our own strength or wisdom, nor on anything in us—for if it did it would be short-lived, would die and die quickly—but on his resurrection who can die no more. This makes this hope not to imply uncertainty, as worldly hopes do; but it is a firm, stable, inviolable hope, *an anchor fixed within the veil*. L.

4. *Fadeth not away.* As it hath no principle of decay within itself, so neither can it be wasted by anything from without. It is "reserved," or laid up, "for them in heaven"; a place of absolute safety, beyond the reach of every adverse power, and equally secured against deceit and rapine. *There is no thief to steal, no spoiler to lay waste*. In those regions of perfect light and love all is order and harmony; there is nothing to hurt,

nothing to destroy, through the whole extent of the heavenly Jerusalem, that imperial seat of Zion's king. R. W.—The blessedness of the saints, as it is without diminution, so it is without end: it is complete and continual for ever. This makes heaven to be heaven; the security is as valuable as the felicity. There is no satiety of the present, no solicitude for the future. Were there a possibility, or the least suspicion of losing that happy state, it would cast an aspersion of bitterness upon all their delights; it would disturb their peaceful fruition and joyful tranquillity; as hope in misery allays sorrow, so fear in happiness dashes joy; and the more excellent the happiness is, the more stinging would be the fear of losing it. "But the inheritance reserved in heaven is immortal, undefiled, and fades not away." And the tenure of their possession is infinitely firm, by the promise of God, who is truly immutable, and immutably true; and by the divine power, the support of their everlasting duration. Our Saviour assures his disciples, "Because I live, ye shall live also"; and "he lives for evermore." *Bates.*

Kept by the power of God. The children of God are kept safe indeed, but not unmolested and unassaulted; they have enemies, and such as are stirring and powerful; but in the midst of them they are guarded and defended. The word here translated *kept* is a military term, used for those who are *kept* as in a fort or garrison-town besieged. So Satan is still raising batteries against this fort, using all ways to take it, by strength or stratagem; unwearied in his assaults, and very skillful to know his advantages, and where we are weakest, there to set on. And, besides all this, he hath intelligence with a party within us, ready to betray us to him; so that it were impossible for us to hold out were there not another watch and guard than our own, and other walls and bulwarks than any that our skill and industry can raise for our own defense. In this, then, is our safety, that there is a power above our own, yea, and above all our enemies, that guards us: *salvation itself our walls and bulwarks.* L.

It is not the hold which we have of God, but that which *he hath of us*, that makes us hold on our way. We should quickly let go our hold of God if God had not infinite faster hold of us. *Caryl.*—Where is the vessel upon earth into which the fullness of the life of faith could be poured without its suffering it to be lost from time to time through want of watchfulness and prayer? and from this frail vessel of the human heart should we expect the fruit of constancy? Never; there is no feeling, there is no heart, which holds Jesus fast. Jesus *holds us.* Because he of his great grace and mercy holds us in repentance and faith, therefore it is that we continue in the constancy of the life of faith.

The faithfulness of Jesus Christ toward us is the ground of our constancy. A. C.

6. Whatsoever oppositions or difficulties grace meets with in its acting go under this general name of *temptations*; yet it is particularly meant of their afflictions and distresses, as the apostle James likewise uses it. And they are so called because they give particular and notable proof of the temper of a Christian spirit, and draw forth evidence both of the truth and the measure of the grace that is in them. L.—Mere feelings of irritability, indolence, weariness, partisanship, unkindness, suspiciousness, and so forth, are not in themselves sins. They must be consented to and harbored before they can become so. Our minds may be rendered uncomfortable by them; we may be "in heaviness through manifold temptations"; but heaviness and discomfort are no sins. Nay, heaviness of spirit resulting from temptation is the cross of the garden laid on us by him who bore it in Gethsemane; and it is a great honor and privilege to be called upon, like the three chosen ones of the chosen, to come and watch with him for one short hour. Multitudinous temptations are, indeed, if we comport ourselves well under them, a great means of spiritual advancement. E. M. G.

Though now for a season. A consideration that moderates this heaviness is its shortness. Because we willingly forget eternity, therefore this moment seems much in our eyes; but, if we could look upon it aright, of how little concernment is it what be our condition here? Well might Austin say, "Use me here as pleaseth thee, so as that hereafter it may be well with me." L.

If need be. Affliction indeed is not good in itself, but only when God comes in and with it. Therefore no man is required to desire affliction or to pray for suffering, even for Christ's sake, but if God sends it, to faint not, but receive and bear it as his discipline for good. There is always a *need be* connected with it; and those who are the subjects of such discipline, "*kept by the power of God,*" are enabled greatly to rejoice in the promises of God, though now for a season, "*if need be,*" they are in heaviness through manifold temptations. They may thus even count it all joy when they fall into divers trials, because, in the endurance of such trials, God dealeth with them as sons, and their faith and patience are perfected. The seeds of a harvest of holiness are sown, and the causes are set in motion which will work out an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. This *need be* is exceedingly precious and encouraging; this is the way God must take with you; it is a *need be* on your account, not on his; a *need be* by reason of your weakness and of his great goodness; and if you persevere waiting upon him, your *heaviness*, under such circumstances, is

quite as good a seal and proof of your sonship, of your belonging to God, as another person's rapturous enjoyment under different circumstances. Only be anxious to please Christ; only wait on him. And remember that, when you pray that God would make you holy, you really pray that he would take whatever means might be necessary for the accomplishment of this prayer. G. B. C.

7. Here the apostle expounds the *if need be* of the former verse, and so justifies the joy in afflictions which there he speaks of, by their utility and faith's advantage by them; it is so tried that it shall appear in its full brightness at the revelation of Jesus Christ. L.—A man must be proved before he can be approved. In the very nature of the case, trial precedes approbation. God tries and trains men before, and for, advancement. The advancement is to be great; the trial must be searching. Therefore the individual life is so adjusted in its circumstances, and so measured as to its length, as to constitute on the whole a complete probation for the man. What makes it such is not *alone* the tribulation that is in it. Health, and happy temperament, and prosperous circumstances, and pleasant friendships, and all social advantages, are elements in the probation just as much as the tribulation; indeed, in most instances rather more so, since, in by far the greater number of human lives, there is a large preponderance of what is felt to be good over its opposite. Still, without the tribulation, the trial would not be complete; it would be partial, and in regard to some men very superficial. Indeed, there is probably that in every one of us which *only* suffering in some form can touch and try. Hence we read such words of God as these: "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried." A. R.

Might be found unto praise, and honor, and glory. This is the end that is intended, and shall be certainly obtained by all these hot trials. An unskillful beholder may think it strange to see gold thrown into the fire, and left there for a time; but he that puts it there would be loth to lose it; his purpose is to make some costly piece of work of it. Every believer gives himself to Christ, and he undertakes to present them blameless to the Father; not one of them shall be lost, nor one drachm of their faith; they shall be found, and their faith shall be found when he appears. That faith that is here in the furnace shall there be made up into a crown of pure gold.

8. Faith in Christ begetting love to him, and both these giving assured hope of salvation by him, make it as certain to them as if it were already in their hand, and they in possession of it. And from all those together results this exultation, or leaping

for joy, *joy unspeakable and full of glory.* L.—Faith is indeed to us a second sight, which reveals Jesus crowned in heaven with glory and honor, and entering within the veil where his very presence is an intercession. To faith he is no mere bright record of the past traced on the most sacred page of history, still less is he an ideal of humanity that never was realized. For faith holds daily communion with him, as with a person, as with a vast, all-comprehending intellect, as with a resistless will, as with a living heart of surpassing tenderness. H. P. L.

The spiritual joy of the Christian takes root at the same time in faith, hope, and love, which are the great powers of the inner life. He believes, although he does not perceive; he loves, although he may not behold; he hopes, although he does not possess. Then he must rejoice in this Lord with a joy unspeakable, and, as it stands literally, a "glorified joy." Yea, it is unspeakable, the calm joy of faith and love which, at least now and again, the ransomed sinner may attain! It may cause a reflection of heavenly glory to fall upon a pale, suffering countenance, and what shall it be when he, "whom having not seen we love," shall stand before us, face to face, in all "his beauty"! *Van O.*—We never saw our Saviour's face. We never heard our Father's voice. Faith here achieves what in other things would be impossibilities. In Jesus Christ we believe in one we never saw; and we commit the keeping of our most precious treasure to one who dwells in a country from which no traveler has ever returned to assure us that his trust was not, and that ours will not, be misplaced. Yet blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed. The seen are shadows; the substance is found in the unseen. These are the most real objects—God, whom no man ever saw and lived; the soul, which does not grow infirm with time and defies the sharpest darts of death; not this world of matter, which shall vanish in the smoke of its own funereal fires, but that world of spirits, where saints enjoy a glory that never fades. T. G.

Think of all the affection of human hearts that has been given to the Saviour of the world since he withdrew his visible presence from it! He has appeared to no eye of man since the apostles; but millions have loved him with a fervency which nothing could extinguish in life or death. Think of the great "army" of those who have suffered death for this love, and have cherished it in death! And a mightier number still would have died for it, and with it, if summoned to do so. Think of all those who in the incitement and inspiration of this love have indefatigably labored to promote the glory of its great object! And the innumerable multitude of those who, though less prominently distinguished,

have felt this sacred sentiment living in the soul, as the principle of its best life, and the source of all its immortal hopes! J. F.—Once, as I rode out into the woods, having alighted from my horse in a retired place for divine contemplation and prayer, I had a view, that for me was extraordinary, of the glory of the Son of God as Mediator between God and man, and his wonderful, great, full, pure, and sweet grace and love, and meek and gentle condescension. The grace that appeared so calm and sweet appeared also great above the heavens. The person of Christ appeared ineffably excellent, with an excellency great enough to swallow up all thought and conception; which continued, as near as I can judge, about an hour; which kept me the greater part of the time in a flood of tears and weeping aloud. I felt an ardency of soul to be—what I know not otherwise how to express—emptied and annihilated; to lie in the dust and to be full of Christ alone; to love him with a holy and pure love; to trust in him; to live upon him; to serve and follow him; and to be perfectly sanctified, and made pure with a divine and heavenly purity. *Edwards.*

9. This is the certainty of their hope, that it is as if they had already received it. If the promise of God and the merit of Christ hold good, then they that believe in him and love him are made sure of salvation. Sooner may the rivers run backward, and the course of the heavens change, and the frame of nature be dissolved, than any one soul that is united to Jesus Christ by faith and love can be severed from him, and so fall short of salvation hoped for in him; and this is the matter of their rejoicing. L.—The end of this salvation is in the immortal result toward which the change of spirit and life experienced on earth continually points; in a power ever exercised, yet ever renewed; in the inward sanctity made complete; in the fellowship of saints, our eternal possession; in the wisdom, before which all secrets open; in a joy ecstatic, that touches with its intenser beauty whatever surrounds it; in the perfect love, that makes each work an exulting worship, toward him once suffering and now crowned; in the beatific vision of God! R. S. S.

10-12. If we collate these words with the first sermons of Peter, we shall find they take up the habitual theme of his preaching at Jerusalem; and if we remember further that we are to seek the special doctrinal characteristic of the various sacred writers in the solution given by them to the question of the relation of the two covenants, we shall feel that we can not attach too much importance to this passage of the Epistle of Peter. He affirms most explicitly the unity of the old and new covenants. The Spirit of Christ which lives in the apostles was also the animating Spirit of the prophets, who were the true forerunners of the evangelists, since they foretold both the sufferings and the glory of Messiah. True religion rises before his eyes like

a vast and splendid temple—prophecy its foundation, the gospel its top-stone. *De P.*—The gospel is represented as the doctrine of the sufferings and glory of Christ as the means of salvation. The worker of this salvation, whom the prophets and apostles make the sum of all their doctrine, is Jesus Christ, and the sum of that work of redemption, as we have it here, is his humiliation and exaltation, his sufferings and the glory that followed thereupon. L.

12. Unto us they did minister. The law and the prophets, as scriptures, as a book, were still under the new dispensation what they had been under the old—the voice of the Spirit and the word of God. Nay! this written word belonged to the new dispensation more truly than the old, for these Scriptures also were now raised to newness of life, and were recognized as prepared for the uses to which they were now applied, and written less for the immediate than for the ulterior purposes, as Peter has here expressed it. T. D. B.

The angels desire to look into. These, like us, are powers of endless life, intelligences that have had a history parallel to our own. Some of them, doubtless, have existed myriads of ages, and consequently now are far on in the course of their development. Hence their interest in us, who as yet are only candidates, in their view, for a greatness yet to be revealed. They break into the sky, when Christ is born, chanting their all-hail. They visit the world on heavenly errands, and perform their unseen ministries to the heirs of salvation. They watch for our repentances, and there is joy among them before God when but one is gathered to their company in the faith of salvation. And the reason is that these ancient princes and hierarchs, that have grown up in God's eternity and unfolded their mighty powers in whole ages of good, recognize in us competers that are finally to be advanced as they are. H. B.

The glory of redemption! It is the chief delight of the infinite mind; the joy of angels; the bliss of mankind; the central sun and moral bond of the universe. As the theatre of this redemption, our world is honored above all worlds. Though in itself an obscure corner of creation, it is made the center of highest interest. A moral force is gathering in it to uphold the universe in love and obedience. It is heaven's laboratory, in which are to be worked out the great principles which are to exist in and rule God's kingdom. It is the battle-field of the universe, on which holiness and sin, truth and error, life and death, Christ and the devil are to wage their one great and decisive warfare. History may record her eventful eras, when all the powers of earth were drawn up in hostile array, and all its interests suspended on a single conflict. But time is a more eventful era, in relation to eternity. The spiritual powers of the universe are met on this earth in hostile array; for nearly sixty centuries has the conflict raged already, and it will continue to rage we know not how long. And who can conceive the extent of the interests at stake in this warfare? The honor of God, the maintenance of law and order, and the happiness of all worlds are involved. Our highest conceptions of the grandeur and importance of this contest fall amazingly short of the reality. There is a breadth of purpose, a depth of meaning, a height of glory, and a fullness of love and blessing in this work of redemption, which eternal ages will hardly disclose. *An.*

Section 357.

1 PETER i. 13-25.

13 **WHEREFORE** gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that
 14 is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fash-
 15 ioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he which hath
 16 called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye
 17 holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth
 18 according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear: forasmuch
 as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from
 19 your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood
 20 of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained be-
 21 fore the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him
 do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith
 22 and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through
 the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure
 23 heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word
 24 of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man
 25 as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the
 word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached
 unto you.

If there be a true purpose in the life, it shall reach a perfect close one day; its shortcomings shall yet be completed, its errors rectified, its visions realized. There are no ruins nor half-finished structures in the city of God. One of the most blessed assurances of the Christian faith is, that not only can there be a compensation for failure now, in the lessons of humility, of trustfulness in God, and of inward peace amid outward loss, but that there shall yet be a compensation in the perfectness of deed and of attainment. All the inward gains of the soul in its struggles, its defeats, and disappointed hopes shall be represented, and more than represented, in the fullness of power and possession which shall be its heritage in the endless life. It is by privation, not unfrequently by disaster, that God qualifies souls for the highest ends, and the thought of this may make the most wearied heart among us bear up bravely, and "hope to the end for the grace that shall be brought to it at the revelation of Jesus Christ." *Ker.*

13. The great error of man's mind, and the cause of all his errors of life, is the diverting of the soul from God, and turning downward to inferior confidences and comforts; and this mischoice is the very root of all our miseries. Therefore, the main end of the holy word of God is to untie the hearts of men from the world, and reduce them to God as their only rest and solid comfort; and this is here the apostle's mark, at which all the preceding discourse aims. It all meets and terminates in this exhortation: *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind. Hope to the end.* The difference of the two graces, *faith* and *hope*, is so small that the one is often taken for the other in Scripture. It is but a different aspect of the same confidence, *faith* apprehending the infallible truth of those divine promises, of which *hope* doth assuredly expect the accomplishment, so that this immediately results from the other. This is the anchor, fixed within the veil, that keeps the soul firm against all the tossings on

these swelling seas. The firmest thing in this inferior world is a believing, hoping soul!

14, 15. Of all children the children of God are most obliged to obedience, for he is both the wisest and the most loving of Fathers. And the sum of all his commands is that which is their glory and happiness, that they endeavor to be like him, to resemble their heavenly Father. *Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect*, says our Saviour. And here the apostle, citing out of the law, *Be ye holy, for I am holy* (Lev. 11: 44). Law and gospel agree in this. L.

17. "And if ye call him Father." T.—**Pass the time in fear.** The fear here recommended is, out of question, a holy self-suspicion and fear of offending God, which may not only consist with assured hope of salvation, and with faith and love and spiritual joy, but is their inseparable companion, as all divine graces are linked together. The apostle, having stirred up his Christian brethren, what-

soever be their estate in the world, to seek to be rich in those jewels of faith and hope and love and spiritual joy, and then considering that they travel among a world of thieves and robbers, he advises them to give those their jewels in custody, under God, to this trusty and watchful grace of godly fear; and, having earnestly exhorted them to holiness, he is very fitly particular in this *fear*, which makes up so great a part of that holiness that it is often in Scripture named for it all. L.—This grace of *fear* is the softest and most tender of God's honor of all the graces. To keep a good watch is a wonderful safety to a place that is in continual danger because of the enemy. Why, this is the grace that setteth the watch and that keepeth the watchman awake. *Bun.*

18, 19. He sets forth this as the strongest incentive to holiness. Not only have you the example of God set before you as your Father, and the justice of God as your Judge, to argue you into a pious fear of offending him, but he is your Redeemer; he hath bought out your liberty from sin and the world, to be altogether his; think on the price laid down in this ransom. L.—Christ our Passover is no unconscious victim, but one who freely gives himself that he may bring us to God. It is no corruptible thing that is the ransom price, but the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. In this was seen the height of divine love and the depth of human sin and loss, that the highest in the universe devoted himself for the lowest, and died the death for them, which was the ransom of the soul. He who made the world came into the world to save it, and bore for it the burden of shame and guilt. *Ker.*—The precious soul could be redeemed by no blood but that of this spotless Lamb Jesus Christ, who is God equal with the Father, and therefore his blood is called *the blood of God* (Acts 20). So that the apostle may here well call it *precious*, exceeding the whole world and all things in it in value. Therefore, frustrate not the sufferings of Christ; if he shed his blood to redeem you from sin, be not false to his end. L.—**Without blemish.** It is the extraordinary combination of excellences which it displays that constitutes the peculiar attraction of the character of Christ. Meekness and majesty—firmness and gentleness—zeal and prudence—composure and warmth—patience and sensibility—submissiveness and dignity—sublime sanctity and tender sympathy—piety that rose to the loftiest devotion and benevolence that could stoop to the meanest sufferer—intense abhorrence of sin and profound compassion for the sinner, mingle their varied rays in the tissue of our Saviour's character, and produce a combination of virtues such as the world never saw besides. W. L. A.

20, 21. Before there was time or place or any creature, God, the blessed Trinity, was in himself and as *inhabiting eternity* completely happy in himself. But intending to manifest and communicate his goodness, he gave being to the world, and to time with it; made all to set forth his goodness, and the most excellent of his creatures to contemplate and enjoy it. But amongst all the works he intended before time and in time effected, this is the master-piece that is here said to be fore-ordained, the manifesting of God in the flesh for man's redemption; and that by his Son Jesus Christ. This is the great work wherein all those glorious attributes shine jointly, the wisdom, and power, and goodness, and justice, and mercy of God. L.—The agency of the *Father* ordained the Saviour: he *manifested* him to the world; he *raised him up from the dead*; he *gave him glory*. And all those particulars are made known to us. For what end? *That our faith and hope may be in God!* R. W.

22. **Purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit.** Here is the chief seat or subject of the work of sanctification, *the soul*; the subordinate means, *truth*; the nature of it, *obeying of truth*; the chief worker of it, *the holy Spirit*. They are here said to *purify themselves*. For it is certain and undeniable that the soul itself doth act in believing or obeying the truth; but not of itself, it is not the first principle of motion. They purify their souls, but it is *by the Spirit*. They do it by his enlivening power, and a purifying virtue received from him. Faith, or obeying the truth, works this purity; but the Holy Ghost works that faith; as God is said to *purify their hearts by faith*, he doth that by giving them the Holy Ghost. The truth is pure and purifying, yet can it not of itself purify the soul but by the obeying or believing it; and the soul can not obey or believe but by the Spirit, which works in it that faith, and by that faith purifies it and works love in it. L.—If Christ becomes wisdom to any mind, it is because that mind exercises its thought upon Christ and his truth—opens itself to his teaching, yields to his truth. If Christ becomes righteousness to any soul, it is because that soul by its own act of faith, by looking to him and trusting in him, accepts his atonement as its plea for pardon. If Christ becomes sanctification to any soul, it is because that soul, feeling its guilt and need, seeks by his grace to conquer sin, to become holy, and to purify itself by obeying the truth through the Spirit. But while man's activity *must* be put forth in acts of thought and resolve, in faith and love and obedience, or Christ will never avail him, it is yet true that no man really comes to Christ, "except the Father draw him." The holy Spirit takes the things of Christ and shows them to us, and thus makes Christ

our wisdom; the holy Spirit incites us to the act of faith; the holy Spirit by the truth kindles within us desires after holiness, and inciting us to prayer and watchfulness, promotes our sanctification; and therefore, though Christ can be literally nothing to us without our *own act* of reflection, of repentance, of faith, of love, yet since we will put forth no proper act toward him except as moved by grace, we do owe to that grace our salvation from first to last. J. P. T.

There may be truth in the intellect separate from its regenerating power on the soul; light in the reason without the corresponding love in the heart; but there can not be the transforming and regenerating effect, nor the intelligent kindling of holy emotion, without the truth and the light first. There may be little truth, and feeble perception of it; but truth and the sight of it there must be. Now, the influence or work of the holy Spirit is that movement—whatever it be, or however exercised—which gives truth its regal and penetrating power, and kindles through it the fire of the affections. T. B. —Let us never forget that, in speaking of divine truth, the Spirit of God, and the soul of man, we are speaking of living and life-giving things, and that therefore the whole subject devolves on us the duties of prayer and watchfulness, of labor and study, of thought and effort, to see that these living and life-giving things be not kept apart. It is only by keeping the truth, the Spirit, and the soul in close companionship, that we can expect the blessed result of renewed and purified natures. Indolence and indifference here are as deeply mischievous, and, in one sense, as deeply criminal, as dislike and opposition. Though God is always first in action in the great work which we have considered, yet we should always labor as though first action belonged to us; and though he will ever be found to have wrought all our good in us, yet we should always work as though there were a sense in which all things depend on ourselves.

Unfeigned love for the brethren. Literally, a "love *without hypocrisy*," "fervent love for one another out of a *pure heart*"; this is religion in its fairest, most perfect development on earth. Were all that claims to be religion really imbued with this spirit, truth would have a safer as well as a warmer home than she now has in this lower world. Pure, holy, Christian love furnishes no soil for the roots of error; nor does it ever baptize truth in the waters of strife. J. S. S.—**Love one another.** They that are indeed lovers of God are united; by that their hearts meet in him as in one center. They can not but love one another. And as the Christian's love is pure in its cause, so in its effects and exercise; his society and converse with any tends mainly to this, that he may mutually help and be

helped in the knowledge and love of God; he desires most that he and his brethren may further one another in their way to the full enjoyment of God. And this is truly the love of a pure heart, that both begins and ends in God.

23. This incorruptible seed is the living and everlasting word of the living and everlasting God. Because the word is enlivening and living, therefore they into whose hearts it is received are made alive by it; and because the word endureth for ever, therefore that life begot by it can not perish; no, this spiritual life of grace is the certain beginning of that eternal life of glory and shall issue in it.

24. How easily and quickly hath the highest splendor of a man's prosperity been blasted, either by men's power, or by the immediate hand of God! The Spirit of the Lord blows upon it, as Isaiah says, and not only withers the grass, but the flower fades though never so fair. Would we consider this, it would give us wiser thoughts, and ballast our hearts; make them more solid and steadfast in those spiritual endeavors which concern a durable condition, a being that abides for ever; in comparison of which the longest term of natural life is less than a moment, and the happiest estate of it but a heap of miseries. Were all of us more constantly prosperous than any of us is, yet that one thing were enough to cry down the price we put on this life; that *it continues not*. L.

The word endureth. It is an authority which survives when others perish, and a light which waxes when others wane. By it, as the instrument of God for the education of men, nations are humanized and churches sanctified. And yet more real and lasting than these are the ultimate results which it secures. An elect nation is being gathered from among us, and an eternal Church prepared which shall supplant all transient and provisional societies in that day for which the whole creation waits. Then is it not to each of us a matter of the deepest personal concern that the truth which it teaches and the spirit which it breathes should have entered into his own soul; and that he should thus become a partaker in the life which it reveals, an example of the character which it demands, and an inheritor of the portion which it promises? But this can not be, unless he yield to the written Word the *confidence* which it claims. Oh, deal worthily, deal trustfully with such a guide as this! Receive the message "not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God," and then you will find that it "effectually worketh also in them that believe"; for he who obeys it from the heart finds that a course of progressive teaching is opened in his own soul, to which the holy Scripture will never cease to minister, and which the Holy Spirit will never cease to guide. T. D. B.

Section 358.

1 PETER ii. 1-25.

1 WHEREFORE laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil
 2 speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:
 3 if so be ye have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious. To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone,
 4 disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious, ye also, as lively stones, are
 5 built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to
 6 God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion
 a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.
 7 Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the
 8 stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone
 of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobe-
 9 dient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal
 priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him
 10 who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: which in time past *were* not a
 people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained
 11 mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts,
 12 which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that,
 whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they
 shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the
 14 king, as supreme: or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment
 15 of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with
 16 well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using *your*
 17 liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all *men*. Love the
 18 brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all
 19 fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this *is* thankworthy,
 20 if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory *is*
 it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do
 21 well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God. For even hereunto
 were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should
 22 follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was
 23 reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to
 24 him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree,
 that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.
 25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of
 your souls.

"I AM not come to destroy," said Christ, "but to fulfill"; and as in his own sacrifice he fulfilled the ritual of the law, and in his own mediation now fulfills its priesthood, so in his Church he realizes the ideal of the temple as the spiritual habitation of God. How wondrous is this temple! built upon the stone that God had chosen and designated as his offering of love before the world began; built of living stones, conscious of their position, feeling their union with the foundation, and radiating the glory which they receive from the presence of God—even as stones hewn from the quarry, and set on high in ordered beauty, they "show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light." J. P. T.—We often think and speak as if little was accomplished, because little is seen on earth. But we forget that only part of the living structure is here, and this a small part. Every moment, blessed souls, fitted by gracious discipline in this vale, by the axe and hammer and furnace of trial, and the molding hand of sanctification, are carried away in angelic arms, to be placed in the house above. This is only the preparatory state. Out of this mass God is gathering his elect, and taking them to his temple. There is nothing which we can do in life so important as to contribute in some humble measure to the upbuilding of the Church. It is the only work of which the fruit can not be lost. One soul saved by our means is a living stone added to the edifice. One soul made holier and better through our labors is a new ornament to the unseen sanctuary. Not a toil, a self-denial, or a tear shall fail of recognition; though lost to the view of men, "the day will reveal it." J. W. A.

2. Grow thereby. The word feeds *faith*, by setting before it the free grace of God, his rich promises, and his power and truth to perform them all; showing it the strength of the new covenant, holding in Christ, in whom all the promises of God are *yea* and *amen*; and drawing faith still to rest more entirely upon his *righteousness*. It feeds *repentance* by making the vileness and deformity of sin daily more clear and visible. It increaseth *love* to God by opening up still more and more of his infinite excellency and loveliness. But, above all other considerations, the word is the increaser of grace in that it holds forth Jesus Christ to our view to look upon, not only as the perfect pattern, but as the full fountain of all grace, from whose fullness we all receive. The contemplating of him as the perfect image of God, and then drawing from him as having in himself a treasure for us—these give the soul more of that image, which is truly spiritual growth.

3. This looks back to the whole *exhortation*. For, if you have tasted of that kindness and sweetness of God in Christ, there will be nothing but love and meekness and singleness of heart; therefore they that have bitter, malicious spirits evidence they have not tasted of the love of God. This graciousness is first conveyed to us by the *word*; there we taste it, and there still we are to seek it; there the love of God in Christ streams forth in the several promises; the heart that cleaves to the word of God, and delights in it, can not but find in it daily new tastes of his goodness; there it reads his love, and by that stirs up its own to him, and so grows, and loves every day more than the former, and thus is tending from tastes to fullness.

4, 5. The whole building is Christ mystical: Christ, together with the entire body of the elect; he as the foundation, and they as the stones built upon him; he the living stone, and they likewise, by union with him, as living stones; he *having life in himself*, and they deriving it from him; he primitively living, and they by participation. For therefore is he called here a *living stone*, not only because of his immortality and glorious resurrection, but because he is the principle of spiritual and eternal life unto us, a living foundation, that transfuses this life into the whole building and every stone of it, *in whom all the building is fitly framed together*. **L.**—Shut the eyes of the body, open the eyes of the soul, and you will say with Pascal, "Oh, with how great pomp and magnificence has he come in the eyes of the heart, and of those who see wisdom!" Behold for once, behold the true temple of the true God! Vast thoughts, secular traditions, splendid recollections, all these are stones: cold materials, hard and dead. There are other stones, living stones, which form together a spiritual build-

ing, a holy priesthood. Of the number of those living stones are all those sincere and humble souls who by repentance have been born to the new life which is hidden with Christ in God; souls, some of whom perhaps have not been able to give God anything but themselves, but given unreservedly. **A. V.**—By various discipline here God fits and polishes each living stone for the place which it is destined to occupy in the spiritual temple; and, when all the stones are made ready, he will build them together each into its place, and exhibit to men and angels their perfect unity. **E. M. G.**

An holy priesthood. The New Testament owns the idea of the priesthood, but applies it expressly to *all* true Christians. All have immediate access to Christ by faith, and should daily offer him the sacrifices of praise and intercession. In virtue of their union with Christ they are here called "a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices." It is by this universal priesthood that we are to account for the *liberty of teaching* and the *participation* of the people in the *worship* and *government* of the Church which we observe in the apostolic age. **P. S.**—The priesthood of the law represented Him as the great High Priest that *offered up himself for our sins*, and that is altogether incommunicable; neither is there any peculiar office of priesthood for offering sacrifice in the Christian Church but His alone who is Head of it. But this dignity here mentioned, of a *spiritual priesthood* offering *spiritual sacrifice*, is common to all those that are in Christ; as they are living stones built on him into a spiritual temple, so they are priests of that same temple. As he was, after a transcendent manner, temple and priest and sacrifice, so, in their kind, are Christians all these three through him; and by his Spirit that is in them their offerings through him are made acceptable. **L.**—It is the certain doctrine of Scripture that God requires from Christians, not indeed a sin- or trespass-offering, which we could never render, but offerings of sweet savor, as a testimony of their love and gratitude. These are generally described as "spiritual sacrifices," which we are ordained to offer. **E. M. G.**

6. The rapid transition of mind here certainly gives origin to a double figure; for the same persons who in one clause are called the temple are in the next represented as the worshipers. Both temple and worshipers, in the type, were intended to show forth the Church of God, or the entire body of sanctified believers. **J. W. A.**—The prophecy here cited we find inserted in the middle of a very sad denunciation of judgment against the Jews. And this is usual with the prophets—particularly with this *evangelical prophet* Isaiah—to uphold the spirits of the godly in the worst times with this one great consolation, the promise of the Messiah, as weigh-

ing down all, both temporal distresses and deliverances. Hence are those sudden ascents (so frequent in the prophets), from their present subject, to this great *Hope of Israel*. And, if this expectation of a Saviour was so pertinent a comfort in all estates so many ages before the accomplishment of it, how wrongfully do we undervalue it, being accomplished, if we can not live upon it and answer all with it, and sweeten all our griefs in this advantage, that there is *a foundation-stone laid in Zion, on which they that are builded shall be sure not to be ashamed!* L.

7. Every man obeys Christ as he prizes Christ, and no otherwise. The higher price any soul sets upon Christ, the more noble will that soul be in its obedience to Christ. *Brooks.*

9. **Hath called.** That God, who is the author of all kind of being, hath called you from darkness into his marvelous light. If you be a *chosen generation*, it is he that hath chosen you. If you be a *royal priesthood*, you know that it is he that hath anointed you. If a *holy nation*, he hath sanctified you. If a *peculiar* or *purchased people*, it is he that hath bought you. All are in this calling. L.—The Church Catholic, despite all appearances to the contrary, is a holy body, for they only are its members who are in true and living fellowship with Christ. All others, however they may have the outward notes of belonging to it, are in it, but not of it. They are like chaff on the same barn-floor with the grain, tares growing in the same field with the wheat, endured for a while, but in the end to be separated off, the evil from the good. *Aug.*

11. This entreaty is strengthened much by the words *Dearly beloved*. Scarce can the harshest reproofs, much less gentle reproofs, be thrown back that have upon them the stamp of love. That which is known to come from love can not readily but be so received too, and it is thus expressed for that very purpose, that the request may be the more welcome. L.—Warnings and cautions against the lusts of the flesh are so often accompanied by expressions of love and tenderness as to make you think that the connection is not accidental. Hear how the Holy Ghost speaks to us here in warning us of certain sins, the consciousness of which disposes us to indulge fear and despair. Oh, the tenderness of God, in dealing with us as sinners in this world of mercy! N. A.

Strangers and pilgrims. If you were citizens of this world, then you might drive the same trade with them; but, seeing you are chosen and called into a new society, made free of another city, and are therefore here but travelers passing through to your own country, there should be this difference betwixt you and the world, that while they live as at home, your carriage be such as fits

strangers; as wise strangers living warily and soberly, minding most of all your journey homeward, suspecting dangers and snares in your way, and so walking with holy fear, as the Hebrew word for a stranger imports. We are to abstain not only from the serving of our flesh in things forbidden, as unjust gain or unlawful pleasures, but also from immoderate desire of and delighting in any earthly thing, although it may be in itself lawfully desired and used; yea, to have any feverish, pressing thirst after even just gain, or after earthly delights though lawful, is a thing very unbecoming the dignity of a Christian. It was a high speech of a heathen, *that he was greater and born to greater things than to be a servant to his body*; how much more ought he that is born again to say so, being born heir to a crown that *fadeth not away!*

12. **Honest.** Fair or beautiful; the same word doth fitly signify goodness and beauty. Could the beauty of virtue be seen, said a philosopher, it would draw all to love it. A Christian, holy conversation hath such a beauty, as when they that are strangers to it begin to discern it anywise a right, they can not choose but love it; and where it begets not love, yet it silences calumny, or at least evinces its falsehood. Trouble not yourselves with many apologies and clearings when you are evil spoken of, but let the tract of your life answer for you, your *honest* and *blameless conversation*. That will be the shortest and most real and effectual way of confuting all obloquies. It was a king that said, *It was kingly to do well and he ill spoke of*. Well may Christians acknowledge it to be true, when they consider that it was the lot of their king, Jesus Christ; and well may they be content, seeing he hath made them likewise kings (as we heard, verse 9), to be conformable to him in this too. This is a kingly way of suffering, to be unjustly evil spoken of and still to go on in doing the more good, always aiming in so doing, as our Lord did, at the glory of our heavenly Father. L.

13-17. Christianity does not prescribe any peculiar form of government, but regulates the respective duties, both of those who govern and those who are governed. It reminds the latter that their Christian profession does by no means dissolve or weaken their political obligations, but confirms and strengthens them; that their religion makes no other alteration than that of rendering them still better citizens and better subjects, and of enforcing every civil tie by the sanction of divine as well as human authority. They are not, therefore, to use their spiritual freedom "as a cloak of maliciousness," as a cover for faction and mischief, as a pretense for disturbing the peace and order of society; but they are to submit themselves patiently to "every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." P.

—The main ground of submitting to human authority is the interest that *Divine* authority hath in it; having both appointed civil government as a common good among men, and particularly commanded his people obedience to it as a particular good to them and suitable with their profession—it is *for the Lord's sake*. Although civil authority, in regard of particular forms of government and the choice of particular persons to govern, is but a human ordinance, or *man's creature*, as the word is, yet both the good of government and the duty of subjection to it is God's ordinance; and, therefore, *for his sake submit yourselves*. But not only ought the exercise of authority and submission to it be in things just and lawful in themselves, but the very purpose of the heart, both in command and obedience, should be *in the Lord* and *for his sake*. This is the only straight and only safe rule both for rulers and for people to walk by. L.

He who has resolved to stand on the side of God is the best friend of his country that any country can have; and there is no earthly country good enough to be loved safely, except the love of it be hallowed by faith in a better country, even a heavenly. F. D. H.—We should be accustomed to look upon political matters as Christians; we should by that standard try our common views and language about it, and, if it may be, correct them, that so, when called upon to act, we may act according to the apostle's teaching, for the sake of our Lord Jesus. And I am quite sure if we do so think and act, although our differences of opinion might remain, yet the change in ourselves—and I verily believe in the blessings which God would give us—would be more than we can well believe; and a general election, instead of calling forth a host of unchristian passions and practices, would be rather an exercise of Christian judgment and forbearance and faith and charity, promoting, whatever was the mere political result, the glory of God, advancing Christ's kingdom, and the good of this, as it would be then truly called, Christian nation. T. A.

17. Here is the sum of our duty toward God and men: to men in general, *honor all men*; in their Christian or religious relation, *love the brotherhood*; and in a chief civil relation, *honor the king*. And our whole duty to God, comprised under the name of *his fear*, is set in the middle betwixt these, as the common spring of all duty to men and of all due observance of it, and the sovereign rule by which it is to be regulated. **Honor all men.** The Jews would not willingly tread upon the smallest piece of paper in their way, but took it up; for possibly, said they, the name of God may be on it. Though there was a little superstition in that, yet truly there is nothing but good religion in it if we apply it to men. Trample not on any; there may

be some work of grace there that thou knowest not of. The name of God may be written upon that soul. Wheresoever thou findest the least trace of Christ's image, if thou lovest him, thou wilt honor it. L.—The divine image, expressed in man's intelligence and freedom; the atoning blood, giving the measure of man's preciousness in the eyes of God; the glorified manhood of Jesus, revealing to man his capacity for glory—these are the privileges of no class or station; they are the right and the possession of humanity. H. P. L.

Fear God. This fear hath chiefly these things: a reverent esteem of the majesty of God that molds the heart most powerfully to the obedience of his will; a firm belief of the purity of God and of his power and justice; that he loves all holiness and hates all sin, and can and will punish it; a right apprehension of the bitterness of his wrath and the sweetness of his love. From all these things springs a desire to please him in all things, and an unwillingness to offend him in the least; and because of our danger through the multitude and strength of temptations and our weakness, a continual self-suspicion, a holy fear lest we should sin, and a care and watchfulness that we sin not. L.

19. The virtue, value, and glory of conscience have been manifested in its habitual predominance in the spirit and conduct of good men. A good conscience has been the source of unspeakable complacency and delight; it has been mighty in trial and temptation, consolatory under injustice, reproach, and undeserved ignominy; a sublime energy under persecution for fidelity to God. J. F.

21. *God's thoughts are not ours*; those whom he calls to a kingdom he calls to suffering as the way to it. He will have the heirs of heaven know they are not at home on earth, and that *this is not their rest*. He will not have them with the abused world fancy a happiness here, and seek a happy life in the region of death, as Augustin says. That we are called to suffering, the apostle puts out of question by the supreme example of our Lord Jesus Christ; for the sum of our calling is *to follow him*. In both suffering, and suffering innocently and patiently, the whole history of the gospel testifies how complete a pattern he is. L.—Christ left us an example of all meekness, and patience, and humility; he left us an example of perfect submission to God's will; he left us an infinite comfort by letting us feel when we are in any trouble, or pain, or affliction, that he was troubled too: that he knew pain and endured affliction. Above all, in that hour which must come to all of us, he has left us the greatest of all supports; for he endured to die; and we may enter with less fear into the darkness of the grave, for even there Christ has been for our sakes, and arose from out of it a conqueror. T. A.

It is obviously not every part of his life that was intended to be an example to man, but only that in which he stood in the relations common to men, in which he moved and walked as one of them. And he did move and mingle freely with men of all classes and of all conditions. He was placed not only in such a condition in life, but in so many situations—he came into collision with human passion and interest in so many ways—as most fully to test his character and make him an example to all. M. H.—As man, he had specific traits of character, the assemblage of which in harmony, resting on a foundation of spotless godliness, constituted his perfection. These traits of character were cultivated under the guiding hand of Providence and the control of godliness, until they reached their highest beauty and excellence. Hence the beauty of his example, hence his nearness to our hearts, and the soft attractiveness of his love. T. D. W.—In imitating Christ no man is led out of his sphere. The rich and the poor, the contemplative and the active, the gifted and the ungifted, men of every class and of all dispositions, find in him the teaching they need; and all are led, by looking to him, into that path which is most suitable for them. He is the contrast of all that men should shun and the perfection of all they should copy. J. A.

23. "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again." Ah! why are we who call ourselves his disciples so little like him? and when shall we understand that we are not genuine Christians so long as the crown of meekness is wanting to our sullied brow? We always wish to gain it through the maintenance of our real or imagined rights: Jesus overcame through suffering wrong, but never doing wrong. Van O.—Instead of revilings and threatenings, he committed all to him that judgeth righteously. And this is the true method of Christian patience, that which quiets the mind and keeps it from the boiling, tumultuous thoughts of revenge: to turn the whole matter into God's hand, to resign it over to him to prosecute when and as he thinks good. Not to reply to reproach with reproach, as our custom is, to give an ill word for another, or two for one to be sure not to be behind. Men take a pride in this, and think it ridiculous simplicity to suffer; and this makes strifes and contention so much to abound. But it is true greatness of spirit to despise the most of those things which set you usually on fire one against another. It were a part of the Spirit of Christ in you, and is there any spirit greater than that, think you? Oh, that there were less of the spirit of the dragon, and more of the spirit of the dove, among us!

24. That Jesus Christ is in doing and suffering our supreme and matchless example, and that he came to be so, is a truth. But that he is nothing

further, and came for no other end, is a high point of falsehood; for how should man be enabled to learn and follow that example of obedience unless there were more in Christ? and what would become of that great reckoning of disobedience that man stands guilty of? No, these are too narrow; he came to *bear our sins in his own body on the tree*, and for this purpose had a body fitted for him and given him to bear this burden; to do this as the will of his Father; to stand for us instead of all offerings and sacrifices; and *by that will*, says the apostle, *we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*. L.—If Christ in any real sense died *instead of sinners*, he was in *his death* their representative; this character which he thus assumed can not be disassociated from his death, and therefore his death is vicariously penal. He bears on his cross "our sins and the penalty of our sins." Bright.—In virtue of the union constituted by the wisdom and grace of God between the Saviour and mankind, he voluntarily *put himself in their place*, and suffered as if he had been a transgressor, in order that they might be delivered from the guilt or legal condemnation of their sins, and by consequence from the pollution and practical power of sin. The Saviour of mankind voluntarily yielded himself a sacrifice of expiation, bearing the guilt and punishment of sin not his own. The fire of heaven consumed the sacrifice. The tremendous manifestations of God's displeasure against sin he endured, though in him was no sin; and he endured them in a manner of which even those unhappy spirits, who shall drink the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God, will never be able to form an adequate idea. They know not the holy and exquisite sensibility which belonged to this immaculate sacrifice. Pye Smith.—I rest on the fact that on him all our iniquities were laid; that he, by the satisfaction of his meritorious death, standing in the room of our nature as Adam did, suffered, exhausted once for all, the punishment of the world's sin. A.

The sublime idea of the incarnation and death of the Son could only have originated in the mind of him who is wonderful in counsel and unsearchable in his judgments. In Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, we behold a kinsman, who, through the eternal Spirit, is able to endure the wrath of God—a man who can satisfy justice and yet recover from the stroke—a being who could die and in dying conquer death. Great indeed is the mystery of godliness, but it is no less glorious than great. Through the infinite wisdom of God a suitable substitute is found who takes the place of the guilty; the law is executed in its utmost rigors, and God is just, perfectly and gloriously just, in justifying those who believe J. H. T.

Section 359.

1 PETER iii. 1-22.

1 LIKEWISE, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the
 2 word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while
 3 they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear. Whose adorning, let it not be that
 4 outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of ap-
 5 parel; but *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the*
 6 ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after
 7 this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves,
 8 being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him
 9 lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amaze-
 10 ment. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour
 11 unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life;
 12 that your prayers be not hindered.

13 Finally, *be ye* all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, *be*
 14 pitiful, *be* courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise
 15 blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he
 16 that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that
 17 they speak no guile: let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.
 18 For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers:
 19 but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil. And who *is* he that will harm you,
 20 if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake,
 21 happy *are ye*: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord
 22 God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a
 23 reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that,
 24 whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse
 25 your good conversation in Christ. For *it is* better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer
 26 for well doing, than for evil doing. For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for
 27 the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by
 28 the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime
 29 were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while
 30 the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like
 31 figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of
 32 the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus
 33 Christ: who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities
 34 and powers being made subject unto him.

WE may disparage the power that is operating within us. It is the common mistake of retired and suffering Christians. Because they are not called to public manifestations, they think there is no advancement. But faith may be diffusing its mighty influence on every side. Holy devotion may be sending up clouds of incense, acceptable to God. Intercessory prayer may be stretching its arms of love, to take in all the brotherhood of Christ and all the family of man. Appetite and passion may be dying, by repeated blows. Patience may be approaching to its perfect work. Submission to God's chastising hand may be gaining strength in the furnace. The world may be waning, and the attraction of heaven waxing more luminous. Joy in the Lord may be like the fragrance of a field which God hath blessed. And gentle humility, the ornament and preservative of all graces, may be growing more constant. Is all this nothing? Is it not the very process to which our Master calls us? J. W. A.—The slowness of those steps by which you are following after your blessed Master—slow in spite of your best efforts—has disheartened you. But think. You have not to overtake your Lord, in order to be sure of his comfort and his blessing. He is not hurrying away from you. He has *come to you*. All the way from heaven—down to our poor, miserable mortality he has come, that he might seek after us, and find us, and stand with us just where we are, and love us here—if only our willing hearts will let him. Would he have been likely to do and to give all that if he did not love you; if he did not *mean* to have you for his own? F. D. H.

1. That which is here said of *their conversation* holds of the husband in the like case, and of friends and kindred and of all Christians, in reference to them with whom they converse; that their spotless holy carriage as Christians, and as Christian husbands, wives, or friends, is a hopeful means of converting others who believe not. Men who are prejudiced observe actions a great deal more than words. In those first times especially, the blameless carriage of Christians did much to the increasing of their number.

3, 4. Though clothing was first drawn on by necessity, yet all regard of comeliness and ornament in apparel is not unlawful; nor doth the apostle's expression here, rightly considered, fasten that upon the adorning he here speaks of. He doth no more universally condemn the use of gold for ornament than he doth any other comely raiment, which here he means by that general word of *putting on of apparel*, for his *not* is comparative; *not this adorning but the ornament of a meek spirit*, that rather and as *more* comely and precious. The apostle doth, indeed, check and forbid vanity and excess in apparel, and excessive delight in lawful decorum, but his prime end is to recommend this other ornament of the soul, *the hidden man of the heart*. The particular grace he recommends, this *meekness and quietness of spirit*, is, withal, the comeliness of every Christian in every estate; it is not a woman's garment or ornament, improper for men.

7. That the Christian husband and wife are equal *coheirs* of the same *grace of life* is that which most strongly binds all these duties on the hearts of husbands and wives; and most strongly indeed binds their hearts together and makes them one. If each be reconciled unto God in Christ, and so heirs of life and one with God, then are they truly one in God; and that is the surest and sweetest union that can be. Natural love hath risen very high in some husbands and wives; but the highest of it falls very far short of that which holds in God. Hearts centering in him are most excellently one. That love which is cemented by youth and beauty, when these moulder and decay it fades too. That is somewhat purer and so more lasting, that holds in a natural or moral harmony of minds, yet these likewise may alter and change. But the most refined, most spiritual, and most indissoluble is that which is knit with the highest and purest Spirit. And the ignorance or disregard of this is the great cause of so much bitterness, or so little true sweetness, in the life of most married persons, because God is left out, because they meet not as one in him.

That your prayers be not hindered. He takes it for granted that the heirs of life can not live without prayer. This is the proper breathing and language of these heirs. Can the husband and

wife have that love, wisdom, and meekness that may make their life happy, and that blessing that may make their affairs successful, while they neglect God, the only giver of these and all good things? It is prayer that sanctifies, seasons, and blesses all.

8. This one verse hath a cluster of five Christian graces or virtues. That which is in the middle as the stalk or root of the rest, *love*, and the other growing out of it, two on each side; *unanimity* and *sympathy* on one side, and *pity* and *courtesy* on the other.

Be pitiful. Christian pity is more than manly, it is divine. There is of natural pity most in the best and most ingenuous natures, but where it is spiritual it is a prime lineament of the image of God; and the more absolute and unselfish it is in regard of those toward whom it acts, the more it is like unto God; looking upon misery as a sufficient incentive of pity and mercy, without the ingredient of any other consideration. **Be courteous.** It is not that graver and wiser way of external plausible deportment that answers fully this word, it is the outer half indeed; but the thing is a radical sweetness in the temper of the mind that spreads itself into a man's words and actions. And this is not merely natural, a gentle, kind disposition, which indeed some have; but this is spiritual, from a new nature descended from heaven, and so in its original and nature it far excels the other, supplies it where it is not in nature, and doth not only increase it where it is, but elevates it above itself, renews it, and sets a more excellent stamp upon it. Religion is in this mistaken sometimes, in that men think it imprints an unkindly roughness and austerity upon the mind and carriage. L.—The most earthly of earthly actions, those which are most bound up with this transitory state of things, and which have no intrinsic dignity or sacredness whatever, may be spiritualized by importing into them a spiritual intention. The little courtesies, for example, which society requires may be yielded simply because they are social requirements, in which case they will be often done "grudgingly, and of necessity"; or they may be regarded as so many opportunities of compliance with the inspired precept, "Be courteous," in which case they will be done cheerfully, "as to the Lord, and not unto men." A. M.

9. "Not rendering to others evil for evil, or reproach for reproach, but contrariwise blessing them." A.

10, 11. *Life, long life, and days of good*, is the thing men most desire. But he that will wisely love it, that will take the way to it, *must refrain his tongue from evil; he must eschew evil and do good; seek peace and ensue it*. To be deprived of peace calls for our prayers and tears to pursue it, and entreat its return; to seek it from his hand that is

the sovereign Dispenser of peace and war; to seek to be at peace with him, and thereby good, all good shall come unto us. We may pursue it among men and not overtake it: we may use all good means and fall short. But pursue it up as far as the throne of grace; seek it by prayer, and that will overcome it, will be sure to find it in God's hand.

12. Against them that do evil. Prosper they may in their affairs and estates, may have riches and friends, and the world smiling on them on all hands; but there is that one thing that damps all, *the face of the Lord is against them*. This they feel not indeed for the time; it is an invisible ill, out of sight and out of mind with them. But there is a time of the appearing of *this face of the Lord against them, the revelation of his righteous judgment*. L.

15. Light in the understanding is scarcely less an object with Christianity than purity in the affections. Its whole scope and tendency is to magnify the importance of truth. The enemies of Christianity can not point out anything, either in its letter or spirit, which would restrict knowledge or cramp the intellect. We are, indeed, required to have faith; but we are also required to "add to faith knowledge." We are to adopt no conviction on the ground of any blind impulse; we are always to be able to give a *reason* of the hope that is in us. We glory in Christianity as a religion of light not less than a religion of love. M. H.—We are to answer every one that *inquires a reason*, or an account; which supposes something receptive of it. We ought to judge ourselves engaged to give it, be it an enemy if he will hear; if it gain him not, it may in part convince and cool him; much more, should it be one who ingenuously inquires for satisfaction, and possibly inclines to receive the truth, but has been prejudiced by false representations of it. S. T. C.—**With meekness.** Truth needs not the service of passion; yea, nothing so deserves it as passion when set to serve it. The *spirit of truth* is withal the *spirit of meekness*. The dove that rested on that great champion of truth, who is the truth itself, is from Him derived to the lovers of truth, and they ought to seek the participation of it. The soul that hath the deepest sense of spiritual things, and the truest knowledge of God, is most afraid to miscarry in speaking of him, most tender and wary how to acquit itself when engaged to speak of and for God.

16. The goodness of conscience here recommended is *the integrity and holiness of the whole inward man*. The ingredients of it are (1) a due light or knowledge of our rule—so much knowledge of the will of God as may regulate you and shew you your way, may teach you how to do and speak and think, as in his presence; (2) a constant

using of this light, applying it to all; still seeking a nearer conformity with the known will of our God; daily redressing and ordering the affections by it; not sparing to knock off whatsoever we find irregular within, that our hearts may be polished and brought to a right frame by that rule. And this is the daily inward work of the Christian, his great business, *to purify himself, as the Lord is pure*. L.—In order to have a good conscience, it is not necessary that a man should be without sin, but that in spiritual things he seeks and desires but one object; that not indeed without stumbling, but yet without willful deviation, he walks in the path of obedience, and longs to be tried by the searcher of hearts, because, in fellowship with God, he desires above all things *truth* in the inward part. He who in humility can profess this with regard to himself has, in spite of all momentary neglects and failures (which a faithful conscience incessantly points out to him), grounds for a good conscience toward God. Van O.

17. The mind feels itself invincibly firm and content when it hath attained self-resignation to the *will of God*; to agree to that in everything. This is the very thing wherein tranquillity of spirit lies. And what is gained by our reluctancies and repinings but pain to ourselves? *God doth what he will* whether we consent or not; our disagreeing doth not prevent his purposes, but our own peace. If we will not be led, we are drawn. We must suffer if he will; but if we will what he wills even in suffering, that makes it sweet and easy; when our mind goes along with his, and we willingly move with his providence.

18. The whole life of a Christian is a steady aiming at conformity with Christ; so that whether doing or suffering, there can be no argument so apposite and persuasive as his example. The apostle doth not decline the frequent use of it. Here we have it thus, *for Christ also suffered*. There can be no higher example. Not only are the sons of adoption sufferers, but the *only begotten Son*, the eternal heir of glory, in whom all the rest have their title, sonship, and heirship, derived from and dependent on his: not only all the saints, but the king of saints. Who shall now repine at suffering?

Pring us to God. Though the heart once gone from God turns continually farther away from him, yet even wandering it retains that natural relation to God as its center, that it hath no true rest elsewhere. It is made for him, and is therefore restless till it meet with him. And there is no other but the power of Christ alone that is able to effect this, to persuade a sinner to return, to bring home a heart unto God. L.

19, 20. "The meaning of the text appears to be, that the Spirit of Christ influenced Noah, who

was a 'preacher of righteousness,' to warn the unhappy men, whose spirits were then, and still are, in prison, of the danger which was so near them while the ark was preparing." *Quoted by J. W. A.* —This preaching was done, as to *time*, while the ark was preparing; as to *place*, on this earth, not in Hades; on the point *by whom*, by Christ really, but through Noah instrumentally, whom Peter speaks of (2: 5) as a "preacher of righteousness"; on the point *to whom* specifically, to those hardened, defiant sinners, with whom God in long-suffering waited so long, and of whom he at length said, "My Spirit shall not always strive." Peter tells the Christians to whom he is writing that it is better to suffer for doing well than for doing ill, and would enforce this by the example of Christ. He suffered for us even unto death, but rose to a more glorious life, and by the Spirit of God was exalted to a deathless, omnipotent power. Expanding and illustrating the latter point, he thinks of the divine Spirit as the embodiment of divine power, and as having been manifested first in his striving with the generation of Noah's time, but reaching his climax of force after the resurrection of Jesus. The going (of Christ, by the Spirit) to preach to the wicked men of Noah's time (verse 19) is set over against the going into heaven (verse 22), which shortly followed his resurrection. The former going and preaching proved unavailing; but the latter going, following close upon his death of agony, opened a new era of unsurpassed power and majesty. Therefore, let his saints have no fear of suffering, be it only for righteousness' sake; there is unspeakable glory to follow. H. C.

20, 21. The manner of salvation, as well as the necessity for it, is taught from the history of Noah. He was delivered "by water," passed through the death in which others were swallowed up, concealed or buried out of sight for a time, and then emerged as by resurrection to render to God his sacrifice of praise. So are we saved by baptism into the death of Christ, by burial with him through "baptism into death," and by resurrection with him who is risen and gone into heaven. Then and therefore have we good cause to offer our sacrifice of praise to God continually. D. F.

The passage may, with strict justice to the original, be thus paraphrased: "Noah and his family were carried in the ark through the whelming waters of the flood, and thus saved from present temporal death. The *antitype* to this—I mean baptism, not, however, the mere putting away of the filth of the flesh, but what this material washing *signifies*, in the answer of a good conscience toward God, given as the result of the inward baptism of the Spirit—now saves us also, or assures us, as God's pledge,

the seal of his promise and his oath, that our bodies shall hereafter be raised from the grave through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, or by the same power which raised him from the dead." J. S. S.

21. Baptism doth save us. Not by a natural force of the element, though adapted and sacramentally used. But it is in the hand of the Spirit of God, as the word itself is, to purify the conscience and convey grace and salvation to the soul by the reference it hath to and union with that which it represents. It saves *by the answer of a good conscience unto God*, and it affords that *by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead*. Thus we have a true account of the power of sacraments and a discovery of the error of two extremes: 1. Of those that ascribe too much to them, as if they wrought by a natural inherent virtue and carried grace in them inseparably; 2. Of those that ascribe too little to them, making them only signs and badges of our profession. Signs they are, but more than signs merely representing: they are means exhibiting and seals confirming grace to the faithful. But the working of faith and the conveying of Christ into the soul to be received by faith is not a thing put into them to do of themselves, but still in the Supreme Hand that appointed them. And he indeed both causes the souls of his own to receive these his seals with faith, and makes them effectual to confirm that faith which receives them so. They are, then, neither empty signs to them that believe, nor effectual causes of grace to them that believe not.

The taking away of spiritual filthiness as the true and saving effect of baptism, the apostle here expresses by that which is the further result and effect of it, *the answer of a good conscience unto God*. The purified and good condition of the whole soul may well, as here it doth, go under the name of the good conscience, it being so prime a faculty of it, and as the glass of the whole soul wherein the estate of it is represented. This *answer of a good conscience unto God* is touching two great points, that are of chief concern to the soul, its *justification* and *sanctification*; for baptism is the seal of both, and purges the conscience in both respects. That water is the figure both of the blood and water, the justifying blood of Christ and the pure water of the sanctifying Spirit of Christ: he takes away the condemning guiltiness of sin by the one, and the polluting filthiness by the other.

22. This is added on purpose to show us further what he is, how high and glorious a Saviour we have. The particulars are clear in themselves. The sitting at the right hand of God is a borrowed expression, drawn from earth to heaven, to bring down some notion of heaven to us; to signify to us the supreme dignity of Jesus Christ, God and man, the Mediator of the new covenant, his matchless nearness unto his Father, and the sovereignty given him over heaven and earth. And the subjection of angels is but a more particular specifying of that his dignity and power, as enthroned at the Father's right hand, they being the most elevated and glorious creatures; so that his authority over all the world is implied in that subjection of the highest and noblest part of it. L.

Section 360.

1 PETER iv. 1-19.

- 1 FORASMUCH then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with
 2 the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer
 3 should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.
 4 For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when
 5 we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable
 6 idolatries: wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of
 7 riot, speaking evil of *you*: who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick
 8 and the dead. For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that
 9 they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.
 10 But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And
 11 above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multi-
 12 tude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath re-
 13 ceived the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold
 14 grace of God. If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; if any man minister,
 15 *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified
 16 through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.
 17 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though
 18 some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's
 19 sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.
 20 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for the spirit of glory and of
 21 God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.
 22 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody
 23 in other men's matters. Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but
 24 let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the
 25 house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the
 26 gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the
 27 sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the
 28 keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator:

THE world sleeps her old sleep, and dreams her old dreams, and wanders like a sleep-walker on the brink of the abyss. The wicked servant begins to give way to self-indulgence, and to deal hardly with his fellow-servants, in proportion as the Master of the house delayeth his coming. The faithful servant, on the contrary, although in the stifling atmosphere around him the light will not always burn with equal clearness and cheerfulness, keeps with all his might sleep from his eyes, and ever holds in memory this apostolic saying: "The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." And thus he watches finally, when all has been put in readiness, when it shall please the Lord to return to his own. When others have already long ceased from such ministration, he continues steadfast in working, watching, hoping, and remains to the last moment what he has been since the first of his life of faith—a servant. *Van O.*

If there be a mode of life, a system of duties, a series of acts, which bears the same relation to our spiritual prosperity that the toil of the student, the care of the merchant, and the labor of the artisan bear to their success, then there follows a conclusion of fearful import. It follows that our spiritual progress depends, not only upon the reception of a divine influence, silent, unseen, incomprehensible, but also upon the performance of plain, matter-of-fact duty, in reference to which the reason and the conscience consider and the will acts; and that the waters of life in our souls do not passively rise and fall, like the ocean tides, swayed wholly by a power far away, but flow in a full channel when we maintain, in the appointed way, our connection with the fountain, and fail when our neglect and remissness shut off the stream. Yes, with all the weight of accountability which the confession devolves upon us, we are compelled to admit that there are means of grace, intelligible, visible duties, without constant attention to which it is presumption to expect spiritual prosperity. We are driven to the conclusion that self-denial, watchfulness, worship, the spirit and the habit of obedience to the divine will, are essential to spiritual safety and growth. *An.*

1. Patience in suffering and avoidance of sin have a natural influence each upon the other. Although affliction simply doth not, yet affliction sweetly and humbly carried doth, purify and disengage the heart from sin, wean it from the world and the common ways of it. And again, holy and exact walking keeps the soul in a sound, healthful temper, and so enables it to patient suffering, to bear things more easily. Therefore the apostle hath reason to insist so much on these two points in this Epistle, and to interweave the one so often with the other, pressing jointly throughout the cheerful bearing of all kind of afflictions and the careful forbearing all kind of sin; and out of the one discourse he slides into the other, as here. And as the things agree in their nature, so in their great pattern and principle, Jesus Christ.

Arm yourselves. There is still fighting, and sin will be molesting you; though wounded to death, yet will it struggle for life and seek to wound its enemy—will assault the graces that are in you. So long as you live in the flesh there will be remainders of the life of this flesh—your natural corruption; therefore, ye must be armed against it. The children of God often find to their grief that corruptions, which they thought had been cold dead, stir and rise up again and set upon them. Therefore is it continually necessary that they live in arms, and put them not off till they put off the body, and be altogether free of the flesh. You may take the Lord's promise for victory in the end—that shall not fail; but do not promise yourself ease in the way, for that will not hold. L.

2-4. In an age when sensuality was wrought into all forms of literature and art, was blazoned shamelessly in the decorations of private houses and enshrined in the temples of the gods, the contrast of a chaste and godly conversation in the Christian community witnessed for the redemptive and renovating power of the gospel. The exhortations of apostles at once testify of this contrast and urge that it be made emphatic. J. P. T.

5. "*They shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead.*" He hath the day set; and it shall surely come, though they think it far off. Though the wicked themselves forget their scoffs against the godly, and though the Christian slights them and lets them pass, they pass not so; they are all registered; and the great court-day shall call them to account for all these riots and excesses, and withal for all their reproaches of the godly that would not run with them in these ways.

6. They that formerly received the gospel received it upon these terms; therefore think it not hard. And they are now dead; all the difficulty of that work of dying to sin is now over with them. If they had not died to their sins by the gospel, they

had died in them, and so died eternally. It is therefore a wise prevention to have sin judged and put to death in us before we die. If we will not part with sin, if we die in it and with it, we and our sin perish together; but if it die first before us, then we live for ever.

Live according to God. If this life be in thee, it will act. It will be moving toward God; often seeking to him, making still toward him as its principle and fountain, exerting itself in holy and affectionate thoughts of him. And as it will thus act within, so it will be outwardly laying hold on all occasions, seeking out ways and opportunities to be serviceable to thy Lord; employing all for him, commending and extolling his goodness, doing and suffering cheerfully for him, laying out the strength of desires and parts and means, to gain him glory; if thou be alone, then not alone, but with him; seeking to know more of him and to be made more like him; if in company, then casting about how to bring his name in esteem, and to draw others to a love of religion and holiness by the true behavior of thy carriage; tender over the souls of others, to do them good to thy utmost; thinking an hour lost when thou art not busy for the honor and advantage of him to whom thou now livest.

7. End of all things at hand. This might always have been said in respect of succeeding eternity. The whole duration of the world is not considerable, and to the eternal Lord that made it and hath appointed its period, *a thousand years are but as one day*. We think a thousand years a great matter in respect of our short life. But what is the utmost length of time, were it millions of years, to a thought of eternity! To each man the *end of all things* is, even after our measure, at hand; for when he dies the world ends for him. Now, seeing all things shall be quickly at an end, even the frame of heaven and earth, why should we, knowing this and having higher hopes, lay out so much of our desires and endeavors upon these things that are posting to ruin? Why should our hearts cleave to those things from which we shall so quickly part, and from which, if we will not freely part and let them go, we shall be pulled away, and pulled with the more pain the closer we cleave and faster we are glued to them?

Sobriety is the friend of *watchfulness*, and *prayer* of both. When the affections are soberly acted, and care is taken that even in lawful things they have not full liberty to follow the world; when the unavoidable affairs of this life are done with a spiritual mind, a heart kept free and disengaged; then is the soul more nimble for spiritual things, for divine meditation and prayer. It can watch and continue in these things, and spend itself in that *excellent way* with more alacrity. And as this sobriety

and the watchful temper attending it, enables for prayer, so prayer preserves these. L.—He must be a close Christian that will be a closet Christian. When I say a close Christian, I mean one that is so in the hidden part, and that also walks with God. Many there be that profess Christ, who sooner in a morning run to make bargains than to pray unto God and begin the day with him. But for thee, who professest the name of Christ, do thou make conscience of beginning the day with God. For he that begins it not with him will hardly end it with him; he that runs from God in the morning will hardly find him at the close of the day; nor will he that begins with the world and the vanities thereof in the first place be very capable of walking with God all the day after. It is he that finds God in his closet that will carry the savor of him into his house, his shop, and his more open conversation. *Bun.*

He that is much in prayer shall grow rich in grace. He shall thrive and increase most that is busiest in this, which is our very traffic with heaven and fetches the most precious commodities thence. He that makes the most voyages to that land of spices and pearls shall be sure to improve his stock most, and have most of heaven upon earth. But the true art of this trading is very rare. Industry is to be used in it, but the faculty of it comes from above; that spirit of prayer, without which learning and wit and religious breeding can do nothing. Therefore, this is to be our great suit for the spirit of prayer, that we may speak the language of the sons of God, by the Spirit of God.

8. The graces of the Spirit are an entire frame, making up the new creature, and none of them can be wanting; therefore the doctrine and exhortation of the apostles speak of them usually, not only as inseparable, but as one. But there is among them all none more comprehensive than this of *love*, inasmuch that Paul calls it *the fulfilling of the law*. **Cover the multitude of sins.** It delights not in undue disclosing of brethren's failings, doth not eye them rigidly, nor expose them willingly to the eyes of others. The uncovering of sin necessary to the curing of it is not only no breach of charity, but is a main point of it, and the neglect of it the highest kind of cruelty. But, further than that goes, certainly this rule teaches the veiling of our brethren's infirmities from the eyes of others, and even from our own that we look not on them with rigor: no, nor without compassion. L.—It is a noble and a great thing to cover the blemishes and to excuse the failings of a friend; to draw a curtain before his stains, and to display his perfections; to bury his weakness in silence, but to proclaim his virtues upon the house-top. R. S.

9. **Without grudging.** Some look to the

actions, but few to the intention and posture of mind in them, and yet that is the main; it is indeed all, even with men, so far as they can perceive it; much more with thy Lord, who always perceives it to the full. He delights in the good he does his creatures. He would have them so affected to one another, especially would see his children to have this trace of his likeness. See then, when thou givest alms or entertainest a stranger, that there be nothing either of undergrumbling or crooked self-seeking in it.

10. Every man hath received some gift, no man all gifts; and this, rightly considered, would keep all in a more even temper. As all is received, so all is received to *minister to each other*; and mutual benefit is the true use of all, suiting the mind of him that dispenses all, and the way of his dispensation. Thou art not proprietary lord of anything thou hast, but a *steward*; and therefore oughtest gladly to be a good steward, both faithful and prudent in thy intrusted gifts, using all thou hast to the good of the household, and so to the advantage of thy Lord and master.

11. Particular rules for the preaching of the word may be many, but this is a most comprehensive one which the apostle gives: *If any speak, let him speak as of the oracle of God.* He that would faithfully teach of God must be *taught of God*, be *God-learned*; and this will help to all the rest; this will effectually engage him to be faithful in delivering the message as he receives it, not detracting or adding, nor altering. And you that hear would certainly meet and suit in this too. If any hear, let him hear *as the oracles of God*—not as a well-tuned sound to help you to sleep an hour; not as a human speech or oration to displease or please you an hour, according to the suiting of its strain and your palate; but hear *as the oracles of God*, the discovery of sin and death lying on us, and the discovery of a Saviour. These are the things brought you in this word; therefore come to it with suitable reverence, with ardent desires, and hearts open to receive it *with meekness, as the ingrafted word that is able to save your souls.*

That God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. Here we have, like that of the heavens, a circular motion of all sanctified good; it comes forth from God through Christ unto Christians; and, moving in them to the mutual good of each other, returns through Christ unto God again, and takes them along with it in whom it was and had its motion. All persons and things shall pay this tribute, even they that most wickedly seek to withhold it; but this is the happiness of the saints, that they move willingly thus, are sweetly drawn, not forced or driven. As it is most just, so it is also most sweet, to aim all at this, *that God be glo-*

rified; it is the alone worthy and happy design that fills the heart with heavenliness and with a heavenly calmness.

12. This fighting life! surely, when we consider it aright, we need not be dissuaded from loving it, but have rather need to be strengthened with patience to go through and to fight on with courage and assurance of victory, still combating in a higher strength than our own against sin within and troubles without. This is the great scope of this Epistle, and the apostle often interchanges his advices and comforts in reference to these two. The words to the end of the chapter contain grounds of encouragement and consolation for the children of God in sufferings, especially in suffering for God. L.

Think it not strange. If we considered well, must not we much more wonder and be astonished over happiness unbroken here below than at adversity? must it not more disturb us if we should see the rod of chastisement strike others while against us it absolutely was never raised? As if some strange thing happened unto us when we are led to heaven by the same path as God's most favored children have trod since time began! *Van O.*—If God had promised us all peace and quiet in this world, then our troubles here might amaze us, and make us doubt of our future rest; but, finding by proof the manifold tribulations of the life present, we may expect with comfort the promise of the time to come. *Jerome.*

There is nothing that a Christian man meets with in his course through life, however difficult or painful, but he might have anticipated it all if he had only studied the chart drawn out in the word of God. If he encounters worldly losses, cross-currents which try his patience and temper, sore bereavements that lay waste his heart, it was written down, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." If there are inward assaults of evil thoughts or hours of languor and depression, God's word has spoken of "fiery darts," of "hands that hang down and feeble knees." If sometimes these accumulate and threaten utter ruin, we may be reminded of "deep calling unto deep," of the "great fight of afflictions," and that "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Probably none of us realize these things fully till they come upon us, and then we open the Bible and read it with a new light; but it is well for us to have at least some idea of them beforehand, that we may be kept from the murmurs and backsliding of men taken by utter surprise. *Ker.*

15. Keep far off from all impure, unholy ways; *suffer not as evil-doers*, no, nor as *busy-bodies*; be much at home, setting things at rights within your own breast, where there is so much work and such daily need of diligence, and then you will find no

leisure for unnecessary idle prying into the ways and affairs of others; and, further than your calling and the rules of Christian charity engage you, you will not interpose in any matters without you, nor be found proud and censorious, as the world is ready to call you. L.

16. Glorify God on this behalf. It has never entered into human thought, unsanctified by religion, that there is or can be any such thing as greatness in the mere passive virtues, or in simply suffering well; least of all, in suffering wrong and evil with a forgiving, unresentful spirit. Christianity is here alone, holding it forth as being, when required, the divinest, sublimest, and most powerful of all virtues, to suffer well. H. B.—True Christians are witnesses for God by their *sufferings*. All Christian suffering is a kind of witness-bearing. It is the greatest consolation of saints under heavy trials, in long, debilitating illnesses, and those retirements and straits which forbid active service, that they are all the while passively serving. Under the cross they bear witness of God, attesting his justice, his faithfulness, his power, his wisdom, his covenant gentleness; they bear witness of Jesus, that he hears the sigh of the humble, distills the dew of his grace, sustains the fainting head with his arm, tranquilizes and elevates by his Spirit, and shows himself altogether lovely. Only they can say, "We speak that which we know, and testify that we have seen." They can tell of a Saviour who has proved himself sufficient in the day of trial, who has lifted them out of the swoon of despair, and breathed rapture into them with the kiss of peace. J. W. A.

17. The gospel of God. It is his embassy of peace to men, the riches of his mercy and free love opened and set forth—not simply to be looked on, but laid hold on—the glorious holy God declaring his mind of agreement with man in his own Son, his blood streaming forth in it to wash away uncleanness—and yet this gospel is not obeyed. Sure the conditions of it must be very hard and the commands must be intolerably grievous, that they are not hearkened to. Why, judge you if they be. The great command is, to receive that salvation; the other is, to love that Saviour—and there is no more. Perfect obedience is not now the thing. And the obedience which is required love makes sweet and easy to us and acceptable to him. This is proclaimed to all that hear the gospel, and the greatest part refuse it; they love themselves and this present world, and will not change, and so they perish. They perish! What is that? What is their end? I will answer that but as the apostle doth, and that is even asking the question over again, *What shall be their end?* There is no speaking of it; a curtain is drawn; silent wonder expresses it best, telling it

can not be expressed. How then shall it be endured? It is true that there be resemblances used in Scripture, giving us some glance of it; we hear of a *burning lake, a fire that is not quenched, and a worm that dies not*; but these are but shadows to the real misery of them that obey not the gospel. Oh, to be filled with the wrath of God, the ever-living God, for ever! What words or thoughts can reach it! Oh, eternity, eternity! Oh, that we did believe it!

18. The righteous scarcely saved. That imports not any uncertainty or hazard in the thing itself, in respect of the purpose and performance of God, but only the great difficulties and hard encounters in the way. And yet through all these they are brought safe home. There is another strength which bears them up and brings them through. **L.** — **Where shall the sinner appear?** If some of the good are to be saved with difficulty, how can the bad be saved at all? If for a man to "*suffer loss*" is represented as so awful, what must it be for him "to lose himself"? It is terrible to have to endure some purgative discipline intended to save us from being "condemned with the world"; more terrible must be that condemnation itself! It will be awful to be seized upon by the flaming minister of the divine displeasure, and, instead of being

purged by it from superficial defects, to have "utterly to perish in your own corruption"! **T. B.**

19. Nothing doth so establish the mind amid the turbulency of present things as both a look above them and a look beyond them; above them to the steady and good hand by which they are ruled, and beyond them to the sweet and beautiful end to which, by that hand, they shall be brought. This the apostle lays here as the foundation of that patience and peace in troubles wherewith he would have his brethren furnished. And thus he closes this chapter in these words: *Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* **L.**

Men, when they persecute, are for the stuff, but the devil is for the soul, nor will anything less than that satisfy him. Let him then that is a sufferer commit the keeping of his soul to God, lest stuff and soul and all be lost at once. **Bun.**—As he is powerful, he is no less faithful, *a faithful Creator*, truth itself. Them that believe on him he never deceives nor disappoints. Well might Paul say, *I know whom I have trusted.* Faith engages the truth and power of God; his royal word and honor lies upon it, to preserve the soul that faith gives him in keeping. **L.**

Section 361.

1 PETER v. 1-14.

1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the
2 sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock
of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly;
3 not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but
4 being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive
5 a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto
the elder. Yea, all of *you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for
6 God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore
7 under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care
8 upon him; for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the
9 devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast
in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that
10 are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by
Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen,
11 settle *you*. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.
12 By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting,
13 and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand. The church that is at
14 Babylon, elected together with *you*, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son. Greet ye
one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

It is very instructive to observe how deeply the experiences of Peter's fall, and of Christ's mercy then, had impressed themselves on his memory, and how constantly they were present with him all through his after-life. His Epistles are full of allusions which show this. He remembered the contempt for others and the trust in himself with which he had said, "Though all should forsake thee, yet will not I"; and, taught what must come of that, he writes, "Be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." He remembers how hastily he had drawn his sword and struck at Malchus, and he writes, "If when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." He remembers how he had been surprised into denial by the questions of a sharp-tongued servant-maid, and he writes, "Be ready always to give an answer to every one that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness." He remembers how the pardoning love of his Lord had honored him, unworthy, with the charge, "Feed my sheep," and he writes, ranking himself as one of the class to whom he speaks, "The elders I exhort, who am also an elder, . . . feed the flock of God." He remembers that last command, which sounded ever in his spirit, "Follow thou me," and discerning now, through all the years that lay between, the presumptuous folly and blind inversion of his own work and his Master's which had lain in his earlier question, "Why can not I follow thee now?" he writes to all, "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps." So well had he learned the lesson of his own sin, and of that immortal love which had beckoned him back, to peace at its side and purity from its hand. Let us learn how the love of Christ, received into the heart, triumphs gradually but surely over all sin, transforms character, turning even its weakness into strength, and so, from the depths of transgression and very gates of hell, raises men to God. To us all this divine message speaks. Christ's love is extended to us; no sin can stay it; no fall of ours can make him despair. He will not give us up. He waits to be gracious. A. M.

1-4. In the opening of the Epistle, Peter takes the title of Apostle; but the apostolate was not an office to be continued in the Church. Apostles were gifts to the Church, not officials. The permanent office of superintendence is that of Presbyterate. So Peter, in addressing those who occupied that office, calls himself their "co-presbyter," and bids them "feed the flock of God." Without doubt he has in mind the charge he had himself received from the Lord—"Feed my lambs; keep my sheep; feed my sheep." He transmits it to all the presbyters, bidding them regard the Christian people, not as their flocks or followers, but as the flock of God, and both tend and nourish that flock as they shall be answerable to the divine "Shepherd and Bishop of souls." D F.

1. **A partaker of the glory to be revealed.** As a witness of those sufferings, so a partaker of the glory purchased by these sufferings; and, therefore, as one insighted and interested in what he speaks, the apostle might fitly speak of that peculiar duty which these sufferings and glory do peculiarly persuade. L.—Christ himself connects the suffering and the reward in that question to the wondering disciples, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" And Peter, in like manner, combines the same double aspect of the office of the Redeemer—"the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow"—declaring them both equally the subject of ancient prophecy. Christ, then, is the bright and eternal model of suffering and its recompense; in his own divine Person he has immortalized their union. W. A. B.

2. **Feed the flock.** The preacher who discards theology from the course of his studies is in danger of taking from the Bible suggestions instead of teachings. He is likely to lose the support of the great cloud of witnesses who confess the Christian truth in every age. He is in peril of conceding that the realm of thought must be yielded

up to science, while faith retains only the domain of feeling. Ministers now must have fresh and perpetually deepened convictions upon fundamental questions, which in the days of our fathers were taken for granted. But withal, this is to be strenuously asserted also, that the *substance* of Christian theology is for us the same that it was for them. We know, as they knew, of no genuine power for the minister, save that which is wielded in the use of the great Christian truths. Karr.

The preaching which is most to be desired is that in which the great objects of religion shall stand forth with greater prominence, while the interests and duties of man shall force themselves on the attention, as following of course. It is that which occupies itself more with invisible realities, and which trusts to the spiritual power of truth and of God rather than to the power by which man can move the feelings and the will. It is preaching which comes from a mind profoundly penetrated with divine truth, and used to long reflection upon it, rather than from a mind which has mastered and can recall a theological system. It is that which lodges weighty thoughts and wide-sweeping principles in the hearer's soul, rather than that which awaken sensibilities that die down again, because they are not rooted in deep truth. Preaching, even of the best kind, has now too *subjective* a tendency. Those parts of the truth which are the most telling and exciting; those parts which relate most immediately to the operations of the soul, take a front rank, while others have sunk in their importance. It results from the same tendency that the sentiments which lie deepest in the soul, such as a sense of dependence, reverence, and acquiescence, are but little trained and cherished; while the more violent sensibilities, which are connected with human interests and doings, are appealed to and trusted in as the regulators of the life. The preacher of meditative spirit will avoid the extremes of this tendency. God and eternal truth being near and real to him-

self, how can he fail to try to bring them near to his hearers? He will thus be a serious preacher, being penetrated by faith in invisible things. He will be a preacher fitted to build up the Church of God, to make it intelligent, thoughtful, and constant. He will carry his influence far down into the lives of men. Let him die young in his field, still he has not ceased to live or to preach. The best and ripest portion of his flock will associate him with principles which sway their conduct, with thoughts which have borne fruit through their lives, with their whole progress in Christian excellence. T. D. W.

Of a ready mind. There is nothing moves us aright, nor shall we ever find comfort in this service, unless it be from a cheerful inward *readiness of mind*, and that from the *love of Christ*. Love to Christ begets love to his people's souls, that are so precious to him, and a care of feeding them. He devotes the working of love toward him upon his flock for their good; puts them in his room to receive the benefit of our services, which can not reach him considered in himself; he can receive no other profit from it. Love, much love, gives much unwearyed care and much skill in this charge. How sweet is it to him that loves to bestow himself, *to spend and be spent*, upon His service whom he loves! L.

3. The shepherd goes before the sheep and *leads* them as "ensamples to the flock." As the doctrine of true shepherds is life within them, so again their life itself is holy doctrine. Their peaceful life proclaims the virtues of him to whom they invite and lead souls; their life hidden in God is made manifest by fruits, to the edifying of the Church. *Besser.*

—If we would sketch the portrait of a Christian pastor, it would be that of a parent walking among his children, always at hand, to be found in his own house, or met with among the folds of his flock, encouraging, warning, directing, instructing, as a counselor ready to advise, as a friend to aid, sympathize, and console, with the affection of a mother to lift up the weak, with the "long-suffering" of a father to "reprove, rebuke, and exhort." Such a one, who really lives in the hearts of his people, will do more for their temporal and spiritual welfare than men of the most splendid talents and commanding eloquence. *Bridges.*

5. Let this be all the strife: who shall put most respect each on another. *In giving honor, go each one before another.* That such carriage may be sincere, no empty compliment, but a part of the solid holiness of a Christian, the apostle requires the true principle of such deportment—the grace of *humility*—that a Christian *put on that*, not the appearance of it to act in as a stage-garment, but the truth of it as their constant habit: *Be ye clothed with humility.* It must appear in your outward carriage, so the resemblance of clothing imports; but let it appear as really it is, so the very name of it imports. It is not a *show of humility*, but heart lowliness, *humility of mind.* L.—It is striking that, almost without exception, the word humility, used before the time of Christ, is used contemptuously and rebukingly. It always meant meanness of spirit. It described a cringing soul. It was a word of slaves.

Such is its almost constant classic use. Where could we find a more striking instance of the change that the Christian religion brought into the world than in the way in which it took this disgraceful word and made it honorable? P. B.

God resisteth the proud. He singles out pride for his grand enemy, and *sets himself in battle-array* against it, so the word is. Pride rises up in rebellion against God, and doth what it can to dethrone him and usurp his place. Therefore he orders his forces against it; and be sure if God be able to make his party good, pride shall not escape ruin. He will break it, for he is set upon that purpose. But to the humble *he giveth grace*, pours it out plentifully upon humble hearts. His sweet dews and showers of grace slide off the mountains of pride, and fall on the low valleys of humble hearts and make them pleasant and fertile. The swelling heart, puffed up with a fancy of fullness, hath no room for grace. It is lifted up, is not hollowed and fitted to receive and contain the graces that descend from above. And again, as the humble heart is most capacious, and as being emptied and hollowed can hold most, so it is most thankful, acknowledges all as received. The return of glory that is due from grace comes most freely and plentifully from an humble heart. God delights to enrich it with grace and it delights to return him glory. The more he bestows on it, the more it desires to honor him with all; and the more it doth so, the more readily he bestows still more upon it; and this is the sweet intercourse betwixt God and the humble soul. When all is reckoned, the lowliest mind is truly the highest; and these two agree so well, that the more lowly it is, it is thus the higher; and the higher thus it is, still the more lowly. L.

6. There is *excellency* enough in God; he requires only a *sense of emptiness* in us. *God loves to make all his works creations*; and grace works most freely when it works upon nothing. It is not for the honor of God that the creatures should receive anything from mercy until they are brought humbly to seek it. Humility fits a man to receive, and leads him to value the grace received from God. Hence humble persons are most gracious and gracious persons most humble. T. M.—To be the least among those who truly love and faithfully obey God, is the highest honor to which humanity can be exalted, and within the reach of all. It cometh through our becoming as little children, and yielding ourselves up to those gracious influences of the divine Spirit by which alone the proud heart can be humbled, and the doubtful heart be assured, and the unloving heart be brought to love. W. H.

7. The combination of lowliness and boldness, *humble confidence*, is the true temper of a child of God toward his great and good Father; nor can any

other have it but they that are indeed his children, and have within them that *Spirit of adoption* which he *sends into their hearts*. And these two the apostle here joins together: *humble yourselves under the hand of God, and yet cast your care on him*; upon that same hand under which you ought to humble yourselves must you withal cast over your care, all your care, *for he careth for you*. L.—Where everything that belongs to self is buried and God becomes all in all, there true and effective care is possible. To take thought in our own strength makes us either madly active or desperate. The care of Jesus Christ guards us from moroseness and despair, and gives our hands the power to work, and our hearts the wish to do so. A. C.—No anxiety, no displeasure, no grief, no sorrow, proceedeth from prayer, but joy, delight, and pleasure, by reason of sweet converse with God, the eternal King. After prayer we are sure that our concerns shall have a happy ending. All anxiety ariseth from distrust of God; and distrust proceedeth from the omission of prayer. Faith and prayer trust God and drive away all care. *Arnd.*

For he careth for you. Nothing can be more simple, and nothing can be more persuasive. If the great Lord of heaven and earth vouchsafe to become our friend, nay, our guardian, then surely with a cheerful and unreserved confidence we may resign ourselves wholly to his disposal and government. The objects of his care must always be safe; no real evil can befall them, neither shall anything that is truly good be withheld from them. The Christian who has attained a full and unsuspecting dependence upon God's wisdom and goodness, such a dependence as quiets the mind, disposing it to wait patiently upon God and to accept with thankfulness whatsoever he is pleased to appoint, not only brings his cares to the throne of grace, but there also he leaves them. R. W.—Christians are not men who do not care, but men who cast their care upon the Lord. Christians are not men who see no thorns upon the track of life; they are men who perhaps see far more thorns than all others do; but they are men who know from their own experience that where Christ's grace is granted all thorns at last swell and burst open into roses. In short, Christians are men who believe in the words, "If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" A. T.

8. Because your adversary the devil. An alarm to watchfulness is here given, from the watchfulness of our grand adversary. There be other two usually ranked with him as the leading enemies of our souls, the world and our own flesh; but here he is expressly named who commands in

chief and orders and manages the war, uses the service of the other two against us, as prime officers, under which most of the forces of particular temptations are ranked. Some others there be which he immediately commands and leads on himself, a regiment of his own, some spiritual temptations. And we have need to be put in mind of the hostility and practices of Satan against us; for if the most were put to it, they would be forced to confess that they very seldom think on their spiritual danger from this hand. And this seeking the destruction of souls is marked as all his work. The prey he hunts is souls, that they may be as miserable as himself: Therefore he is justly called *our adversary*: the enemy of holiness and of our souls, tempting to sin and then accusing for sin, as his name here imports; appearing against us upon the advantages he hath gained. He studies our nature and fits his temptations to it; knows the prevalency of lust, or earthliness, or that great and most general evil of pride, so like himself. L.—When the tempter continues his importunity and siege about a soul, he has all these advantages over it; as, to view its strongholds, and to spy where they are least fortified; to observe the intervals and cessations of duty; when devotion ebbs, and the spiritual guards draw off; when the affections revel, and slide into a posture of security; and then to renew and bring on the assault afresh, and so to force a victorious entrance for his temptations. R. S.—Satan is the author of evil, the adversary of the truth, the corrupter of the world, man's perpetual enemy; he planteth snares, goadeth souls, suggesteth thoughts, exposeth virtues to hatred, maketh vices beloved, soweth error, nourisheth contention, disturbeth peace, and scattereth affliction. *Quarles.*

9. Steadfast, or solid, by faith. This is absolutely necessary for resistance; a man can not fight upon a quagmire; there is no standing without firm ground to tread upon; and this faith alone furnishes. It lifts the soul up to the firm advanced ground of the promises and fastens it there; and there it is sure, even as *Mount Zion, that can not be removed*. He says not, *steadfast by your own resolutions and purposes*, but *steadfast by faith*. The power of God by faith becomes ours, for that is contained and engaged in the word of promise; and *this is our victory*, says John, *whereby we overcome the world, even our faith*. And, universally, all difficulties and all enemies are overcome by faith. Faith sets the stronger *Lion of the tribe of Judah* against this roaring lion of the bottomless pit; that delivering Lion against this devouring lion. L.—When the soul is beleagured by enemies, weakness on the walls, treachery at the gates, and corruption in the citadel, then by faith she says—*Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world! thou art my*

strength! I look to thee for deliverance! And thus she overcomes. S. T. C.

10. The God of all grace. By reason of our many wants and great weakness, we had need to have a very full hand and a very strong hand to go to for supplies and support. And such we have indeed; our Father is the *God of all grace*, a spring that can not be drawn dry, no, nor so much as any whit diminished. The work of salvation is all grace from beginning to end—free grace in the plot of it laid in the counsel of God and performed by his own hand all of it; his Son sent in the flesh, and his Spirit sent into the hearts of his chosen to apply Christ. All grace is in him the living spring of it, and flows from him; all the various actings and all the several degrees of grace. He is the God of *pardoning grace*, that *blots out the transgressions* of his own children, *for his own name's sake*; makes one act of oblivion serve for all reckonings betwixt him and them. So he is the God of *sanctifying grace*, who refines and purifies all those he means to make up into vessels of glory, and hath in his hand all the fit means and ways of doing this; purges them by afflictions and outward trials. For the further opening up of his riches expressed in this title, *the God of all grace*, is added one great act of grace, which doth indeed include all the rest; for we have in it the beginning and end of the work linked together: the first effect of grace upon us in *effectual calling*, and the last accomplishment of it in *eternal glory*. *Who hath called us to his eternal glory*. Consider what is there, how worthy the affection, worthy the earnest eye and fixed look of an heir of this glory! What can he either desire or fear whose heart is thus deeply fixed? Who would refuse this other clause, *to suffer awhile*, a little while, anything outward or inward he thinks fit? How soon shall all this be overpast, and then overpaid in the very entry, at the beginning of this glory that shall never end! L.—If my reaching the goal depended on myself and on my strength, I should never get there; but through God's free grace I expect to reach it. I build not my salvation on my vows of eternal faithfulness to Jesus. I build on God's promise, that he will "perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle" me. I might perhaps let him

go, but he holds me fast; and my salvation is sure because it rests on Jesus and his blood. A. C.

The hand that beckons us to glory waves out of impenetrable clouds. We walk in a way which we know not. We lay wise plans, and they miscarry. We commit gross blunders, and they are overruled for good. We run toward the light, and find it darkness. We sink shivering into the darkness, and find it light. We run toward the doors to which worldly ambition has called us, and only a solid granite wall is across our path. We move against that wall at the call of duty, and it opens to let us through. What shall befall us, we can not know. What is expedient, we can not tell. Only this we know, that God would shape us to himself, whether by the discipline of joy or of sorrow. To make us perfect as he is perfect, this is the choice of our heavenly Father, this is the end of all his revelations. Everything not helpful to this he hides away out of our sight. R. D. H.—At every step the disciple takes his rewards as he goes on; and they are rewards in the kind of his toil; for the charity that suffereth long and thinketh no evil there will be given a mightier power of love, till tongues shall cease and that which is perfect is come; for the struggles of uncomplaining patience there will be the grand endurance which smiles on pain; for faith, the sunlit country where no doubt ever casts a shadow; and for that Christlike purity of heart which is the transparent air in which all spiritual graces live and move, the vision beatific and divine, a vision not to be wholly postponed and waited for till death changes us. Death to sin is always changing us; victory over evil is always transfiguring us. The knowledge of the Son of God will begin where the purity begins. It will be an immediate and ever-growing "blessedness" even here. The vision will be ever-brightening, till we see not in the least "as through a glass darkly," but "face to face." F. D. H.

11. "To Him, the God of all grace, the glory and might to the ages of the ages. Amen." Let all the people of the Lord say Amen. Let none of them seek their own glory or boast of their own might; but let all, catching the spirit of this precious Epistle, hope in God, live in the world as pilgrims, and wait patiently for Christ. D. F.

Section 362.

2 PETER i. 1-21.

- 1 SIMON PETER, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:
- 2 grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our
- 8 Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and

4 godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

6 and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

7 and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things

8 be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither be barren nor unfruitful in the

9 knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot

10 see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things,

11 ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things,

13 though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as

14 long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting *you* in remembrance; knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed

15 me. Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things

16 always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am

17 well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him

18 in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the

20 day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any

21 private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.

ADMISSION to his kingdom, the reception of his Spirit, communion with himself, participation in his knowledge, the unutterable happiness conferred by his love, the entire and sweet repose of affection exalted yet satisfied in him, the boundless and sublime freedom that comes with acquiescence in the will of the Infinite, the exultant and interminable progress of heaven, heirship with Christ to the forces, the enjoyments, and the dominions of God—all these are promised to those who receive redemption in the Son. God promises himself! We shall not only be "sons" and "heirs" of God, but we shall be *partakers of the divine nature*. We know not what we shall be, but we shall be like God; seeing him as he is. We shall be filled with all the fullness of God. The language of earth fails fully to utter these mysteries of glory. It staggers beneath the wealth of the heavenly revelations. What no aspiring desire in its loftiest flight has dared to deem possible, they offer to all on condition of faith. On the ground of acceptance, established in the cross, illustrated in the ascension, recorded in the gospel, and ever symbolized in the ordinance of the supper, they offer to man the felicity of the Godhead! R. S. S.

PETER'S SECOND EPISTLE.

THE First Epistle was written to fortify Christian brethren in the endurance of afflictions from without. *This* bids them watch against dangers within the Church, in the form of deceptive teachers and mocking skeptics, who would turn them away from the hope of the gospel. D. F.—The object and aim of the Epistle are best set forth in the last two verses of it, as being a caution to the readers against falling from their steadfastness, and an exhortation to grow in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. To the fervent enforcing of this latter and main purpose, chapter 1: 1-11 is devoted. Then (1: 12-21) the grounds of this knowledge are stated to consist in the apostolic testimony and prophetic announcement. This serves as an introduction to the description of the false teachers and prophets who were coming in among them (ch. 2). In chapter 3 the further error which should arise, that of reject-

ing the hope of the Lord's coming, is stigmatized, with a reference to the Epistles of Paul, as teaching the same truths, but being perverted, like the other Scriptures, by the ignorant and unstable. The main purpose of exhortation is, notwithstanding many allusive and polemical digressions, kept closely in view throughout. The later portions are all based on the earlier. The whole sprang from a holy desire to build up and confirm the readers, in especial reference to certain destructive forms of error in doctrine and practice which were then appearing, and would continue to wax onward. A.

2. Through the knowledge of Jesus our Lord. Take the Holy Scriptures and see how often Christ is there spoken of as an indwelling Christ, present now, formed within, living in the believer and the believer in him, the very Life of life.

Light even breaks in on that almost inexplicable and incredible saying of Peter, that, by the "exceeding great and precious promises" of the Word made flesh, men may be "partakers of the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world through lust." Reason, blind and anxious, may still have its difficulties, and toil and grind in its prison-house, "bound in affliction and iron"; but Faith marches right over them as if they were not—nay, she takes wings and leaves them out of her sight. What we want, *that* our gospel gives. While Reason is puzzling herself about the mystery, Faith is turning it into her daily bread, and feeding on it thankfully in her heart of hearts. While Reason is applying the tests of her earthly chemistry, threatening to dissolve the very cross of Calvary in her crucibles, Faith has quietly set the holy doctrine to the music of her joy, and is singing it as her hymn of *Benedictus* or *Magnificat* in unquestioning peace. The doctrine may crucify the proud, but it crowns the meek with salvation. F. D. H.

4. The word which is here given to us is full of promises, and they are "exceedingly great and precious": great in their range, because there is no circumstance which they do not reach; precious in their character, because there is no exigency in our affairs to which they are not adapted. E. M.—The grant includes all that the infinite God can do for the well-being of man; it far surpasses all human comprehension and thought. It is the breadth and length and depth and height of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, which is concerned for the believer's interests; it is that he may know this by experience, and that he may be filled with all the fullness of God, that God has made a covenant with him. It is pardon, grace, and eternal glory. Thus, all there is in heaven is opened to man by the promises of God; all there is in God, all there is in the universe, concentrated and poured upon the heart of man by the promises of the immutable God. For what? To allure him "to be a partaker of the divine nature"—the holiness of God. N. W. T.

Every promise is built upon four pillars: God's *justice*, which will not suffer him to deceive; God's *grace* or goodness, which will not suffer him to forget; God's *truth*, which will not suffer him to change; God's *power*, which makes him able to accomplish! T. M.—The promises are a precious book; every leaf drops myrrh and mercy. They are golden vessels, laden with the choicest jewels that heaven can afford or the soul desire. *There is nothing you can truly call a mercy but you will find it in the promises.* Brooks.

5-7. We venture to affirm that this passage is fraught at once with philosophical justness of classification and with prophetic truth. To convey the

full sense of the apostolic language, it is necessary to resort to a paraphrase of the passage. "Divinely endowed," says the apostle, "with whatever is important to (spiritual) life and piety; enriched also with those inestimable promises which insure to us a participation in the divine nature—a participation we derive from our acquaintance with him who has challenged us to so high a glory; and having, by the same means, gained freedom from the defilement of mundane passions, my brethren, take heed that you besecm yourselves worthily of your vocation—using the utmost assiduity in the pursuit of Christian excellence—see that your faith in these promises is always associated with manly energy or vigor—that your faith be not pusillanimous—and then, that your courage (*virtue*) be duly informed by evangelical principles (*knowledge*). Again, take heed that your knowledge (of the gospel) be not abused to licentiousness, but rather be united with self-command and temperance. Nor must this control of the appetites spring from a haughty and fanatical temper, but must consist with humility and submission. Yet let your humility be religious (*not stoical*). Then remember that your piety is not to be unsocial (*or anchoretic*), but fraught with brotherly affection. And lastly, that your affection toward your fellow-Christians is not to be *sectarian*, but expansive, and that it is to spring from the principle of universal love." I. T.

5. **Add.** The root of the word is a *chorus*—a chorus, not of voices, but a band or company of persons united in one group by the taking hold of hands. So have we here a circle of properties in which each supports and qualifies every other; beginning with one quality, this striking hands with the next, and so through the whole, till the last named is joined again to the first in one organic whole, a chorus of most musical harmony. W. A.—**To faith virtue.** Faith being laid, in the individual soul, as the "foundation" on which a Christian life is to be erected, every believer is to build upon it the virtues and excellences of that life. Each of these is as a separate stone which is to be added to the structure. *Virtue* stands, according to the exact import of the original term, for "force," "energy," "manly strength." It describes a readiness for action and effort; the disposition and the power of strenuous achievement. "Add," then, "to your faith," *force*. Be strong. Have manly energy, and let it be manifested by promptness, decision, and resolute action. T. B.—It would conduce to childlike humility if the use of the term *virtue*, in that comprehensive and *notional* sense in which it was used by the ancient Stoics, were abandoned as a relic of paganism, and if Christians, restoring the word to its original import, viz., manhood, or manliness, used it exclusively to express the quality of fortitude; strength of character in relation to the resistance opposed by nature and the irrational passions to the dictates of reason; energy of will in preserving the line of rectitude tense and firm against the warping forces and treacheries of temptation. S. T. C.—**To virtue knowledge.** *Practical wisdom* to direct force. By this union of "energy" and "wisdom," standing together on the basis of "faith," there will come to be within you the harmonious coöperation of great powers, principles, and habits: high aims, true thoughts, sound judgment, rectitude of purpose, strong impulse, practicable plan, indomitable perseverance, tact to discern "time and opportunity"—

all issuing in a wise and intelligent course of action, fruitful in noble deeds, and crowned with frequent success.

6. To knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience. These two virtues have relation to life as a scene of mixed enjoyment and suffering. In respect to both, we want "temperance," that is, self-government, self-control—a regal power to limit or resist. But the same nature and the same constitution of things that render "temperance" necessary expose us to that which requires "patience." There is nothing for it but to bear up and to oppose to suffering a store of determined *passive* force in the form of the "patience" inculcated by the apostle. The circle of duty seems to be getting complete. "Energy" and "knowledge"—motive force and practical wisdom; "temperance" and "patience"—masterhood of self in two noble forms; these elements of heroic action, of regulated joy and uncomplaining endurance, based on "faith" and beautified by "godliness," would seem to make provision for almost all the excellence that can be demanded of humanity. But men are not living *alone* now. Goodness in us is not only to be divine and personal, but is especially to have a social and human aspect. **7. Therefore add to godliness brotherly kindness, or the love of the brotherhood, "the household of faith."** It is the fraternal or family affection of Christianity which unites together, or ought to unite, all those who profess to regard themselves as "heirs together of the grace of life." The feeling that comes next to the love of God is, or ought to be, the love of godlike men. **And to brotherly kindness charity.** Charity here signifies "philanthropy"—universal love; the love of all mankind. This love is not, as a Christian sentiment, to be a bit of barren though beautiful idealism, a vague, philosophic glow of "fraternity," but a really deep, earnest, intense thing as to its nature, and a real, effective doer of work as to its expression. T. B.

Religion begins with faith and ends in love, and the circle is complete—for of him and to him are all things. We set out with believing; we graduate at last in that holy affection which makes us "partakers of the divine nature." We can make no advance beyond the point we have now reached. We stand on that summit which has nothing higher than itself. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." He who liveth in love is one with his Maker. W. A.—Such is the edifice which every individual Christian, as a wise, diligent, and honest workman, is to build up on the "foundation" of his faith. It is wonderfully comprehensive and exquisitely beautiful, this enumeration of virtues, this catalogue of the materials, which, being put together according to rule, shall stand forth a noble, symmetrical, divine thing, the becoming embodiment of a divine life. T. B.

8. Neither barren nor unfruitful. Study if you will, nay, study because you ought, the historical or logical evidences of Christianity. Trace the symmetry of its form, the minute and marvelous articulations of all the joints and bones of its doctrinal system, but remember, when you have thus reconstructed its frame, you have not discovered its life, any more than the knife of the anatomist can lay bare for him the life of the frame he examines. That is to be seen in its actings only. For that, you must come out into the world where Christianity lives, breathes, moves, and acts, a living

thing. You must see it in the beauty and the grace and the might of its life. *Magee.*

10. Give diligence. Depending with an apparent faith, a real negligence, upon the agency of the Spirit of God, we too much forget that the Spirit urges us *by means* and to the *use of means*; that his object is not to supersede the prudence and the reason, but to disentangle it of encumbrance, and call it more forcibly, clearly, and constantly into action. Employ every means to rise from sense to faith. Consult with candor your own experience of your own temptations, and *then* the sincere prayer of faith will be heard—God will direct and overrule. W. A. B.—*Make your calling sure*, and by that your *election*; for, that being done, this follows of itself. We are not to pry immediately into the decree, but to read it in the performance. Though the mariner sees not the *pole-star*, yet the needle of the compass that points to it tells him which way he sails. Thus the heart that is touched with the loadstone of divine love, trembling with godly fear and yet still looking toward God by fixed believing, points at the love of election, and tells the soul that its course is toward the haven of eternal rest. He that loves may be sure he was loved first, and he that chooses God for his delight and portion may conclude confidently that God hath chosen him to be one of those that shall enjoy him and be happy in him for ever—for that our love and electing of him is but the return and repercussion of the beams of his love shining upon us. L.

Christian salvation is a spiritual state, here or hereafter, where nobler and heartier service can be done for God and man. It is right to exhort men to make sure their calling and election in heaven. Only we must remember, heaven is not a spot to lie down in, and there, on our couches, tuning our harps, to think how much misery we have personally escaped. The Christian heaven is an exalted society of self-sacrificing spirits, bound together in mutual fellowship by their common consecration to him who is above them, where each accepted soul will go from strength to strength, run and not be weary, toil and not faint, aspire and not be baffled, do good and not be misinterpreted, and will be assimilated in ever closer and closer affinity to him who is light and life. F. D. H.

11. Shall be ministered. The "add" in the fifth verse and "ministered" in the eleventh are both parts of the same verb; as if it were said, "add" to your faith these virtues in this world, and God will "add" to them—or to you because of them—"an abundant entrance" into that which is to come. T. B.

Everlasting. This word in the New Testament is employed seventy-two times. In four instances it is loosely used in describing long past

events, as in 2 Tim. 1: 9, where it is translated with its accompanying noun, "before the world began"; in two instances it is used to represent a complete eternity, without beginning or end—once of God and once of Christ; in eight instances it refers to an eternal future, as in 2 Cor. 4: 18, "the things which are not seen are eternal"; in seven instances it is applied to the future of Christ's kingdom as here, the "everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"; in forty-four instances it describes the unending life of the good; and in the remaining seven instances it similarly describes the unending death of the wicked. There is absolutely no indication in its New Testament use that, in Mat. 25 or any similar one, it was intended to include any limit to its significance. And, whatever that significance may be, it is clear that Christ attaches it as effectually to the life of the good as to the death of the bad; so that, if the latter be limited, the former must be also. *Dexter.*

16. Not cunningly devised fables. Those who are not convinced of the truth of the gospel must at any rate admit that Christianity exists. How it came here, how it thrives, and how it works more than all other energies, are questions that no man has solved without assuming far more unlikely things than the existence of a Christ such as the Scriptures describe. The phenomenon appeared, they must allow, some eighteen centuries ago, and among a few fishermen upon Bethsaida beach. These simple folk carved out the only Godlike image ever seen. They devised the most novel and successful scheme of moral conduct, and kept on preaching doctrines that convicted every day their own falsehood and deception. They invented the very best plan for benefiting other people, but they utterly failed to get anything out of it themselves except weeping and loss. These simpletons, that could not see through the flimsy veil of fable, saw deeper into human hearts than any other men, and gave voice to yearnings that were felt everywhere, but were never understood before. These dupes exposed all other deceptions that had deceived the wisest of philosophers. *Macgregor.*

16-18. One closing testimony he bears, consciously or unconsciously, for the Church of all time, to the reality of that which he calls "the power and presence" of Christ; in other words, the great and glorious advent which is to be the Revelation, the Epiphany, of the King of kings. I have been, he says, an eye-witness of his majesty. I heard with these ears that voice from heaven, on the holy mount of transfiguration, which attested him as the beloved Son of God. And, therefore, I can not be misled, I can not be misleading, when I bid you to believe, to expect, and to adore. V.—"The power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." That is, our Lord's coming in his kingdom with power, and glory, and majesty, to judge the world. Peter here proves that he will so come by declaring that he and the two other disciples, James and John, were *eye-witnesses of his majesty*; that is, they actually saw him on the mount, invested with *majesty and glory* similar to that which he would assume in his kingdom at the last day. P.—To a few quickened eyes and elevated spirits,

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and through them to the Christian multitudes and ages, for a demonstration never to be forgotten, the gates of the unseen home were opened; the curtain of the hidden glory was lifted; the sublime forms of the great religious masters of antiquity, long since withdrawn from the flesh into the tabernacle of their eternal worship, were revealed. They came in shapes like those of their mortality, indicating some mysterious and transcendent correspondence between the perishable and the celestial bodies. Above all, in the center of all, was seen, for once, the glorified appearance of the Redeemer, not marred or mortal any more; and the wonderful words spoken were of the suffering that was to be borne for the remission of the sins of mankind. F. D. H.

19. Peter's description of the office of the Bible—its *office* and the *limit* of it. "A light shining in a dark place until a dawning day." *The day*—that which has still to dawn, that of which the day-star has not yet risen, though already some streaks, prognostics of daybreak, are visible in the horizon of the far eastern sky. The day is the advent, not the first advent—for that was past when he wrote—nor only the spiritual advent—wherein Christ comes, with his Father, by the Spirit, to make his abode with the believing and loving one, for after *this* advent there is but the more need of that lamp of the word by which the Christian man must walk, warily and circumspectly, till his change come—but the great advent, that to which the eye of longing expectation should ever be turned in awe and hope, that of which, although the world, dead and living, shall see the glorious, dazzling brightness, the Christian alone shall behold in his heart the beauty and the satisfaction. Till then let us study, let us love, let us live by the light of God's word. Let us say, and find it true, "Thy word is a lantern unto my feet, and a lamp to my step." "Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them." So living, so dying, it shall be said to each one, as he prepares to exchange the dark chamber of his earthly being for the light of an everlasting day: "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off."

20, 21. "Knowing this first"—as a condition of all profiting from it—"that no prophecy," no utterance, "of Scripture is of private solution"—due, that is, to the writer's individual will or effort to solve one of God's mysteries—it is not that the human writer, of any book or any chapter of Scripture, volunteers to explain God, his way and his doing, his will and his counsel, to the creatures of his hand. The prophecy comes to solve; and in coming to solve, it comes not of itself, not of the will or the wisdom of the man who writes, but of God who sends and who inspires. No testimony was ever stronger or more comprehensive to the inspiration of the Bible. Every part of it, Peter declares, is due, not to man, but to God. Every part of it has its divine purpose, and every writer his

divine mission. V.—Whether we look at the prophecies that related to events before the time of Christ, or to those relating to him, or to those which he uttered, or to the present state of the Jews, and indeed of the world, as indicating a complete fulfillment of the prophecies, we shall see the fullest reason to believe that “the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” M. H.

Divine truth has been revealed to us, not in a law of the letter, not in a digested summary of specific articles of faith, but in this historical embodiment, this application to individual cases, to specific historical circumstances and social relations, imparted through the instrumentality of individual men, who lived as depositaries of divine truth among their fellow-men; who, in the common intercourse of human life, testified of and revealed the divine, speaking and acting as men, each in his own peculiar human manner, though hallowed indeed by the Spirit of God. Thus was divine truth to be brought humanly near to us. N.—It is a great evidence of the inspiration which held the minds of the apostles in check, while they wrote, that the mere love of sentiment toward Christ is never heard in their writings; Peter and John may be mentioned historically in the gospels as manifesting feeling of

this kind on one or two occasions; but in their Epistles you find no trace of love to the human friend. Jesus, viewed under the light of Pentecost, is simply the redeeming God, the one Mediator, the only name given among men whereby we must be saved. E. M. G.

21. Our Bible is both divine and human. It comes to us from God's Spirit; it comes also from man's spirit. It is written in the language of earth, yet its words are the words of him “who speaketh from heaven.” Natural, yet supernatural; simple, yet profound; undogmatical, yet authoritative; very like a common book, yet very unlike also; dealing often with seeming incredibilities and contradictions, yet never assuming any need for apology, or explanation, or retraction; a book for humanity at large, yet minutely special in its fitnesses for every case of every soul; carrying throughout its pages, from first to last, one unchanging estimate of sin as an infinite evil, yet always bringing out God's gracious mind toward the sinner, even in his condemnation of the guilt: such is the great book with which man has to do, which man has to study, out of which man has to gather wisdom for eternity, one of the many volumes of that divine library which is one day to be thrown open to us, when that which is perfect is come, and that which is in part shall be done away. *Bonar.*

Section 363.

2 PETER ii. 1-22.

1 BUT there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought 2 them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious 3 ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of 4 a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, 5 to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth *person*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; 6 and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned *them* with an over- 7 throw, making *them* an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; and delivered 8 just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* 9 unlawful deeds;) the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to re- 10 serve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous *are they*, self- 11 willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas angels, which are greater 12 in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they 13 understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, *as they* that count it pleasure to riot in the daytime. Spots *they* 14 are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; 15 having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken 16 the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; but was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speak- 17 ing with man's voice forbade the madness of the prophet. These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. 18 For when they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. 19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of

- 20 whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them
 21 than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

WHILE the first letter of Peter arms the Christians chiefly against outward danger from the heathen persecution, which was to proceed from Rome, the seat of the centralized despotism of the world, the second letter has mainly in view the dangers from within, from pseudo-christian and antichristian errorists. It is an earnest prophecy of future conflicts, the germs of which were already beginning to unfold themselves. P. S.

As we pass into the second chapter, we find the tone of this book changed from grave exhortation to stern warning and even severe denunciation. Having set before the brethren the light to which they should take heed, the apostle puts them on their guard against false lights that would lure them to destruction. There had been pseudo-prophets among the people of Israel, and in like manner there would be pseudo-teachers in the Church. The Lord himself had said, "Beware of false prophets." Paul gave warning that such should arise. John and Jude describe them as already producing a baneful effect on Christian faith and life. Peter here points out their pernicious ways, and affirms their doom. Those who should "bring in heresies" (i. e., divisions) "tending to destruction" he stigmatizes as denying "the Lord," for by their willfulness and disobedience they would set aside all his authority. Their chief lure would be licentious living, and their chief motive would be avarice. History soon showed that such warnings were required; for in the end of the first century, and in the second, teachers appeared and sects were formed, that brought infamy on the Christian name by their unruly principles and shameless lives. Woe, woe to all who demoralize Christian society! This is the tenor of this chapter, and of the Epistle of Jude. Woe to those who obliterate the distinction between Christian and heathen life, encouraging licentiousness, despising authority, indulging a railing, contemptuous spirit, and attending the love feasts of the Church with impure eyes and hearts. Their course is in harmony with the vile counsel of the prophet Balaam, who was the anti-Moses of his time, and prevailed against Israel not by direct attack, but by a crafty and licentious device. In his steps walked those antichristian men who beguiled and corrupted unstable souls. That they had known Christ made their wickedness all the worse. D. F.

4. This passage and the parallel in Jude 6 are two important texts on the *present condition and future destiny of evil angels*, and, consequently, of those persons who yield to their solicitations. These two texts declared: 1. That some angels sinned, and, as a penalty for their sin, were cast out of their *original habitation*. 2. That they have been committed in *custody to chains of darkness*, and that they are *now* being kept in them, and they there endure *some* punishment. 3. That they there *remain* even to the end of the world, and are *reserved* there for the *judgment of the great day*. This appears also from the language of the devils them-

selves to Christ: "Art thou come to torment us *before* the *season* of judgment?" It is also evident from our Lord's words describing the transactions of the great day. He there preannounces that he will then say to them on the left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, that *hath been prepared* for the devil and his angels." They are, therefore, *not yet* cast into it. It is also further apparent from the Apocalypse, revealing the casting of the devil into the *lake of fire*, as an event which has *not* taken place, but is yet *future* (Rev. 20 : 10). 4. Comparing also these texts with other portions of Holy Scripture, where the devil is compared to a roaring lion *walking about*, seeking whom he may devour, and (Rev. 20 : 7) where Satan is described as loosed, and with the clear assertions of the apostolic writings, describing his present liberty, energy, and influence, and designating him as "the prince of the power of the air," and as "the god of this world," we must conclude that the *chains of darkness*, of which Peter and Jude speak, and to which Satan and his associates are now confined, and in which they will be kept even *till the day of judgment*, are of such power as to restrain them from ever recovering their place in the *regions of light*, but *not* such as to prevent them from exercising great power over those persons in the lower world who *allow themselves* "to be taken captive by them at their will." W.

7. When Lot was compelled to quit Sodom, he could not count a single convert, nor carry with him one religious friend. The best thing we know of him is what is here said by the apostle Peter, "that his soul was grieved by their conversation"; but if it was so, and if from fear of the consequences, or despair of doing any good, he had left off all efforts to reform them, the sooner he quitted Sodom the better. When a man ceases to strive against evil, he yields to it; and it can be no one's duty, in such a case, to remain where his holiest feelings are lacerated, his conscience deadened, and his family exposed to the corruption of a debasing atmosphere. Unhappily, the longer he continues, the less able he becomes to move, for conscience offers less remonstrance, associations strengthen their hold, and the only thing that saves him is the shock of some sore judgment. The more carefully therefore should every Christian weigh the first choice. *Ker.*

14-19. The apostle Peter, speaking of the influence of corrupting and licentious men, who have "eyes full of adultery, and that can not cease from sin," remarks that, while they promise their dupes "liberty, they themselves are the servants (slaves) of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." This latter clause explains how it is that an unrenewed man is unable perfectly to keep the law of God, and unable to change his own heart. Sin contains in itself the elements of servitude. In the very act of transgressing the law of God there is a *reflex* action of the human will upon itself, whereby it becomes less

able than before to keep that law. Sin is the suicidal action of the human will. To do wrong destroys the power to do right. We see this in every-day life, and in hundreds of examples before our very eyes. Hear the following wail and lament from the lips of one of the most genial of English writers, in which he confesses, in a way not to be mistaken, that "whosoever committeth sin is the slave of sin": "The waters have gone over me. But out of the black depths, could I be heard, I would cry out to all those who have set a foot in the perilous flood. Could the youth, to whom the flavor of the first wine is delicious as the opening scenes of life, or the entering upon some newly discovered paradise, look into my desolation, and be made to understand what a dreary thing it is when he shall feel himself going down a precipice with open eyes and a passive will; to see his destruction, and have no power to stop it, and yet feel it all the way emanating from himself; could he see my fevered eye, feverish with the last night's drinking, and feverishly looking for to-night's repetition of the folly; could he but feel the body of the death out of which I cry hourly with feeble outcry to be delivered, it were enough to make him dash the sparkling beverage to the earth, in all the pride of its mantling temptation." *Shedd.*

20, 21. Those that religiously name the name of Christ and do not depart from iniquity, how will they die? and how will they look that man in the face, unto the profession of whose name they have entailed an unrighteous conversation? or do they think that he doth not know what they have done, or that they may take him off with a few cries and wringing of hands, when he is on the throne to do judgment against transgressors? It had been better they had not known, had not professed; yea, better they had never been born. And as Christ says it had been good, so Peter says it had been better—good they had not been born, and better they had not known and made profession of the name of Christ. *Bun.*—The truth is perceived by the understanding, and has commended itself to the conscience, but the blindness of the heart still maintains its gloomy and obstinate resistance. They believe

it in every sense which can create responsibility, enhance guilt, and secure perdition, and that is all. And, I ask, if they are thus blind to truth; if they can confess the majesty and glory of God, when presented in visible manifestation before them; if they can see and acknowledge that the claims of their Redeemer are brought to them by the actual presence of their Redeemer, and yet remain blind to the perception of the reality; if they can admit that heaven and hell are opened before them, that death is at hand, their final Judge at the door, and yet slumber on; if all the appointed means of impression are thus counteracted, and nothing new will be furnished—I ask if such men are not outcasts of condemnation? N. W. T.

Whatever be the fate of human speculations on this tremendous topic, be it ours to cultivate the simplicity of faith which is independent of them. Even though in its vastness and mystery it continue to rebuke our feeble reason, let it stand in the naked simplicity of fact; a truth—great, and terrible, and certain; planted deep in the nature of God's attributes, and therefore unfathomable as all things are that are of him; but, withal, addressing itself to the simplest and strongest feelings of man—his dread of pain, his horror of shame, and misery, and death; meeting him at every turn to evil, and casting a fearful shadow across those pleasures that are not of God, and those glories where God's glory is forgotten; meeting him at the first fatal steps upon that course which ends in the abyss of woe it denounces; warning him to flee the bondage of seductions which grow as they are obeyed and strengthen with every victory; warning him that all the temporal results of sin—the shame of detection, the loss of reputation, the ruin of prospects, the destruction of health, the early grave—all are but shadows of the overwhelming penalty it brings, when the mercy which still restrains to these limits the fullness of divine vengeance shall have ceased, and the sin and the punishment, which are now but temporary, passing together into the world of eternity, and still, as ever, bound in inseparable links, shall become themselves alike eternal! W. A. B.

Section 364.

2 PETER iii. 1-18.

1 THIS second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure
2 minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken
before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and
3 Saviour: knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after
4 their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers
5 fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation. For this
they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the
6 earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being
7 overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the
same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition
of ungodly men.

8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thou-
9 sand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise,
as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any
10 should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come
as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and

the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

THE coming of Christ may be distant as measured on the scale of human life, but may be "near," "at hand," "at the door," when the interval of the two advents is compared, not with the four thousand years which were but its preparation, but with the line of infinite ages which it is itself preparing. View the interval that spans the first and second coming, as we now do in the midst of it, and it swells to a vast extent; view it as we shall yet do from some far height in the measureless eternity of the Church triumphant, view it as these holy men were wont to do, the first stage in an infinite progress, and it lessens to a point! The use of terms importing nearness, rapidity, immediate approach, which startle us as with the very presence of Christ, seem specially adapted to keep alive expectation, by bringing emphatically before us the perpetual possibility of an immediate manifestation, and thus indirectly second all those express exhortations which make the hope and desire of the coming of Christ a leading motive and impulse in the whole life of the Christian disciple. It is the confessed object of our blessed Master, in training his disciples for glory, that they should, in the school of this world, learn such divine arts as those of hope, of watchfulness, of fidelity, of humility, of earnest inquiry, of reverential awe. And this he accomplishes, as in other ways, so by shrouding his march in mystery, revealing enough to win affection and to guide duty, but reserving his deeper purposes for the council-chamber of the Holy Trinity. It is his gracious will that this matter shall be the perpetual subject of watchfulness, expectation, conjecture, fear, desire—but no more. To cherish anticipation, he has permitted gleams of light to cross the darkness; to baffle presumption, he has made them only gleams. He has harmonized, with consummate skill, every part of his revelation to produce this general result—now speaking as if a few seasons more were to herald the new heaven and the new earth, now as if his days were thousands of years. He who knows us best knows the deep devotion of watchfulness, humility, and awe to be the fittest posture for our spirits; therefore does he preserve the salutary suspense that insures it, and therefore will he determine his Advent to no definite day in the calendar of eternity. W. A. B.

5. Willingly ignorant. Men will not know that which they have a mind to hate. It argues a secret fear and suspicion of the truth; men are unwilling to follow it too close lest it cross their lusts and interests; they "will not come to the light lest their deeds be reproved"; "they are willingly ignorant"; those that can please themselves in the ignorance of any truth err *not only in their minds but hearts*. T. M.

5-7. The heavens and the earth became the instruments of destruction of the then existing world of human beings and animals. The heavens became such an instrument of destruction when their windows were opened and it rained as never

before since the creation of the world. The earth, which had been founded upon the waters and risen out of the water (Ps. 24 : 2), in obedience to the command of God was compelled to pour forth its treasures of water (Gen. 8 : 2), in order to destroy man and beast. The same divine omnipotence which commanded the water to destroy men and to lay waste the earth, will hereafter destroy the present world by fire, and not only change the surface of the earth. *Fronmüller.*—After passing symptoms of destruction, destined to give note of warning that the earth itself with all its inhabitants subsists only by mercy, the earth and the heavens have continued to see an uninterrupted series of day suc-

ceeding night, and night day, the sea ebbing and flowing under the gravitation of the heavenly bodies, and these again performing their wonted orbits in the heavens. But the sentence is only delayed. This temple itself, with its movable architecture, amid which the earth occupies so small a spot, must sink into an ocean of fire in order that the catastrophe, by its easy and sudden accomplishment, may establish in all created minds this eternal principle of the divine government—matter is made for mind, and mind for truth and God. A. V.

8. To short-lived creatures a few years may seem an age; but Scripture, measuring all things by the existence of God, reckons otherwise. Human reason sticks altogether in the outward sense and feeling, and therefore, as man measures *his happiness by temporal accidents, so his duration by temporal existences*. When shall we look within the veil, and learn to measure things by faith and not by sense? We count moments long; and God, who is of an eternal duration, counts thousands of years a small moment. All outward accidents have their periods beyond which they can not pass; but eternity is a day that is never overcast with the shadows of a night. T. M.—God hath not made a creature that can comprehend him; 'tis the privilege of his own nature. I am that I am, was his own definition unto Moses; and 'twas a short one to confound mortality, that durst question God or ask him what he was; indeed, he only is; all others have been and shall be, but in eternity there is no distinction of tenses. To his eternity, which is indivisible and all together, the last trump is already sounded, the reprobates in the flame, and the blessed in Abraham's bosom. Peter speaks modestly when he saith a thousand years to God are but as one day; for those continued instances of time which flow into a thousand years make not to him one moment; what to us is to come, to his eternity is present, his whole duration being but one permanent point without succession, parts, or division. *Browne*.

9. Not slack concerning his promise.

God oftentimes delays, that his people may come to him with greater importunity; he puts them off, that they may put on more life and vigor. God seems to be slack, that he may make us the more earnest; he seems to be backward, that he may make us the more forward in pressing upon him. *Brooks*.—Never be discouraged because good things get on so slowly here, and never fail to do daily that good which lies next to your hand. Do not be in a hurry, but be diligent. Enter into the sublime patience of the Lord. Be charitable in view of it. God can afford to wait; why can not we, since we have him to fall back upon? Let patience have her perfect work, and bring forth her

celestial fruits. Remember that the grand harvest of the ages shall come to its reaping, and the day shall broaden itself to a thousand years, and the thousand years shall show themselves as a perfect and finished day. *McD.*—**Long-suffering.** God does not love to condemn, but to save; and the reason why he is patient with bad men is that he may change them into good ones. *Aug.*

10. Forbearance may be long, but it will end abruptly. Then comes sudden judgment, with crashing ruin and a blazing sky. The earth itself, on the stability of which the scoffers count so confidently, will be wrapt in all-dissolving fire. How long or short will be that day of judgment, no mortal man can tell. We are warned not to apply the scale of human days to the day of God. But what it most concerns us to know is that the day will come surely and suddenly. D. F.—The passages in the Bible are but few in which anything like a detailed description of the incidents of the judgment-day is given us. Of the great fact itself, that the Lord hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, we are frequently and earnestly reminded. But of the mode or outer circumstances of the event comparatively little is revealed. Nearly all that is told us in the Scriptures is comprised in four passages: Matt. 25 : 31-46; 1 Thes. 4 : 13-18; Rev. 20 : 11-15; and 2 Peter 3—a chapter to which we are inclined to attach the greater importance, as it is so purely didactical in its character. One leading feature of the great day of reckoning—the one perhaps more than any other pressed upon our regard in Holy Writ—shall be its suddenness, its unexpectedness, the world's unpreparedness for it. The day before its last shall see them all going on as usual. Then, without a herald sent or note of warning given, the Son of man shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God. That trumpet-call of heaven shall span at once the globe, and be heard the same moment at either pole. At its summons the million sleepers of the earth shall all start up from their last repose, their dreamings of earthly to-morrows all cut short. But that trumpet-call shall do more than waken all the sleeping and arrest all the living inhabitants of the globe. It shall go where sound never went before—it shall do what sound never did. It shall pierce the stony monument; it shall penetrate the grassy mound; far down through many a fathom of the ebbing waters shall it make its way; over the deep bed of ocean shall it roll; and the sea shall give up at once the dead that are in it, and the earth the dead that are there. And all the dead, small and great, shall arise. And in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, by the forthgoing of one fiat of the Omnipotent, over all the vast congregation of the living with which that still vaster congregation of the dead is to mingle, over all the bodies of the living, a change shall pass that shall make them like to those new bodies of the raised. And all shall be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. W. H.

11. Having warned the scoffers, Peter concludes by exhorting the believers to vigilance and piety. What is to other men a fearful prospect should be by them expected with a solemn joy. It is incum-

bent on them to use well the present time, and serve Christ with diligence during this period of toil and struggle on the part of the Church, patience and long-suffering on the part of God. D. F.

A believer is "the light of the world," "the salt of the earth," "a child of God," "a friend of God," "an heir of God," "a joint heir with Christ." He is a "partaker of the divine nature"; he is "one with Christ, and Christ is one with him." Christ "liveth in him," "dwells in his heart," "supps with him, and he with Christ"; the Father, Son, and Spirit (the blessed Trinity in Unity) "make their abode with him," and condescend to have "fellowship and communion" with him. He hath "put on Christ!" is "in Christ," is "crucified with Christ," is "risen with Christ," is "set down in heavenly places with Christ." Oh, love passing knowledge! "What manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness!" *Hill*.

12. Looking for the coming. It is one of the mightiest, most overwhelming truths of our existence, that we are all advancing into the immediate presence of God. It is the great event to which we are all hastening. It is the event which is to determine our eternal destiny, according to the character with which we meet God. And one would think the sense of this truth, the remembrance of it, and a watchfulness accordingly, would never be out of our minds. One would think that the very breath of ceaseless prayer in our hearts, and the thought and the yearning co-present with all other thoughts, would be: O Thou, whom I must shortly meet, take possession of me now for thyself! let the refining flame of thy love kindle within me and never go out, but burn on till every sinful thing shall be consumed, every native faculty transfigured, and every impulse of will, feeling, and emotion baptized in that regenerating flame! G. B. C.

15, 16. The specific doctrine here quoted from Paul, that "the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation," is found in the *Epistle to the Romans* (2: 4), an interesting confirmation of what is implied in the context, that all Paul's Epistles were in general circulation throughout the churches, and, with the other books of the New Testament that were already written (included, like the Epistles, in the phrase *the other Scriptures*), were regarded as parts of Holy Scripture. So early do we trace the formation of the *New Testament Canon* by a progress of vital growth, not of arbitrary selection. . . . This celebrated passage, the very key-stone of apostolic evidence to the divine authority of *all* Paul's Epistles, and by inference of *the other Scriptures* of the New Testament as well as of the Old, gives at the same time the clearest exhibition of an apostle applying his ordinary human intelligence to the study of those Scriptures. What a suggestive picture: *Peter perus-*

ing Paul's Epistles! Such an attentive study, perused with an anxiety to clear up the doubts at which the unlearned and unstable might stumble, could not but leave its mark on Peter's style. Nor can we think that he would despise the aid of Paul's companion, the Hellenist Silvanus, whose name was joined with Paul's in the superscription of some of these very Epistles, and in the declaration of the gospel taught by the apostle. S.

16. "In which are some things hard to be understood." Our three most ancient MSS. have the relative "which" in the feminine gender, and therefore referring to "Epistles," which has preceded, not to "things" or "subjects" understood. It will be best, therefore, to read, "in which Epistles." A.—Although there are acknowledged difficulties in the Epistles and in other Scriptures, and though these are misinterpreted by incompetent persons, no argument ought to be founded thereon against the right and duty of appeal to Holy Writ. No composition has been so twisted and wrested as sacred Scripture. So much the worse for those who misuse it. It is "to their own destruction"; but the Scriptures can not be destroyed, and to them should all religious questions be taken with competent learning and spiritual power of insight. D. F.

Holy Mr. Gifford's doctrine, by God's grace, was much for my stability. This man made it much his business to deliver the people of God from all those hard and unsound tests that by nature we are prone to. He would bid us take special heed that we took not up any truth upon trust, as from this or that or any other man or men; but cry mightily to God that he would convince us of the reality thereof, and set us down therein by his own Spirit in the holy word; "for," said he, "if you do otherwise, when temptation comes strongly upon you, you, not having received them with evidence from heaven, will find you want that help and strength now to resist that once you thought you had." Now was my soul led from truth to truth by God; even from the birth and cradle of the Son of God to his ascension and second coming from heaven to judge the world. *Bun.*

18. Read "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord." A.—Those who are weak in grace dwell more upon their sins than upon the Saviour; more upon their misery than upon free grace and mercy; more upon that which may feed their fears than upon that which may strengthen their faith; more upon the cross than upon the crown; more upon those that are against them than upon those that are for them; and this keeps them low and weak in spirituals, it causes a leanness in their souls. *Brooks.*—Past attainments can not serve us. We rest on them, and we wither and become weak and emasculated. We can only be strong and joyous as we go on growing more and more day by

day. A Christian does not have to go down into the dark recesses of his own soul and beget and nourish the law of growth. All he has to do is to comply with the conditions of growth, the law of it being already in him. It is alike our privilege and duty to grow all through life. Though our outward man may perish, though our intellects become torpid and stiff, yet our hearts may become more and more mellow, devout, loving, and sweet. J. D.

The one sign of vital personal religion is growth. There is no growth in a life of spiritual routine, in a mechanical performance of duties however important, or a mechanical attendance upon ordinances however sacred. There is no growth without that sort of enthusiastic interest in religion with which a man must take up anything if he wishes to succeed in it. There is no growth in the deliberate adoption of a low standard, in the attempt to keep back a moiety of the heart from Christ, in consenting to go with God thus far only, and no farther. There is no growth in contenting ourselves with respectability, and declining the pursuit of holiness. There is no growth without fervent prayer, "in spirit and in truth." And, finally, there is no growth (whatever be the hopes with which we may be flattering ourselves) without continual and sincere effort. E. M. G.—There are laws in the economy of grace as in the growth of the body and the mind. Blessings are according to faith. Spiritual glory will be revealed to spiritual eyes. Character will unfold and strengthen in its heavenly order. According to your faith it will be unto you. Every new year will set you nobly forward toward higher purities of sanctification. Power, patience, consistency, self-control, peace with God, joy in believing, victory over the world—these and every other grace will grow with your growth. Such a life will

be a perpetual journey of honor, with light all the way, and immortality at the end. F. D. H.

And knowledge. Seek not so much either to vent thy knowledge or to increase it as to know more spiritually and effectually what thou dost know. And in this way these truths will have a new sweetness and use in them, and in thy humble, sincere way thou shalt grow in knowledge too. L. —It is by the believer's *walk* with God, by the *experimental* acquaintance he gets with Him, that he attains to more solid, more comprehensive views of his glory, grace, and truth, as they shine forth in the person and work of Jesus. The truth, moreover, of God's nature, as one God in trinity and trinity in unity, becomes daily better understood and delighted in, not as a matter of speculation, but as ministering a solid *foundation of trust* to a guilty sinner. As far as the believer can see, the very *possibility* of salvation rests on this distinction of persons in the one blessed God; so that the Father could give his Only-begotten Son, the Son could offer himself without spot to God, and the Spirit of the Father and the Son could go forth to apply this salvation by the testimony of Jesus, quickening his soul together with Christ, and fitting him for the enjoyment of God. The longer the Christian lives the more he sees of wisdom, holiness, and love in the plan, the accomplishment, the application of the salvation which is by Christ: mercy and truth blended with infinite holiness in the Father; infinite amiableness in Christ; infinite condescension and tenderness in God the Spirit. This knowledge, by sweet experience of the divine nature and character as they are made known in Christ, is the food and feast of his soul all the days of his pilgrimage; the foretaste of that fullness of delights which he shall enjoy when he shall see God as he is. *Good.*

Section 365.

1 JOHN i. 1-10.

1 THAT which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life: 2 (for the life was manifested, and we have seen *it*, and bear witness, and shew unto you that 3 eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly 4 our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write 5 we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of 6 him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say 7 that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the 8 blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we

9 deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just
10 to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have
not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

FROM the absolute certainty of the divine existence and authority of Christ comes a certainty as perfect that to follow and love him, to trust ourselves to him, to be guided by his rules, to be vitally imbued and pervaded by his spirit, to be consecrated to the ends which he proposes, and to that sublime service to which he invites us—that this is the way of absolute safety, peace, and well-being to all who will take it ! We can not be out of the path of safety, we must be in harmony with the wisdom, the righteousness, and the glory of the universe while we seek, and serve, and adore this Lord. Before his greatness royalties fade. Before his prescience that of sages is folly. His temper but expresses the perfection of God. His dominion stands supreme over nature and man. The earth is more sacred since he has been on it. The family is more august since he was born into it. Celestial spheres are nearer men since he has come from them to Bethlehem, and again has returned from Bethany to them. And while we serve and honor him with lip and life, with heart and strength, the power that lifted the dead is our guardian ; the wisdom that illuminates the world is our teacher ; the grace that sacrificed life on the cross is our guarantee of the future. R. S. S.

JOHN'S FIRST EPISTLE.

THE Epistles of John were undoubtedly written at Ephesus after the gospel, which is presumed to be known, and in the advanced years of the apostle, though before the date of the Apocalypse. The first Epistle attests itself at once by the introduction as well as by the striking similarity of thought and style, as the work of the author of the fourth Gospel, with which it stands intimately connected as a practical application. It is a circular letter of exhortation and encouragement to the churches of Asia Minor (comp. Rev. 2 and 3), which were already well versed in the faith, built on the golden foundation of Paul's doctrine of grace. The object of the Epistle is to nourish the Christian life, and to warn its readers against moral laxness, against all intermixture of light with darkness, of truth with falsehood, of the love of God with the love of the world, and against the influence of those Gnostic, Docetic "antichrists" who denied the reality of the incarnation, the true union of deity and humanity in Jesus Christ ; who separated the knowing of Christ from the following of him, religion from morality. He briefly points out their fundamental error with profound discernment and holy horror, and contrasts it with the Christian principle. The simple, sublime thought of the Epistle, which he presents at the very beginning, and continually enforces under different shapes, is the *love of God and of the brethren*, founded on living *faith* in the God-man, whose history is fully given in the gospel ; in other words, the idea of *fellowship* in its twofold aspect ; the union of believers with God and his Son Jesus Christ, and the union of believers with one another. The latter is rooted in the former, and is its necessary product ; the two are the marks of regeneration and adoption, and are inseparable from the keeping of the commandments of God, from a holy walk in the light after the example of Christ, as well as from true joy and the possession of the eternal life, which the incarnate Logos has brought into the world, and which he alone can give. These few thoughts, clothed in the simplest words, contain the sum of Christian morality and describe the inmost essence of piety. What Herder says of John's writings in general may be applied with peculiar emphasis to this first Epistle : "They are still waters, which run

deep ; flowing along with the easiest words, but the most profound meaning." P. S.

It is beautiful to notice how the apostle who had drunk the deepest at this river of revelation, and as if the cry of Moses and David and Habakkuk, and all the old yearning saints who panted for a sight of God, were ringing in his ears, as if in the straining eyes and wistful faces of every believer he read the same behest, and could hear from the bosom of the Church universal a murmur asking for God manifest—it is beautiful to observe how John the divine, in the beginning of his Gospel, his Apocalypse, and his general Epistle, comes bursting out with the wondrous tidings, and tells that the want is at last supplied, that the manifestation is vouchsafed, for which the weary Church had so long been waiting. *Hamilton*.

John is the apostle of spirituality. He goes for evidence, proof, satisfaction, within, into the breast. His wisdom is of the heart ; his faith is less of belief than trust ; less by argument than by intuition. No apostle seems to have clung with such reverential affection to the person of Jesus. His faith is all bound up in that personal attachment. John completes the full apostolic manifestation of Christian character. He is the fourth of that united quaternity that show us what we ought to be. He adds to Peter's fervor, and Paul's belief, and James's morality, his own affection. He is a reconciler, and brings in that crowning and harmonizing element of love without which zeal and faith and conscience are all wanting. F. D. H.

1. The Word of Life. In his divine nature, as Logos, he is the eternal Son of the Father, and the agent in the creation and preservation of the world. In him dwells all the fullness of the God-head bodily ; and in him also is realized the ideal of human virtue and piety. He is the eternal Truth and the divine Life itself, personally joined with our nature, our Lord and our God ; yet at the same time flesh of our flesh. In him is solved the problem of religion, the reconciliation and fellowship of man with God. P. S.—The Word has been without a human soul, but it was when the Word was in

the beginning, and was with God, and was God. But ever since the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and manhood, that is, the whole of manhood, soul and flesh, was assumed by the Word, what was the result of the passion, what of the death, save the separation of the body from the soul? But the soul was not separated from the Word. For if the Lord died—yes, even because the Lord died—for he died for us on the cross, doubtless his flesh breathed forth his soul; for a short space the soul forsook the flesh, but the flesh was to rise again when the soul returned to it. But I deny that the soul was separated from the Word. He said to the soul of the robber, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." He forsook not the robber's faithful soul, and did he forsake his own? God forbid; as its Lord, he kept the robber's soul safe, while he retained his own inseparably. *Aug.*

2. All heretics have set themselves against Christ. Manicheus opposed Christ's humanity, for he alleged Christ was a spirit; "even," says he, "as the sun shines through a painted glass, and the sunbeams go through on the other side, and yet the sun takes nothing away from the substance of the glass, even so Christ took nothing from the substance and nature of Mary." Arius assaulted the Godhead of Christ. Nestorius held there were two persons. Eutychius taught there was but one person; "for," said he, "the person of the Deity was swallowed up." Macedonius opposed only the article of the Holy Ghost, but he soon fell, and was confounded. If this article of Christ remain, then all blasphemous spirits must vanish and be overthrown. The Turks and Jews acknowledge God the Father; it is the Son they shoot at. About this article much blood has been shed. I verily believe that at Rome more than twenty hundred thousands of martyrs have been put to death. It began with the beginning of the world—with Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob, and I am persuaded that it was about it the devil was cast from heaven down to hell; he was a fair creature of God, and doubtless strove to be the Son. Next after the Holy Scripture, we have no stronger argument for the confirmation of that article than the sweet and loving Cross. For all kingdoms, all the powerful, have striven against Christ and this article, but they could not prevail. *Luther.*

Manifested. By means of the incarnation, God has reduced himself to the level of human apprehensions and human sympathies. He gives us in Christ a definite object, upon which all our sentiments of love, loyalty, veneration, affection, may fasten; yet without fear of idolatry, inasmuch as this object is divine. To conceive of Christ is to conceive of God; and to love Christ is to love God;

for he that hath seen Christ hath seen the Father. E. M. G.—How can you see life, but by seeing some one live it? You can not see a man's life unless you see him live such and such a life, or hear of his living such and such a life, and so knowing what his life, manners, character, are. And so no one could have seen God's life, or known what life God lived, and what character God's life was, had it not been for the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made flesh, and dwelt among us, that by seeing him the Son, we might see the Father, whose likeness he was, and is, and ever will be. C. K.

3. **May have fellowship with us.** We have fellowship with those that speak, not only in their spiritual relations with their Lord (which they fully understood only after he was gone), but in their remembrances of him in that earlier time when he was yet with them. Their witness is effectual for this end. For us also it is all real. He dwelt among us. We beheld his glory. We caught the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth. So things went with him. So he looked and moved and spoke. So he wrought and suffered and died. We have stood by the cross of Jesus. We have entered the empty sepulchre. We have seen him alive after his passion. He has shown us his hands and his feet. We have been led out as far as to Bethany, have seen the hands lifted up to bless, and watched the ascending form. T. D. B.—The great requisites for fellowship with the Father and Son are determined by the nature and character of God. God is light; and it is communion in the light. God is love; and it is a fellowship of love. D. F.

4. **Joy.** This affords a new proof of God's infinite benevolence, that he has made it our religion to be happy. In exhorting us to believe, and hope, and love, he only summons us to that harmony of the powers which tends to their most blissful exercise. And hence, in the tender and affecting discourses which the Lord held with his disciples after the eucharist, having promised them peace, his own peace, he goes on to promise them joy, even his own joy. "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." J. W. A.—The latter words John here repeats. B.—Joy is of the soul, or the soul's character; it is the wealth of the soul's own being when it is filled with the spirit of Jesus, which is the spirit of eternal love. Every soul is made to be a well-spring of eternal blessedness, and will be if only it permits the waters of the eternal love to rise within. It can have right thoughts and true, and be set in everlasting harmony with itself. It can love, and so, without going about to find what shall bless it, it has all the material of blessing in

itself; resources in its own immortal nature, as a creature dwelling in the light of God, which can not fail, or be exhausted. H. B.

5. God is light. We get the full sense of this richly comprehensive word "light" as said of God when we combine the two great ideas—truth, and purity or holiness. God truthful; God sinless; God the fountain of all truth; God the author and giver of all holiness to his creatures—these are the great ideas which lie in the word *Light* as it stands here descriptive of God. H. C.

6. Light is clear and open. If a man walks deceitfully, and has not the truth in him, but a lie, he offends against the perfect integrity of God, and has no fellowship with him. Light is inviolably pure. It takes cognizance of foulness and corruption, yet receives no soil, contracts no stain; shines on what is base and noisome, keeping itself unsullied, undefiled. If a man becomes contaminated with evil, and has fellowship with "the unfruitful works of darkness," he has no fellowship with God. D. F.

7. The apostle, in these words of holy mystery, contemplates the church of the sanctified walking together under the radiance of a common light, which streams from the presence of God, and which, involving them all, *assimilates* them all. He sees them move in holy fear, and yet holier hope, beneath the meridian blaze of the everlasting glory, receiving its rays, and, in the very community of the same gift, by the very force of a common investiture, enjoying blessed "*fellowship* one with another." The fair procession of the people of God passes calmly on before his gifted eyes; and each, in the luminous robe that vests him, wears the high insignia of a celestial adoption. Co-heirs of heaven, they know their brotherhood; walking in that light which issues from no earthly sun, they feel it theirs alone, and recognize in each other the mystic fellowship it gives! W. A. B.

And what shall we do about our sins? Hear what follows: "And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin." It is great ease of mind that God has given us. The devil once held a bond of slavery against us, but it was obliterated by the blood of Christ. If you have confessed your sins, truth is in you; for truth itself is light. Your life is not yet perfectly lustrous, for sins are there; but yet you now begin to be illuminated, for confession of sins is there. *Aug.*—Nothing will do for a *Gospel* that leaves any trouble incurable, any sorrow uncomfited, any sin beyond forgiveness. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin, all its kinds, and all its degrees—the hard cold sins of avarice and hypocrisy; the hot impulsive sins of passion and desperation. The most perfectly devised system of morality, or even of spirituality, if

the Cross is left out of it, can do nothing like that. F. D. H.

8. Dreams of perfection in the flesh would be little entertained if men kept clearly in view the distinction between what we are *in Christ* and what we are *in ourselves*. To be in him is to be saved at once and for ever from the condemnation of sin, but, as the lives of the highest and the lowest saints *alike* testify, not immediately from the presence and *inworking* of sin. Christ had sin upon him, though he had no sin in him. He that is in Christ has no sin upon him, though he still has sin in him. And just in proportion to the completeness of his abiding in him by communion and obedience will he be free from sin within him as he is from sin upon him. But let us not be deceived. Because the Spirit addresses us as those that are "sanctified *in the name of the Lord Jesus*," let us not therefore claim to have reached a state of practical and realized sanctification in ourselves. "We are in him that is true," and "In him is no sin." "But if we say that *we* have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and *the truth is not in us*." A. J. G.—The belief of Christian perfectibility seems inapplicable to *individual practice* from the very nature of Christian holiness. Were a perfect man to exist, he himself would be the last to know it; for the highest stage of advancement is the lowest descent in *humility*. As long as this humility is necessary to the fullness of the Christian character, it would seem that it is of the essence of the constant growth in grace (however encouraged by holy joy and inward testimonies) to see itself lowlier as God exalts it higher. In truth, it is only piety, and piety fervent and exalted, that can really feel how immeasurably far it is from perfect holiness. W. A. B.—The belief of one's perfect freedom from sin, while God's own discipline is going on to beat down sin, takes the place of faith in Christ, and plunges the soul *into* sin. So has that great master of the human heart, and of the workings both of nature and of grace in it, John Bunyan, presented the consequences of the self-flattering idea of perfect freedom from sin. The Flatterer may seem a bright, glorious man, in a white robe, with white, shining wings, without us; but he is the dark, deceitful old man within us. Grace in this world is medicinal, curative, as long as the world stands. G. B. C.

9. If we confess. The man who confesses his misdeeds and reproaches himself for them sides and coöperates with God. God upbraids your sins; if you do the same, you act with God. That you are a man, 'tis God's work; that you are a sinner, 'tis your own. You must abhor in yourself your own production, that you may love in yourself the work of God. *Aug.*—Under the teaching of Satan men invert God's order. For God has at-

tached a sense of shame to sin, and given confidence to the confession of sin; but the devil attaches confidence to sin, and to confession shame. *Chrys.*

God is both "faithful and just to forgive": "faithful," as having promised, and therefore as in good faith fulfilling; "just," as doing a righteous thing—a thing which he can righteously do by reason of the provisions made in the atoning death of Christ. H. C.—It is Christ in our nature who has stood in our place, and offended law is satisfied in the very nature that broke it. Death is overcome in the very nature that was doomed to die. Heaven is opened by the very nature that was excluded from it. Christ in our nature, God in humanity's form bearing the cross! Does the law come and threaten me, I refer the law to Christ; he is my substitute. Does justice come with its sword and lift it over my head to strike, I refer justice to my substitute and ask, Hath not Jesus paid the penalty that was demanded of me? *An.*—The penalty having been endured by the substitute of man, God's holiness and justice no longer present a barrier to that salvation. Yea, his holiness and jus-

tice are *enlisted on the side of the sinner* who by penitence and faith has appropriated the expiation. E. M. G.

Though God forgives once and for ever as a *Judge*, he forgives often as a *Father*. In *point of fact*, he justifies us *when we believe*, and renews the sense of his pardon when we return to him at the throne of grace, and take a believing look at the Saviour. *J. Hall.*—The forgiven soul may daily sin, and come under God's fatherly displeasure, and so need a daily renewal of the joys of salvation at the mercy-seat; but he can never come again under the divine wrath and curse. His Father in heaven may visit his transgressions with the rod of correction; "nevertheless, his loving-kindness will he not utterly take from him, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail." The forgiveness of sins is the pledge of all spiritual blessings. Like a tree of life it stands in the garden of God's delights, thrusting its roots downward, and lifting its branches upward laden with precious fruits. It is preceded and followed by the graces of the Spirit, the joys of salvation, the glories of heaven. V. D.

Section 366.

1 JOHN II. 1-29.

- 1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin,
- 2 we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitia-
- 3 tion for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world. And
- 4 hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I
- know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.
- 5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know
- 6 we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk,
- 7 even as he walked. Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old com-
- mandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which
- 8 ye have heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which
- thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now
- 9 shineth. He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until
- 10 now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stum-
- 11 bling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and
- 12 knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes. I write unto
- 13 you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. I write unto
- you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning. I write unto you,
- young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children,
- 14 because ye have known the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have
- known him *that is* from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye
- are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.
- 15 Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world,
- 16 the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh,
- and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.
- 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abid-
- eth for ever.

18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even
 19 now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out
 from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have
 continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not
 20 all of us. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not
 21 written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is
 22 of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is anti-
 23 christ that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath
 24 not the Father: *[but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also*. Let that there-
 fore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard
 from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Fa-
 25 ther. And this is the promise that he hath promised us, *even* eternal life. These *things*
 26 have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye
 27 have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the
 same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath
 28 taught you, ye shall abide in him. And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he
 29 shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. If ye
 know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

RELIGION does something better than sigh and muse over the perishableness of earthly things; it finds in them the seed of immortality. No work done for Christ perishes. No action that helps to mold the deathless mind of a saint of God is ever lost. Live for Christ in the world, and you carry out with you into eternity all of the results of the world's business that are worth the keeping. The river of life sweeps on, but the gold grains it held in solution are left behind, deposited in the holy heart. "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." The world's scenes of business may fade on our sight, the noise of its restless pursuits may fall no more upon our ear, when we pass to meet our God; but not one unselfish thought, not one kind and gentle word, not one act of self-sacrificing love done for Jesus' sake, in the midst of our common work, but will have left an indelible impress on the soul, which will go out with it to its eternal destiny. So live, then, that this may be the result of your labors. So live that your work, whether in the Church or in the world, may become a discipline for that glorious state of being in which the Church and the world shall become one; where work shall be worship, and labor shall be rest. *Caird*.

1. My children. The hour for work had sounded in the first place for Simon Peter. He had founded the Church in Israel, and planted the standard of the new covenant on the ruins of the theocracy. Paul had followed. His task had been to liberate the Church from the restrictions of expiring Judaism, and to open the door of the kingdom of God to the Gentiles. Then, finally, the hour sounded for John—for him who had been the first disciple, and whom his Master reserved to be the last. He completed the fusion of these heterogeneous elements, and conducted the Church to the comparative perfection of which it was then susceptible. According to all the traditions, John never had any other spouse than the Church of the Lord, nor any other family than that which he salutes in his Epistles by the title of "my children." *Godd.*

That ye sin not. This is the great and blessed end—sinlessness, like that of the sinless One. "This," says Calvin, "is not only a summing-up of what goes before, but, so to speak, a *recapitulation* of the whole gospel, that *we should cease from sin*." And when the soul has proceeded thus far in experience, and breaketh for the longing which it hath to be loosed from the loathsome and gigantic

foe, which wrestles with it only to defile and poison, the news it hails on bended knees is glad news, for it is gospel. J. W. A.

We have an advocate. Sin hath made a breach; there needs a mediator to heal it. God and sinful man are two, and they can not be made one but by a third. Christ appears for us in heaven, a faithful Advocate. His intercession is a part of his priestly office. We have a faithful High Priest, therefore a faithful Advocate. He lays our cause to heart; our cause is his cause. He hath espoused the interests of his people, and does all upon his own account. *Caryl*.—The Greek word, of frequent occurrence and great preciousness, sometimes means one who takes up his client's cause to carry it through by pleadings and acts—an *advocate*; sometimes one who goes forth to make peace between two parties, beseeching for an offender—an *intercessor*; sometimes one who stands by the sinking sufferer, uttering words of consolation and strength—a *comforter*. All these offices concur in Jesus Christ, who is our Advocate to urge our cause, an Intercessor to make our peace, our Comforter to fill us with joy; and hence one might almost wish the text had said, "If any man sin, we have a Para-

deos with the Father." Now, though this name of love is also given to the Holy Spirit, there is something delightful in regarding both the adorable Son and the Spirit as standing toward us in this same benignant relation of manifold good. In our mind's apprehension of divine consolation, there need be no nice discriminating between the work of the Son and the work of the Spirit, for when the Lord Jesus comforts it is by the hand of the Comforter. J. W. A.

2. "He is the propitiation," i. e., the Propitiator—one who makes propitiation; who propitiates in the sense of making pardon possible by a righteous God, consistently with due regard to the law which sin has broken and the sacredness of the penalty which the transgressor has incurred. The way being thus opened, the infinite love of God flows out naturally and mightily in the freest forgiveness of the penitent who accepts for himself the atonement made by Jesus. H. C.—Then fix thy thought on what *Christ* did, what *Christ* suffered, what *Christ* is—as if thou wouldst fill the hollowness of thy soul with Christ! If he emptied himself of glory to become sin for thy salvation, must not thou be emptied of thy sinful self to become righteousness in and through his agony and the effective merits of his cross? By what other means, in what other form, is it possible for thee to stand in the presence of the Holy One? With what mind wouldst thou come before God, if not with the mind of him, in whom *alone* God loveth the world? S. T. C.

The death of Christ is called a *propitiation*, for it makes it possible for God to receive sinners into favor, and prompts to the exercise of mercy in a way consistent with the claims of justice. It is called an *expiation*, for it covers sin, and provides for the removal of guilt and consequent punishment. It is an *atonement*, both expiating and propitiating, while it brings into friendship those who were once opposed. It is *vicarious* or substitutional, being endured in our stead. And it is *satisfactory*, for it vindicates the broken law, answers all the moral purposes of punishing the transgressors, and is deemed by the Lawgiver himself to be a sufficient reason for pardoning all who believe. Its first fruit is *forgiveness* and *peace*—complacency on God's part and confidence on ours; its ultimate fruits, *redemption* and *salvation*—that is, actual freedom from sin in its guilt, power, and misery, and in the end eternal life; redemption differing from salvation only in suggesting the price paid for these gifts. In part they are already enjoyed, but in their fullness they are yet to come. J. A.

6. Christ is not only the principle of holiness, but also the pattern of holiness to his people. They that say they abide in him *must walk as he*

walked. His works (except those which were miraculous, and works of mediation between God and us) are our rule as well as his word. Look to Jesus when you have a race of patience to run; let your eye always be upon Christ, and draw the lines of your carriage, both in your spirits and outward actions, according to what you see in him. *Caryl*. —As a prophet he teaches us the way of life, and, as the best and greatest of prophets, is perfectly like his doctrine; and his acting (that in all teachers is the liveliest part of doctrine), his carriage in life and death is our great pattern and instruction. But he is *more than a prophet*, a priest satisfying justice for us, and a king conquering sin and death for us; an example, indeed, but more than an example, our *sacrifice*, our *life*, and *all in all*. It is our duty to *walk as he walked*, to make him the pattern of our steps; but our comfort and salvation lieth in this, that *he is the propitiation for our sins* (v. 2). L.

14. Victory is made so sure unto us in Jesus that the Scriptures represent us as having already obtained it: "Ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one." In Jesus all is accomplished; "we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." *Monod*.

15. A true Christian living in the world is like a ship sailing on the ocean. It is not the ship being in the water which will sink it, but the water getting into the ship. So in the like manner the Christian is not ruined by living in the world, which he must needs do while he remains in the body, but by the world *living in him*. Our daily avocations, yea, our most lawful enjoyments, have need to be narrowly watched, lest they insensibly steal upon our affections, and draw away our hearts from God. *An*.—All immoderate use of the world wrongs the soul in its spiritual condition, makes it sickly and feeble, full of spiritual distempers and inactivity, benumbs the graces of the Spirit and fills the soul with sleepy vapors, makes it grow secure and heavy in spiritual exercises and obstructs the way and motion of the Spirit of God. Therefore, if you would be spiritual, healthful, and vigorous, and enjoy much of the consolations of heaven, be sparing and sober in those of the earth, and what you abate of the one shall be certainly made up in the other. L.

Whoever is contriving by how little faith or how little grace, and with how large interspersing of gayeties and worldly pleasure he may make his title to salvation good, is engaged in a very critical experiment. He is trying how to be a Christian without being at all a saintly person; how to love God enough without loving him enough to be taken away from his lighter pleasures; and he really

thinks that, aiming low enough to be a little of a Christian, he still may just hit the target on the lower edge. Perhaps he will, but is he sure of it? And, if he really is, what miserable economy is it to be so little in the love of God and the joys of a glorious devotion, that he can be just empty enough to want his deficit made up by amusements! If that will answer, a very mean soul certainly can be saved. H. B.—The heart and affections of man are too precious to be wasted. Lay not out your rich capital of faith and hope and love and admiration upon the poor, precarious investments this world at best can offer you! Impress upon your hearts the conviction that not one energy of all this host of energies but was primarily designed for heaven; and open in this blessed belief the full tide of your affections to that world where alone they can ever find repose! Realize the presence of God by faith, know him as he is in Christ Jesus, and, I will not say love him—to know him thus is to love him. W. A. B.

16. Worldliness is determined by the *spirit* of a life, not the objects with which the life is conversant. It is not the "flesh," nor the "eye," nor "life" which are forbidden, but it is the *lust* of the flesh, and the *lust* of the eye, and the *pride* of life. It is not this earth, nor the men who inhabit it, nor the sphere of our legitimate activity, that we may not love, but the way in which the love is given. Worldliness consists in these three things: attachment to the outward, attachment to the transitory, attachment to the unreal, in opposition to love for the inward, the eternal, the true; and the one of these affections is necessarily expelled by the other. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." F. W. R.—The sin of the man in whom the love of the world predominates is of deliberate choice, and it engages the whole man in pursuit of its own ends. It is not an error about the means, it is not seeking a right end in a mistaken way, but it is pursuing a false and pernicious end with care, anxiety, and self-approbation. Hence it is called in Scripture *idolatry*, not from any resemblance it has to the outward act of falling down before stocks or stones, but because it entirely displaces our affections from their proper object, and leads them to the preference of an unjust and delusive rival. R. W.

17. *Lust* is in Scripture the usual name of all the irregular and sinful desires of the heart, both the polluted habits of them and their corrupt streams, both as they are within and outwardly vent themselves in the lives of men. The apostle here calls it the *lust of the world*, and, verse 15, *love of the world*; and then, verse 16, branches it into those three that are indeed the base anti-trinity that the world worships, the *lust of the eyes*, the *lust of the flesh*, and the *pride of life*. L.

The World. The Bible touches us because it seems to know all about this "world"—this aggregate of disorder with purposes of order all through it, this sea of tempest with its tides of law, this mixture of insignificant trifles with the most appalling solemnities, this storehouse of life and activity and influence which we are crowding on and crowded by every day, out of which come the shaping forces of our life, which we call the world. The Bible knows all about it, and so we listen when the Bible speaks. P. B.

Passeth away. The strange thing is, not that amid the world's work we should be able to think of our home, but that we should ever be able to forget it; and the stranger, sadder still, that, while the little day of life is passing—morning, noon-tide, evening, each stage more rapid than the last—while to many the shadows are already fast lengthening, and the declining sun warns them that "the night is at hand wherein no man can work"—there should be those among us whose whole thoughts are absorbed in the business of the world, and to whom the reflection never occurs that soon they must go out into eternity without a friend, without a home! Caird.

Doeth the will abideth. The one business of life with us now is that we do the divine will. There is a will of God for us in, and right through, every day—running along the line of its duties and cares; a will which we are to discover; which we are to do; and in the doing of which we consolidate our immortality. Every duty faithfully done is like a stone built in, that shall abide. And love and prayer will add cohesion. And suffering patience will give depth and strength. And hope and aspiration will bring tenderness and beauty. Every active and every passive grace will contribute something to the completeness and permanency of the life that is set in obedience to the will of God. And the thing to be desired is (so simple and yet so difficult), that we should lay this idea along our whole life, and make it touch every part of it. And all this, not on high days and at special times alone, but, as much as we can, at all times, and in all things—in the sanctuary, in the city; when we eat and when we pray; when we are glad in the joy of life and when our tears fall like rain. In all we are to do the will of God, and then and thus we live upon the flow of his being; we participate, as far as creature can, in his immortality; at his bidding we put forth our hand and take of the tree of life and live for ever. A. R.

18. The solemn asseveration of the apostle is that this under which we live is the final economy, and that with its close will terminate for ever the probation of mankind. For, when the glorious helps to holiness provided by this last economy are re-

viewed, it is to see that God has lavished upon these arrangements all the resources of his love and wisdom, and that nothing more could have been done to his vineyard which he has not done in it. He has put in operation motives more than adequate to the resistance of every temptation; has offered full and free forgiveness through the blood of Christ, together with the gift of his indwelling Spirit; has issued a perfect law for our moral guidance, and a prediction fraught as much with comfort to one class of characters as with terror to another; and we may safely challenge any one to point out what he could have done beyond this consistently with the maintenance of a state of probation. Reason, therefore, echoes back the solemn accents of inspiration, when she asserts that the passing bell of the economies is being rung at present, that with the close of this periodic time trial will expire: "*Little children, it is the last time.*" E. M. G.

19. Though some should wholly forsake the way of godliness, wherein they seemed to walk, yet why should that reflect upon such as are real and steadfast in it? *They went out from us*, says the apostle, *but were not of us*. *Offenses of this kind must be*, but the *woe* rests on him by *whom they come*, not on other Christians. Religion itself remains still the same, whatsoever be the failings and blots of one or more that profess it. It is pure and spotless; if it teach not holiness and meekness and humility, and all good purely, then except against it. But, if it be a straight, golden reed by which the temple is measured, then let it have its own esteem, both of straightness and preciousness, whatsoever unevenness be found in those that profess to receive it. L. —As there are trees and herbs that are wholly right and noble, fit indeed for the vineyard, so there are also their semblance, but wild; not right, but ignoble. There is the grape, and the wild grape; the vine, and the wild vine; the rose, and the canker-rose. There are also in the world a generation of professors that, notwithstanding their profession, are wild by nature; yea, such as were never planted into the good olive-tree. Now these can bring forth nothing but wild-olive berries; they can not bring forth fruit unto God. Such are all those that have lightly taken up a profession, and crept into the vineyard without a new birth and the blessing of regeneration. *Bun.*

20. Apostolical authority and direct revelation diffuse over the Epistles their certainty and their majesty; but yet the presence of these more commanding elements is not suffered to overpower that general character of doctrine, which is proper for those who are of full age, and who have themselves "an unction from the Holy One, that they may know all things." The mind of the teacher still enters into a free companionship with the mind that is

taught, so as to exercise and educate the spiritual faculties, at the same time conducting them with decisive authority to conclusions which they might else have failed to reach. T. D. B.

23. In our English version the last clause of this verse is put in italics, indicating doubt of its being genuine. There seems to be not the least occasion for this doubt. The best manuscripts contain it, and the course of thought with this clause included is entirely in harmony with John's habit. To deny the Son is to lose the Father; to confess the Son retains to us the Father—two propositions mutually correlated to each other. H. C.

25. Not that we shall be exempt from loss, disappointment, sickness, human unkindness, embarrassment, vexation, humiliation; not that we shall have in this world all the displays of providential favor on which we may have calculated; these are not the things promised; *the promise that he hath promised us is eternal life*. God may have dealt strangely with thee; but say frankly, has he at all dealt with thee in a way to hinder the fulfillment of the promise made thee? He that believeth hath eternal life; he hath entered upon it; he is living a new life, one that stretches out into eternity; but what he has experienced is only the beginning of it. G. B.

28. *Abide in him*. The presence of Jesus, our divine Lord, will make our lives not only solemn, but also strong and vigorous. It will quicken and sustain every energy. He is with us who loves us with more than a father's affection, more than a mother's tenderness, more than a brother's sympathy, more than a friend's faithfulness. This thought will animate us. We need never be lonely and faint. In all the meditations of our hearts, in our intercourse with men, in our silent and secret sorrows and struggles, his presence is our rest and strength. A. S.

At his coming. We are not yet in our home; not as yet do we reign; things around us still dazzle us; self-pleased thoughts may yet mislead us; we have still, while yet we are in the flesh, to strike closer and closer into the narrow way, closer and closer to cleave to God, more and more to part with all which would keep us from God. Wherever, then, we may be in the course heavenward, morning by morning let us place before ourselves that morning which has no evening; and purpose we to do that, and that only, which we shall wish we had done, when we shall see it in the light of that morning when in the brightness of his presence every plea of self-love which now clouds our eyes shall melt away. Evening by evening let us resolve we, by God's grace, in union with the all-atoning sacrifice, to love nothing, to prize nothing,

to wish for nothing, to fear nothing, to hold nothing, to regret nothing, but what we shall love, prize, wish for, or be glad we had feared, held, regretted, when our Saviour and Judge's voice shall utter those dread words, "It is done." So, baring ourselves more and more of all displeasing unto him, shall we, with less sluggish steps, follow him who emptied himself of all which was his that he might give us all. *Pusey.*

Section 367.

1 JOHN iii. 1-24.

1 BEHOLD, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.
 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.
 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.
 4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins: and in him is no sin.
 5 Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither
 6 known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is right-
 7 eous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth
 8 from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might de-
 9 stroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed
 10 remaineth in him: and he cannot sin because he is born of God. In this the children of
 11 God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not
 12 of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from
 13 the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one,
 14 and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil,
 15 and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.
 16 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He
 17 that loveth not *his* brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer:
 18 and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the
 19 love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for
 20 the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and
 21 shutteth up his bowels of *compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?
 22 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.
 23 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.
 24 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Be-
 25 loved, if our heart condemn us not, *then* have we confidence toward God. And whatso-
 26 ever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things
 27 that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, That we should believe on
 28 the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.
 29 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we
 30 know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

No external vision or revelation could disclose the Infinitely Holy to natures imperfect and sinful. Divine Being, in its wondrous manifestations, might play around the unrenewed mind, but it would be as a luminous atmosphere bathing blind eyes, or sweet music rippling round deaf ears; the heavenly effluence could not pass inward, could wake no thrill of appreciation, no sympathetic delight within the soul. There must, in short, be something godlike in us before we can see and know God; we must be "like him" before we can "see him as he is." And into this divine affinity, this penetrative moral insight, it is one great end of the Christian's life on earth to train him. By every holy deed, by every spiritual aspiration, by each sacrifice of inclination to duty, of passion to principle, of the wayward human will to God's, the spiritual instincts of the believer are becoming more refined, his spiritual perceptions more acute. Not one fervent prayer, not one act of earnest, thoughtful intercourse with God in holy ordinances, but is strengthening the wing of aspiration and purifying the eye of faith—training the spirit to rise nearer to the region of eternal light, and to bear its divine effulgence with more undazzled gaze. The

time will come when this process shall be completed, when love shall be refined from all admixture of selfishness, and the soul, to its inmost depths, assimilated to God, shall be prepared to reflect, without one dimming shadow, the beams of infinite beauty. *Caird.*

1. "Behold what manner of love!"—there is something touching in an old man like John thus suddenly changing the tone of calm reasoning and exhortation for one of ecstasy. The patriarch of the apostles feels himself in the highest sense of the term once more a child, a child of God, like the meanest of believers, with whom he here puts himself on a level, and boasts as Paul had done before, in the mercy vouchsafed him. *Van O.*—When you have thrown yourself into the arms of the Son of his love, and cleaved closely to his heart, then does the Father no more look upon you as you are in yourself, encompassed with all your sins, enveloped in your misery; he then loves you in the Son of his love, and the darkness within you is irradiated by the light that beams from his countenance. It is this love which calls forth the instant cry of amazement and of gratitude, and prompts us to exclaim with John, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath shown us, that we should be called his own children!" *A. T.*

2. "Beloved," proceeds the apostle, "*now are we the sons of God.*" We have no empty title unattended with real dignities and real privileges; we are not only "called" (as in the preceding verse), but we "are" the children of heaven. We are not merely invested with our rank by adopting favor, but we are in the exercise of our privileges by regenerating grace. This is even *now* the dignity freely accorded to the disciple in the invisible empire of God. *W. A. B.*—We were strangers, yet are made sons, nay, heirs. It is God's good pleasure to give those who were strangers to his family, and rebels to his crown, a joint heirship with his only Son! Every person in the Holy Trinity shows his love to believers. The Father adopts; the Son for a while resigns and lays aside his honor—nay, even dies to purchase our right—the Holy Spirit witnesseth that we are the sons of God! Oh, adore the love of the Trinity with high and raised thoughts! *T. M.*

What we shall be! How profoundly this question, this mystery, concerns us, and in comparison with this what are to us all questions of all sciences? What to us all researches into the constitution and laws of material nature, all investigations into the history of past ages, the future career of states and empires? What to us—what shall become of this globe itself? What we shall be, *we ourselves*, is the matter of surpassing and infinite interest! There is in the contemplation a magnitude, a solemnity which transcends and overwhelms

our utmost faculty of thought. To think that *we* shall continue to be in some mode and scene of existence, for millions of ages, and that *that* will still be as nothing in comparison with what is still to follow! that a duration passing away beyond all reach of the stupendous power of numbers will still be as nothing! that it will still be *we ourselves*, the very same beings! that it will be a perfectly specific manner of being—with a full consciousness of what it is—an internal world of thought and emotion—a perfect sense of relations to the system in which we shall find ourselves placed; and this a continual succession of distinct sentiments and experiences, and with the constant certainty of the train going on for ever! *J. F.*—To our instructed hopes there is a certain future on which we can build, far more glorious, far more beautiful than anything in the past. "We *know* that when he shall appear we shall be like him." We have a future, not of dim expectation and trembling hope, but of knowledge. Our word is not "it may be," but "it will be." That which is to be becomes as firm reality as that which has been. Hope is truer than history. The future is not cloudland, but solid fruitful soil on which we can plant a firm foot. *A. M.*

The Spirit of grace shows us that the moral perfections of God are the end and reason of the natural. And who can doubt but that, when matter and its dark symbols are done with, that which is principal shall seem so? In bursting from the confinement of the body, the spirit shall in a moment reverse the order of its old conceptions; and almost cease to think of Omnipotence, Eternity, Infinity, while the more dominant notions of Purity, and Blessedness, and Love, fill the soul. *I. T.*—Whatever knowledge we gain in heaven will be *transforming*. All our ideas will be as fuel, to feed the flame of love, which will then burn upon the altar of the soul; all will be quickening, penetrating, influential. Our opinions will be principles of action. Everything will lead us to see more of God, to love him with a more intense glow of holy affection, and to be more conformed to him. The light of truth will ever be associated with the warmth of love. "We shall be like God, *for we shall see him as he is.*" *J. A. J.*

We know that there is a God whom it is no longer a hopeless enthusiasm to call on man to imitate—one with whom, it would seem, a connection so perfect may be established of heart and hope, that all the story of his earthly career is spiritually acted over in each of his earthly followers—who

are declared to be "born with Christ," "suffering with Christ," "crucified with Christ," "buried with Christ," "risen with Christ," "exalted with Christ"—until at length these analogies are lost in a deeper and more heavenly resemblance, when, admitted into the sunlight of his glory, they catch the reflection of his eternal beams—as they gaze, approach, and, as they approach, become more and more completely invested with his radiance, are transfigured as they adore the God and man, in the clear truth of his own unshadowed essence—"are like him; for they see him as he is"! W. A. B.—The open vision of God in Christ will then transform us into his image. By that the most amazing miracle of divine love and divine power will be consummated, the complete forgiveness of sin crowned by the transfiguration of the sinner; and in the mean while to look for that, to prepare for that, as far as we may do, to treasure up such glimpses of that ineffable glory as may be shown to us, to carry with us throughout our whole work the recollection of the risen Saviour, is the profession to which we are pledged, the mission to which we are called, the strength with which we are clothed. To make of life one harmonious whole, to realize the invisible, to anticipate the transfiguring majesty of the divine presence, is all that is worth living for. Death, after earthly duty loyally, humbly, patiently fulfilled, is not the end, but the beginning of life. B. F. W.

3. For "*this hope in him*," read "*this hope on him*." "Him" refers to the Lord Jesus; "this hope, resting on him"; whereas, as it stands, it seems as if "in him" meant "in himself," in his breast; and is very generally so read. A.—He who will purify himself as Christ is pure must live in Christ, and seek to be as closely and intimately one with him as possible. This includes a willingness wholly to cease from the old man, as corrupt, in order that a completely new man from Christ may be formed within, and a life determined implicitly by the faith of Christ. It is Christ beheld, reflecting God's own beauty and love upon us, that changes us from glory to glory. If by faith we go with Christ; if we bear his cross in duty after him; if we hang upon his words; in a word, if we are perfectly insphered in his society, so as to be of it, then we shall grow pure. The assimilating power of Christ, when faithfully adhered to as the soul's divine brother, and lived with and lived upon, will infallibly renovate, transform, and purify us. H. B.—"He that hath this hope in Him" knows that the resemblance to God is the great element of the celestial state, and that the depths of the spirit are the scene and subject of that resemblance. He therefore labors that God's image be so reproduced in his heart, that not merely his outward actions, but his motives and

principles of action, may be such as harmonize with those of the august society he anticipates. W. A. B.

6. We are living to be pure, as Christ is; but, regarded as apart from him, the work is only initiated—we still have sin, we are broken, disordered, and corrupt. Yet as long as we abide in Christ, our action is from him, not from our own corrupt and broken nature, exactly as the apostle writes, Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not. He lives in a consciousness, that is, which is not sustained by his own mere humanly personal character, but by the sense of the righteousness that is of God by faith upon him. H. B.—How can we live unto sin, seeing that by coming unto Jesus, crucified for us, we have died unto sin? How can we sin, seeing that we are not under the law, which condemns and gives no life, but under grace, which brings to us both the pardon and the power of God, because it brings God to us, and us to God? A. S.

8. The death of Christ *destroys the works of the devil*, as it displays the glory of all the divine perfections and enlarges the kingdom of God among men, by the very means which Satan employed to sully the one and to diminish the other. The death of Christ is no less effectual to purchase and secure the salvation of men, in spite of all Satan's attempts to ruin them. His blood is the price which redeems the soul; it expiates the guilt of sin and gives full satisfaction to divine justice; so that now the grand obstacle is removed, which obstructed the sinner's access to God and excluded him from any share in the fruits of his beneficence. But this is not all. The death of Christ doth likewise afford the most persuasive and effectual motives to that holiness, "without which no man shall see God." *The Son of God will finally destroy the works of the devil*, when he shall come the second time to judge the world in righteousness. Then shall the kingdom of darkness be plucked up by the roots; then shall the ransomed of the Lord be confirmed in a state of unchangeable purity and happiness. Satan shall no more vex and seduce them; but he, with all the workers of iniquity, shall be thrust down into those everlasting burnings which the wrath of God doth kindle. R. W.

John *was* the apostle of love, he *was* gentle, but it is *his* Epistles in which there comes out most broadly, most sternly, the principle that all mankind are divided into two great classes—the one, those that are of God; and the other, those that are of the world and the devil. That is *his* love. Whatever is not light is darkness. Whatever is not life is death. Whatever is not God is Satan. He has no idea of some on the one side and some on the other, and a great neutral-tinted mass in the center that belong to neither. The contrast embraces all classes and conditions. Every man is one thing or

the other—God's or Satan's! A. M.—Nothing but good comes from good; nothing but evil comes from evil. If you declare that nothing but good comes from any man you meet with on this earth, some startling wrong in him will confute your assertion. If you declare that nothing but evil comes from any man you meet with on this earth, some good which you did not expect will confute that assertion. Let all wickedness, without respect of persons, be assigned to the devil as its parent; let all good, without respect of persons, be assigned to God as its parent. And let each person be encouraged to say, I have no right whatever to acknowledge the evil spirit as my parent. If I have done so, it has been under a dark and horrible infatuation. For in very deed nothing in me is of him, but that which is destroying me. No living powers, energies, affections are from him; only that which extinguishes my powers, energies, and affections, only that which is making me not a man. I have a right to say that God is my parent. For every power, energy, affection, that is awake or slumbering in me, I have received from him. Jesus Christ has bidden us say, "Our Father." *Maurice.*

9. Saving grace is distinguished by its prevalence and constancy. There may be a declination in saints tending to a downfall, but the *seed of God*, that supernatural grace that *remains* in them, will by the power of the Holy Spirit recover the supremacy. Where the Spirit savingly works, he is said to dwell. He is not like a tenant at will that neglects the house, but as the owner he keeps perpetual residence in true Christians, and by his continual influence preserves them from apostasy. *Bates.*—It is the distinguishing character of a believer that he has fellowship with the Father and the Son, through the indwelling of the Spirit. Whatsoever has not this fellowship with God, hath fellowship with sin; and fellowship with God and fellowship with sin are incompatible. Yet a believer may have many sad falls into sin without having fellowship with it. Grace and nature are inmates in the heart of a renewed man; yet they are just like two persons who dwell under the same roof and are always at variance; they have no *fellowship* at all the one with the other. The regenerate part "can not sin, because it is born of God," the divine seed remaineth in the believer uncorrupt and immaculate. "It is no more I," says the apostle, "but sin which dwelleth in me." *Hill.*

10. It is remarkable how—more in fact now than for many ages—Christ forces himself upon the notice of those *who believe him not*. When they speculate about religion, when they trace human culture back through history, Christ stands right in their way; doctrines of men, claims of churches, moral codes they might pass by; but they can not pass

Christ by; he confronts them with a revered yet not welcome presence. They can not be indifferent to him; they must examine his pretensions; he perplexes them like some problem hard to be solved. They say to him, "Thou who hast killed the old religions, thou who hast divided history in twain, and begun a new order of ages, and hast struck thy roots into all human interests, who art thou? Give us more proof of thy rights over us than gospels and their fruits in the world afford." They raise this and that objection, they pare down the Gospel, they lop off myths, but still there he stands to be accounted for, and claims of them that they follow him. They must be for him or against him; for his side, whoever he be, is the side of all virtue. They can not be neutral, even when they deny that he has any right over them, for whatever else he has done or not done, he has set up a kingdom of love and well-doing in the world; every one that loveth, and doeth well, must be for him, every one who loveth not, and doeth evil, is against him. T. D. W.

Love of the brethren is, with John, a habit or state of mind which leads directly to practice, and is treated as utterly worthless apart from practice. The love of God to man is manifested not in any tenderness to his evil ways, but in bringing him into the right way. The two indications of the offspring of evil he gives us here are, he doeth not righteousness, and he loveth not his brother. We shall find that the two are never separated. Love does not interfere with the strictness of right, but establishes it. Right does not make love less deep, or less universal; apart from right it would be superficial and partial. *Maurice.*

11. A touching incident is related by Jerome in his exposition of Galatians. In his extreme old age John was too weak to go into the assembly, and had to be carried. Unable to deliver long discourses, he simply said: "Little children, love one another." When asked why he continually repeated this one exhortation, he replied, "Because this is the command of the Lord, and enough is done if this one command be obeyed."—Assuredly so. For as God himself is love, love to him and to the brethren is the essence and sum of religion and morality, the fulfilling of the law and the prophets, the bond of perfectness. P. S.

14. In the same degree that men are near to Christ, we are commanded that they be near to us. All humanity claims our affectionate sympathy, for He has assumed the nature of a man; every regenerate believer in Christ Jesus claims yet higher and more peculiar affection, for with him Christ is one not in body alone, but in Spirit also. W. A. B. —It is vain to imagine that you can let God's love flow in if you can not let it flow out. We must let the love we are to receive have free course, flowing

through us in such kind of works and lovings as it will naturally instigate. It must be allowed not only to beget itself in us, but to make us to others what God is to us. Hence the soul that is actuated or impelled by any kind of hatred or revenge, or that holds a grudge against another, and can not, will not forgive him, can not really be said to let God love him; for God's love to him is a forgiving love that bends in blessing and even bleeds over all enemies. H. B.

15. *The apostle says not that all hatred will end in murder—far from it—nor that all hatred is equally intense and equally reckless, nor that hatred which bursts out into great crime may not imply a worse state of soul than such as remains within, and does no obvious harm to others. Nor does he intend to confine the murderous quality to positive hatred. Want of love, hardened selfishness, acting on calculation with no rage or wrath in it, may be as deadly, as murderous, as malignity or revenge. The apostle teaches us in these words, that evil lies in the heart, and that the evil there, which meets with some temporary or some lasting hindrance, differs not in kind from that which is ripened by opportunity. It may be for ever dormant as far as the notice of man is concerned. It may never burst forth into wicked action, yet the hatred within and the hatred in the wicked action are one and the same, one quality runs through both. The powder that is explosive and the powder that explodes do not differ. But if there be no principle reigning in the soul, which will introduce love instead of hatred, and change the nature of the soul itself, the thought and the act will be both evil, and the act will be the measure of the thought.* T. D. W.

16. **Hereby perceive we love.** The cure which God has provided, while it reveals the depth of man's ruin, has in it also a token of the greatness of man's nature. It is God giving himself for man's deliverance, a free, unbought love, which devotes itself to suffering and death that it may awaken a response in the sinful heart, and recall the sinner to the Father's arms, when he knows that all has been atoned for, and that the past of guilt is ready to be forgiven and forgotten for ever. It reveals to us the nature of God, but it also reveals to us something of the nature of man; for man's nature must be capable of appreciating free, unselfish love, if it is to return it. *Ker.*

17. If the pursuits of some of us do not allow of our visiting the haunts of distress in our own persons, we may at least contribute to the great work of relief our utmost of sympathy, of prayer, and of almsgiving. Remember that in the relief of distress in some or other of its forms stands to a great extent the vitality of your religion. For if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

And the spirit of Christ is not to sit apart from suffering in selfish isolation, but to come down to it with tender sympathy and timely succor. This is what the Infinite Love did for us all; and unless a similar character be formed in us, we shall not be among those whom at the last day he will recognize and set upon his right hand. E. M. G.

18. True Christians do "not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." "Love unfeigned" is perpetually passing into act with regard to every member of Christ who can be reached. In this way a true follower of Christ fills up his life. The new nature is continually working its way outward, according to the various objects which invite its flow; and benevolence inspired of God seeks new ways of communicating happiness even in the smallest particulars. Nor are these effluences of the sanctified nature in the way of kindly acts the less Christian even if at the moment of performance the happy spirit does not distinctly think of its being done to Christ himself. The inward spring is perpetually running, marking its track by the green margin which it irrigates. A kind, merciful, unselfish heart is always looking around for some one to be the object of its care; and love is the same in its kind when it gives a kingdom and when it gives a flower. J. W. A.

19. **We know.** When we say that we have come to *realize* a doctrine we mean that, somehow, that doctrine has been wrought into the roots of our life. It has passed from a proposition accepted into an influence that actuates. For our religion is neither a dogma nor a theory. It has a spiritual power. It is a personal presence. It is a comforter of actual sorrows. It is a quickener to every noble work. It is not a stranger to be scrutinized, but a friend to be loved because it has first loved us. It is not a guest to be entertained, but a leader to be followed. F. D. H.

20. The law can not condemn a believer—Christ has fulfilled it for him; divine justice can not condemn him—that Christ has satisfied; his sins can not condemn him—they are pardoned through the blood of Christ; and his own conscience, upon righteous grounds, can not condemn him because Christ, who is greater than his conscience, has acquitted him. *Brooks.*—When my soul contemplates his divine love, then am I comforted; for he who loves me thus can not condemn me. Condemn me, my conscience! Accuse me, Satan! Slander me, oh world! Curse me, oh law! Behold, my peace stands immovable before you and your voice of thunder and cursing; for Jesus who loves me and redeems me is far greater than are all my accusers! A. C.

21. If the illuminated tender conscience doth not accuse us of insincerity, "we have confidence

toward God" that he will spare and accept us notwithstanding our frailties, and give free and safe access into his presence. *Bates.*

22. He merely says that consciousness of honesty toward God and of a steadfast aim to do his commandments legitimately begets confidence before him, and that God will respond with favoring answer to our prayer—of course only for Christ's sake. Well does Neander remark on this passage: "As sons whose filial relation has suffered no interruption can with childlike trust and confidence ask all from their father, so believers whose life is of the truth, who are conscious of no disturbance of their filial relation to God through unfaithfulness on their part, can ask all with childlike confidence from God their Father."

23, 24. If you ask what are the central commandments in the gospel scheme, he answers: *Believe in Jesus; love one another.* Keeping his commandments ye come into most intimate mutual relations to him; ye dwell in him; he dwells in you; and of this indwelling his Spirit, present to your soul, is the witness. *H. C.*—**He abideth in us.** There is something at once dreadful and delightful in this indwelling of the Holy One in houses of clay. It is dreadful to be so near that divine glory, before which the seraphim veil their faces. It is, on the other hand, delightful to consider that

the source of all holiness and comfort is within us, if we belong to Christ. The promised Comforter has made his shrine in our very bodies, and possesses our souls with his presence. He can not be ignorant of our condition, and no trial can befall us without his permission, as there is also no sorrow which he can not assuage. This is felt with unutterable peace when the divine witness testifies within the soul. "And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." *J. W. A.*

The Spirit which he hath given us. It is at our worst peril that we, either theoretically or practically, lose sight of this sacred agent, the Spirit of the Father and the Son, amid that branching yet united system of channels through which he makes his ordinary approaches to our understandings and our hearts; seeking thus to reach our invisible souls through our bodily senses, and through those audible and visible means, of preaching and the sacraments, in which those senses are met. Let the divine Spirit, the sacred Illuminator and Comforter of the soul, be ever held in clear view amid the surrounding institutes of the Church, and always regarded as the only efficient agent in our renewal and sanctification; acting alone through all sensible channels, and using truth, men, and ordinances in doing his own proper work. *J. S. S.*

Section 368.

1 JOHN iv. 1-21.

- 1 **BELOVED,** believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because
- 2 many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God:
- 3 Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every
- 4 spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is
- 5 that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already
- 6 is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater
- 7 is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak
- 8 they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God
- 9 heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth,
- 10 and the spirit of error.
- 11 **Beloved,** let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born
- 12 of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In
- 13 this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten
- 14 Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved
- 15 God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if
- 16 God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time.
- 17 **If we love one another,** God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know
- 18 that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we
- 19 have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son *to be* the Saviour of the world. Who-
- 20 soever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.
- 21 **And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us.** God is love; and he that
- 22 dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that

we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.
 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He
 19 that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us. If a
 20 man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother
 21 whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this command-
 ment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

It is easy to see that, with this apostle, all centers ultimately in *love*. That holy name most aptly describes the heart of God, and reveals the deepest meaning of all his works and ways. The creation is the act of love, laying the foundation for its future manifestations. The law and promise are the revelation of a love which would draw men to Christ. The Incarnation is the personal manifestation of redeeming love in intimate, indissoluble union with our nature. So, on our part, love to God and man is the sum of all duty and virtue. Does it not lie at the bottom of all the apostles' exhortations? James, indeed, makes Christianity chiefly law and obedience; but he makes love the queen of the law. Peter, the apostle of promise and hope, is most beautiful and lovely in his enthusiastic devotion to Christ and his flock. Paul, the apostle of righteousness and faith, still calls love the bond of perfectness, the most precious of all spiritual gifts, the greatest in that triplet of cardinal Christian virtues; because, being the highest form of union with the Godhead, it never ceases. In John, the apostle of incarnation and love, this virtue meets us in the deepest and tenderest form—as in his life, from the time he first lay on Jesus' bosom to that last touching exhortation to his little children in his extreme old age, so also in his writings, the whole design of which is to lift the veil from the mystery of eternal love, and draw all his susceptible readers into the same holy and happy fellowship of life with the divine Redeemer. P. S.

To expose false spirits; to prove their false character by decisive tests; to give tests of real piety for each one's own self-judgment; to give prominence to love as the cardinal element of Christian character—these are the leading themes in this chapter. H. C.

1. The gift of *discerning spirits* is of a critical character, concerned primarily with distinguishing true prophets from false, divine inspiration from human or perhaps Satanic. For, where the powers of light are specially active, there also, according to the law of antagonisms, the powers of darkness also most bestir themselves. But the discerning of spirits in the wider sense denotes in general the power of keenly discriminating between the truth and error, which might be mixed together in the discourse of a genuine prophet—for none but the apostles have any claim to infallibility—as also the power of judging characters and discerning motives hidden from the common eye. P. S.—We are commanded to “try the spirits, whether they be of God”—that is, we are to bring the statements of those who profess to teach in the name of God to the one standard of truth, and to receive nothing which that standard disallows, by whomsoever advanced, and whatever may be the antiquity and the authority by which it is enforced. *Ferguson*.

3. **Come in the flesh.** The Docetæ were a sect of the Gnostics who held that Jesus Christ was a mere phantasm, destitute of a real body, that he lived, labored, and suffered only in appearance. The First Epistle of John belongs to that age, when this Docetic or Gnostic error was gradually becoming more dangerous, and specially in Asia Minor. The Manichæans held that Christ descended from the sun in a *seeming* body, to lead men to the worship of the true God. It is supposed that 1 John 1: 1-3, and 4: 1-6 were designed to oppose the doctrine of the Docetæ. B. B. E.

6. The disciple whom “Jesus loved” (and we

can not doubt on account of a kindred simplicity, purity, and elevation of temper) occupied a sphere of meditative abstraction which raised him above that level where faith is most assaulted—in an emphatic sense, he lived on high, and looked upon the things of earth as angels may look upon them. It is altogether in harmony with this order of feeling that we hear him calmly (and justly) and like a messenger from heaven challenging all truth for the Church, and assigning all error to the world. “We know that we are of God.” I. T.—The great apostle of the Gentiles, amid fightings without and fears within, built in his argumentative Epistles the outworks of that temple, of which his still greater colleague and successor was chosen noiselessly to complete, in his peaceful old age, the inner and holier places. And this, after all, ranging under it all secondary aims, we must call the great object of the evangelist; to advance, purify from error, and strengthen that maturer Christian life of *knowledge*, which is the true development of the teaching of the Spirit in men, and which the latter part of the apostolic period witnessed in its full vitality. And this, by setting forth the person of the Lord Jesus in all its fullness of grace and truth, in all its manifestation in the flesh by signs and by discourses, and its glorification by opposition and unbelief, through sufferings and death. A.

7. **Born of God.** There is no possibility of redemption or spiritual restoration for us save that, as being open to the inbreathing of God, we may so be impregnated with a new power of life, and, by force of a divine visitation within, be regenerated in the holiness of God. All which is described in the Scripture as being born of God. And what a height of almost divinity do we look upon in such a truth as that! What man will not even tremble, as in

awe of himself, when he contemplates, in this word of Scripture, the eternal Spirit of God coursing through the secret cells and chambers of his feelings, turning him about in his motions, breathing in his thoughts, and calling back his wild affections to a common center with his own? H. B.—**That loveth knoweth.** Between God and man, the interpreter is love. Love renders intelligible to man the truths of the gospel—not indeed those abstract truths which relate to the essence of God, the knowledge of which is equally inaccessible and useless to us, but those other truths which concern our relations to God, and constitute the very foundation of religion. Let love, sweet, gracious, luminous, interpreting, come between the gospel and the human soul, and the truth of the gospel shall have a meaning, and one as clear as it is profound. Then shall your soul find itself free and happy in the midst of these strange revelations. Then shall those truths you have accepted, through submission and obedience, become to you as familiar and as necessarily true as those common, every-day truths upon which depends your existence. A. V.

8. All who become children necessarily wear the image. And he that loveth not is not of God. A man without love, without inward fountains of human tenderness, without a heart that broods over the world in some measure like the heart of God, is without the chief feature of the great family likeness. But those who return good for evil and love for hatred, who forgive all who trespass against them as they are themselves forgiven of God, and seek the salvation of souls as men seek gold—they put on the image of the heavenly, they look like their brothers of the upper kingdom, they look like what they are—the children of the King! A. R.

God is love. God has not denied us what was most important. He has told us his name in the gospel; and henceforth we know that God is holy, that God is love. To know this is to know all. It is to know that this world is not a chaos, but a world. It is to know that our earthly career is not without reason nor without end. It is to know that man, even in the depth of his fall, is a being whose nature God honors. It is to know the true name of prosperity, which is grace; and of distress, which is trial. It is to know that life is not what we call by this name, but that our true life is hid with Christ in the bosom of God. It is, in fine, to know *our* true name; we are the children of pardon, after having been the children of wrath. All this has been proclaimed from the height of the cross, and transcribed in the gospel, where the most ignorant among us can spell it with the most learned. In naming himself, God has named all. A. V.

The everlasting love was disclosed by our Lord's life and death. It showed that God forgives because

he loves to forgive. He works by smiles, if possible; if not, by frowns. Pain is only a means of enforcing love. *D. Livingstone.*—God is love, not God became love. Above all creation, above every beginning and end, from everlasting to everlasting in himself, God is love; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is the one living and loving Jehovah. It is into this love that we are planted by the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus. A. S.—Redemption is the fruit of that sovereign benignity which equally belongs to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Christ did not die that God might love man; he died because God loved man. The atonement is not the cause, but the effect of the love of God. J. B.

10. The highest act of love is the sacrifice of self; the highest act of God's infinite love to man was in the redemption; but from the ineffable mystery which hangs over the Godhead, God could not be said to sacrifice himself, and therefore he sacrificed his only Son—that object which was so near and so dear to him, that nothing could be nearer and dearer. T. A.—When you would revive the spirit of the contrite, say to him, *God is love*. It will be a dead letter to him, unless he looks at the cross; but let him so look, and he beholds a door. Thus the solitary young monk was led in by Staupitz: "Look at the wounds of Christ," he said to Luther, "and you will there see shining clearly the purpose of God toward men. *We can not understand God out of Christ.*" Hence the maxim of the reformer's after years: "I can not come near the absolute God." J. W. A.

11. This was the main cause of Christ's coming, that man might know how much God loves him, and know it to this end, that he might be kindled with affection for him who loved him first, and might love his neighbor at the bidding of him, who became man's neighbor by loving him when he was no neighbor, but one sojourning far away. *Aug.*—Jesus crucified is God's charity toward man. Impossible that men should not feel themselves bound to act toward each other as God has done to them; and toward what man is not charity a duty? Without the divinity and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the value of man's soul, if I may be pardoned the expression, sinks; neither his salvation nor the example of his Saviour is any longer the question; charity becomes nothing more than human goodness, a sentiment, however noble and useful, still limited both in impulsive energy and in efficacy; having its source in man alone, it is not suited to inspire any long effort or great sacrifice; it is not adequate to convert the longing desire for the moral amendment, the physical relief of humanity, into that inextinguishable sympathy and untiring and impassioned emotion which really constitute charity, and

which the Christian faith, in the history of the world, has alone been able to inspire. *Guizot.*

12. The Scripture itself recognizes the difficulty of considering God in his own nature, and therefore urges us to seek him in and through his Son, Jesus Christ. Providence, the Supreme Being, the Deity, and other such terms, repel us of necessity to an infinite distance; they speak of One incomprehensible and unapproachable. Our God is the Lord, revealed to the Israelites as the God of their own nation, who came down upon Mount Sinai to give the law, who dwelt between the cherubim in the mercy-seat, in the innermost part of the Temple; revealed to us as the Son of man, born of a woman, made in all but sin one of ourselves, living and dying and rising again, after the common condition of us all. This is our manifestation of God. To Him we should come in faith and love, and He will show us of the Father, and give us of his Holy Spirit, in such measure as our present nature can bear, preparing us for a fuller revelation hereafter. *T. A.*

13. Find thou but within thee sanctification by the Spirit, and this argues necessarily both justification by the Son and the election of God the Father. *Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* Where this sanctifying Spirit is not, there can be no persuasion of this eternal love of God; they that are *children of disobedience* can conclude no otherwise of themselves but that they are the *children of wrath*. *L.*—The exhibition of that love in God is to be made the means of producing love in us; the glorious spectacle of love as beheld in God is to be turned into a living principle in us. For this end, the holy, unconfined, and infinite Spirit came down with a fullness and a power as if he sought to fill every heart, to replenish the Church, to be the soul of the world, to encircle the earth with an atmosphere of grace as real and universal as the elemental air which encompasses and circulates around the globe itself, that whoever inhaled it might have eternal life. *J. H.*

14. It is simple love to that only Jesus, who is very man and at the same time very God and eternal life, that speaks from the mouth of John, and that would fain constrain the spirits of men, yea, of all who come into the world, to come to John's beloved Master, and to the bosom on which he lay. *Loke.*

16. *The natural child-faith is a faith without light.* Hence the exhortation of the apostle: "Be no more children tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine." The blind child-faith is that which believes because others *have believed and testified*. The *glorified* child-faith is that which believes because it has *known*. *A. T.*—"And we have known

and believed the love that God hath to us." This was the blessing; this was the privilege. The infinite misery of the denying world was that it did not know and believe the love that God had to it; that it believed him to have no love to it; that it refused all communion with love. That neither the belief of the Church nor the unbelief of the world affected the nature and being of God in the least, he affirms in the next clause, "God is love." This is not an accident of his character, but its essence; not an aspect which it wears at certain times or to some fortunate persons, but that which is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, that which has no respect of persons. *Maurice.*

When God loves us his heart goes out toward us, and with his heart all that he can bestow. All the resources of his power, all the counsels of his wisdom, all the preciousness of his promises, all the gifts of his Spirit, are at our disposal, if only our hearts are open to receive them in the day of his power. To know and believe the love God hath to us—here, in a single sentence, is the beginning of Christian life, the history of Christian experience, the fullness of Christian joy. That God should love me, and yet refuse me anything for my good, is as utterly impossible as that he should cease to be God. To suppose that Christ can have suffered for me, and yet while laying on me his cross deny me the needful grace to carry it after him; sooner than think this, let us boldly say at once that he has died in vain! *A. W. T.*—"God is love—fountain, flood, and sea—and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." We let God love us into love, which itself suffices, and carries all grace with it. Know, then, and believe the love God hath to you, and you shall have all that you are willing to receive, more than you can ask or even think. *H. B.*

18. It is not by any power in our love to appease the stings of sin that we get rid of the fear. We lose it because our love comes from apprehending that great gospel and blessed hope, that God's love is mine, mine in his Son, mine that my love may be perfectly fixed upon it, mine without disturbance from any of his awful attributes, mine without fear of loss or harm from any events. Believing this, the heart fills with a mighty tide of calm, responding love, which sweeps away on the crest of its rejoicing wave the vileness, the sorrows, the fears, which once choked its channels. They are flooded out, and the heart is delivered. We stand peaceful, safe, blessed. Whatever betide, nothing can separate us from the love of God. We are bound to him by that everlasting loving-kindness with which he has drawn us. There is lifted off the heart the whole burden of "fearful looking-for of judgment," the whole burden arising from the dark thought, God is mighty, God must be right-

eous, God *may* strike! because we know "he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." Henceforth our thoughts of God are to be thoughts of perfect, absolute, everlasting love, who is the foundation of our life and the basis of all our hope and work. The love of God casts out the fear of God, and the love of God casts out *all other fear!* A. M.

19. "We love him *because* he first loved us." This is indeed the gospel in its sublime simplicity and its harmonious purity, but, moreover, in its unfathomable riches and its all-conquering power. If once the word—nay, the fact—"God first loved us," as *seen* in Christ, has indeed become to us *the fact* unparalleled, this henceforth determines all our life and faith—nay, then there is no need to say to us, "Love him again." Love has awakened love. We really love "*because* he first loved us." *Van O.*—There is no foundation for my love to God except only the old one, "God loves me." There is no proof that that foundation is laid except only the old one, "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." There is no way of building on that foundation except only the old one, We believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Saviour of the world! A. M.

To love God is verily a gift of God. He who, when he was not loved, loved us, gave us power to love him. When we were displeasing to him, he loved us, that there might be formed in us that whereby we might please him. *Council, A. D. 529.*—We are not to understand the apostle as saying that we love God out of *gratitude* for the love he shows us. Let us understand him to say, "We love God only because that true original love which is in him is moving us and inspiring us." *Maurice.*—It is actually "God's" own "love" (to use the apostle's expression), "shed forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us"; it is not man's love at all, if you trace it up to its source, but God's love, intercepted and returned upon him from a heart which has the capacity of reciprocating it. It does not take its rise in our own bosoms; we have no other property in it than that of simply reflecting and giving it back. If this be so, if our love to God be only his love to us reflected from our hearts, it must be quite clear that the more we expose our hearts to his love the more truly shall we love him. E. M. G.

20. Our love to our brethren is not only the evidence but the measure of our love to Christ. He that hath not love enough in him for a man like himself, how can he love God, whose goodness, being above our knowledge, requireth a transcendancy in our love? This is a sure rule, He that loveth not a member of Christ loveth not Christ; and he who groweth in his love to his brethren groweth likewise in his love to Christ. *Bp. Reynolds.*—We are not required to love infirmities or imperfections; nay, we could not do so, if required; for infirmities and imperfections are naturally repelling. Our brother's true self is the object upon which our love is to fasten; and as to his infirmities and imperfections, which he shares with us in virtue of our common deterioration by the fall, those are to be borne with and overlooked out of regard to his true self, and to the filial relation which this true self bears to God. He would have me love my neighbor exactly as He loves me, fastening my regard upon his true self, upon the feature of God's image which is reflected in his soul, and bearing with his infirmities out of this esteem for the true self. Must it not be practicable? It is what He is constantly doing to me. E. M. G.

Jesus Christ sending in his Spirit into the heart unites it to God in himself by love, which is indeed all, that *loving of God* supremely and entirely, with *all the mind and soul, all the combined strength of the heart!* And then that same love, first wholly carried to him, is not divided or impaired by the love of our brethren, but is dilated, as derived from the other. God allows, commands, yea, causes, that it stream forth and act itself toward them; remaining still in him as in its source and center; beginning at him and returning to him; loving our brethren in God and for him; not only because he commands us to love them, but because in loving our brethren after a Christian manner we do even in that love our God. *L.*—You can not compel light to shine in one direction, or on one side only. It will radiate all around. So will true love. Upward to God it is reverence and worship; toward angels and saints it is affectionate and grateful interest; abroad among the good it is brotherly love; among the bad the kindness of pity. To an enemy it is generous forgiveness; and to one's own flesh and blood, what should it be but unquenchable tenderness, natural feeling strengthened, purified, and made fruitful by the grafting of grace upon it? *J. Hall.*

Section 369.

1 JOHN v. 1-21.

1 WHOSOEVER believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth
 2 him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the
 3 children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of
 4 God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For
 whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh
 5 the world, *even* our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth
 6 that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ;
 not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness,
 7 because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the
 8 Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear wit-
 9 ness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. If
 we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of
 10 God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the
 witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth
 11 not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to
 12 us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath
 not the Son of God hath not life.

13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that
 ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of
 14 God. And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according
 15 to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know
 16 that we have the petitions that we desired of him. If any man see his brother sin a sin
which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto
 17 death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteous-
 18 ness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death. We know that whosoever is born of God
 sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth
 19 him not. *And* we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.
 20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we
 may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ.
 21 This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

FAITH—that is to say, in all possible spheres the *vision* of the *invisible* and the *absent* brought *nigh*—is the energy of the soul and the energy of life. We do not go too far in saying that it is the point of departure for all action, since to act is to quit the firm position of the present and stretch the hand into the future. But this at least is certain, that faith is the source of everything in the eyes of man which bears a character of dignity and force. Vulgar souls wish to see, to touch, to grasp; others have the eye of faith, and they are great. It is always by having faith in others, in themselves, in duty, or in the Divinity, that men have done great things. Faith has been, in all time, the strength of the feeble and the salvation of the miserable. And Christian faith is the victory over the world, since it contains all the elements of a holy life. A. V.—We are not only *final*, but *present*, conquerors. Each hour is a battle, and each battle a victory; our life is not merely a series of *battles*, but a series of *victories*—all ending in one complete and glorious triumph, to be rewarded by a crown and a throne! The overcoming principle in this war is “the *whatsoever is born of God*.” However small at first and feeble it may be, if it be born of God it is enough. With that we are safe, for it can not be extinguished by either earth or hell. Storms may quench the lights of man’s kindling, but they can not touch the stars. So, whatever is of man, or of earth, or of self, may and shall perish amid the rough blasts of this world; but that which is of God shall survive and gather fresh vitality and power from what seeks to destroy it. *Bonar.*

3. When the sun of prosperity shines out warm and bright upon us ; when we are in a state of robust health, and have a flow of animal spirits ; when our friends are around us, our homes happy, our means abundant for our needs, and there is no call for pinching, or saving, or straitening ; when, moreover, our reputation is good, and we are looked up to in the little circle in which we move—nothing is easier, under these circumstances, than to feel an occasional glow of gratitude to the Giver of all these blessings, and to mistake that for the love which is the fulfilling of the first and great commandment. E. M. G.—Love is a beautiful plant with a beautiful flower of which *duty* is the stalk. "This is the love of God," says the apostle of love, "that we *keep his commandments*." The devotion to God and to God's service, which will gradually grow to greater and greater strength and ripeness in the heart of any Christian, includes most assuredly a certain bent and direction of the feelings and impulses, but it is not itself made up of them and of them alone. It includes also something deeper than all feelings and steadier than all impulses. The love that would reach its true perfection must make the sense of *duty* stronger, and deeper, and keener, and the obedience more careful and more inflexible. F. T.

"His commandments are not grievous," can not be, coming from such a source, for they come from the kindest and most loving of Fathers ; are not in their nature, for they enjoin only love and good will, which, the heart being right, are of all things most delightful ; are not therefore in the conscious experience of the obedient, for they find all true obedience supremely joyous. The service of love is a perpetual charm to the loving heart. H. C.

4. Our faith is our spiritual, our Christian power. In the Scriptures it is continually exhibited under this character of *power* ; its deficiency, therefore, is our spiritual weakness. It is that by which, according as it is great or small, we may turn all things to our highest advantage, or carry on but a profitless commerce ; by which we may "*overcome the world*," or hardly be sure that we are not its slaves ; by which we may do much for God, or but bring him such a tribute as we should be utterly ashamed to think of offering to him. J. F.—There is nothing which faith does not overcome ; nothing which it will not accept. Faith passes beyond all earthly things, pierces all shadows, to attain the truth ; keeps it ever in a firm embrace, and will never let herself be separated from it. The simplicity and elevation which faith gives to the soul make it satisfied with everything. Nothing is wanting to it ; nothing is too much for it ; and at all times it blesses the divine hand which causes the

waters of grace to flow so gently upon it. *An.*—The sound and steadfast belief of eternal things is requisite to direct our choice aright. Faith assures us of their reality and worth, as if they were before our eyes and in our actual possession. This divine light governs and conducts the will to choose wisely. When the devil, the deadly flatterer, by inviting representations of the world, entices the heart, the serious belief of the future reward, so glorious and eternal, disgraces the most splendid temptations and makes them ineffectual. "This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith." *Bates.*

5. To throw ourselves on his promises ; to purify ourselves in the full assurance that Christ's love can carry us through all that we shall encounter ; to cling to Christ not only in spite of pain and darkness and strange perplexity, but in spite of our sins also—this is Christian faith. This is the power which, both in great things and in small, both in hard trials and in easy, ever supports the disciple of Christ by bringing within his reach all the strength of his Master. And this faith which, resting on the certainty of Christ's help and striving to hold fast his Spirit, lives in us throughout our daily life, and secretly influences our works and deeds and thoughts, will gradually build up within the soul a temple to the Lord, not of hay, wood, stubble, but of gold, silver, precious stones, a calm, firm, pure character, knit to our Redeemer by the hidden bonds of a Christian purpose, at peace with God, and master of itself. F. T.

6. Who is he, and what is the mysterious power of his coming which makes him the Giver of eternal life to those that believe, in all lands and ages of the world ? "It is he that came by water and blood ; not by water only, but by water and blood." One great part of the power of Christ among men is the cleansing away of moral corruptions. Stains on the lips, the hands, the habits ; worst of all, stains on the sacred temple walls of the soul itself—these all have to be washed away, first by one true repentance and regeneration, having water for their sacramental sign, and then, afterward, by the repeated washings of Christ's truth and Spirit, applied faithfully to all the departments of our action. Christ came to cleanse his followers from all unrighteousness. He "came by water." . . . "*Not by water only, but by water and blood.*" The daily sacrifice of four thousand preparatory years had pre-signified it to a waiting world. From the outset of his personal ministry, as it had been from the foundation of the world, the Saviour was pointing to the sacrifice, journeying always toward Calvary. Other prophets and reformers had come "by water," preaching purification for the future. He alone came "by blood," giving, in himself, atonement for past and future both. F. D. H.

The conclusion of the Epistle begins with verse 6. It is in two portions (vs. 6-12 and vs. 13-21). Both of these serve to bring the subject of the whole to its full completion, and, so to speak, to set it at rest. "Jesus is the Son of God." This is the sum and substance of the apostolic testimony and exhortation. In the opening of the Epistle it was rested on the testimony of eye- and ear-witnesses; now it is rested on witness no less secure, viz., on the religious life and experience of the readers themselves. Between these two testimonies comes in the Epistle itself with all its teaching, exhortation, and warning. This last testimony that Jesus is the Son of God is threefold: the water of baptism, the blood of reconciliation, the Spirit of sanctification (vs. 6-8). These, in threefold unity, form God's own witness for his Son (v. 9). Only in faith on the Son of God (v. 10) do we receive and possess this witness of God, the true substance of which is eternal life, bestowed on us in Christ through water, blood, and the Spirit. So that he that hath the Son hath life. A.

In this Epistle it seems quite manifest that the signature of the threefold God is not merely wrought into spots and corners of the texture, but broadly impressed upon the whole web. In thus making this threefold distinction the basis of his whole scheme of instruction, John has taught not only its absolute truth, but its relative importance. Learning from him "the proportion of the faith," we will safely value that most which he thought most precious. If, under those brief but wondrous words—Father, Son, and Spirit—he was accustomed to classify all the bright treasures of his inspiration; if into this mold every narrative, every exhortation naturally flowed; if he was wont to see, in the adoration that bowed before this mysterious Triad of eternal powers, the last and loftiest act of religion, the sum and abstract of all the rest, we can not be wrong in preserving the equilibrium that he has fixed. And if, too, to him this great belief was more than belief, this "light" was also "life"; if he could feel it blessed to acknowledge a Father who is our Father, a Son in whom we also "are called the sons of God," a Holy Spirit who "dwelleth with us, and shall be in us"; may we also find in the Trinity the ground of practical devotion, pure and deep, till, quickened by the power of this faith, the Three that bear record in heaven shall bear their witness in our hearts; and the Trinity shall have become, not the cold conclusion of the intellect, but the priceless treasure of the affections, the blessed foundation and the perpetual strength of the new and spiritual life! W. A. B.

Verse 7 is perhaps the most celebrated case of interpolation in the whole New Testament. The words, "*in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth,*" are wanting in all Greek manuscripts whatever previous to the sixteenth century, when a Greek manuscript containing them was apparently forged in answer to a challenge from Erasmus; no Greek father whatever takes any notice of them in expounding the passage; the ancient Syriac version does not contain them; the Latin fathers were long supposed to quote them, but hardly an imagined example of this citation in their works will bear strict examination. There is not the shadow of a reason for supposing the words genuine. A.

8-10. This witness is threefold: by the Spirit,

the water, and the blood. It is an external and historical witness. It also becomes an internal and experimental evidence to believers. "He that believes on the Son of God, has the witness in himself," i. e., the triple witness of the Spirit clarifying the mind, the water cleansing the heart, and the blood purging the conscience, so that there is obtained an unwrought certainty of the divine Sonship of Jesus Christ, which no surface objection or suggested doubt can shake. We are reminded of a fine stroke of Bunyan, in his allegory of the "Holy War," when he names "Captain Experience" among the chief officers who routed and slew the army of ten thousand Doubters that came against the city of Mansoul. There is nothing so impervious to doubts as a sound, personal experience of Christ's saving power and love. D. F.

10. We trust not to our good frames, or warm feelings, or sensible comforts, or to any of the genuine fruits and effects of faith, but we trust what God says simply, as *his record*; and, therefore, we walk in a constant dependence of the truth of God in his word, and upon the faithfulness of God to his word. True faith has no foundation but the word of God; nothing to rest on but the divine truth, no support but the divine power, and no growth but from the divine influence. Romaine.

11. Christ founded on earth a kingdom within which is to be found a life that is not to be found beyond its limits; a kingdom which is not "in words but in power"—that is to say, is not produced by any words or ideas alone, however true or however beautiful, but by a power, a vital force peculiar to itself; and that this force is the indwelling life of Jesus Christ—God and Man. Christianity is not a code of morals merely, nor a philosophy, nor a creed, nor a system of religious discipline; but over and above all these it is a life, a new and real vital force in the world; a life with its own conditions of existence, laws of development, and peculiar phenomena, as real and as distinct as those of any other form of life which science investigates and classifies; and this life is in Christ; for "this is our record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Magee.—Eternal life is the life which God himself lives, and has lived from all eternity, and in which he has his blessedness; whose thought is truth, and its force life, and its nature love. As *truth* it contains and declares the essence and substance and relation of all things; as *light* it makes manifest by the very force and acting of its nature; as *love* it finds its joy and satisfaction, even at the cost of infinite sacrifice, in going out of itself for the sake of others. A. W. T.

12. He that hath the Son hath life. He doth not say, he *shall* have life at some distant period, but he *hath* it already in present possession. How

much they mistake the gospel constitution, who represent eternal life as a distant reward, suspended upon the performance of certain conditions on the part of the creature; whereas salvation through Christ, though perfected in heaven, is a present salvation. R. W.—13. "Ye may know that ye have eternal life." Our knowledge of Jesus, or of grace, is not according to our feeling, but according to the testimony which God has given of his Son. When we come to Jesus, we receive him *at once, as he is*, in all his fullness, as God hath made him for us; we receive the whole Christ, and are blessed with all spiritual blessings in him. The believer is gradually growing in the knowledge and enjoyment of the blessings he has received; but the *possession* of them is not a gradual acquisition, but an immediate and perfect reception. The word of God declares that, believing in Jesus, I *have eternal life*. This is far beyond my conception, experience, and feeling; yet I believe and rejoice in this wonderful gift of eternal life. A. S.

14. "If we ask *according to his will*, he heareth us." Outward diversions may break the reverential intimacy of our communion with him; the chill of worldliness may cool the pulse of fervent desire; but if the will yet moves needle-like to the one blessed point, the holy will of Jesus, and rests there, the deepest condition of prevailing prayer is realized. A. J. G.—15. He who prays in the name of Christ is moved and guided by the Spirit of Christ in prayer. He can ask for nothing but that which is in accordance with the will of God; can with assurance ask only that which the Spirit of Christ makes known to him in prayer as corresponding to the Father's will. When this certainty is wanting, his prayer will always be accompanied with the condition that the desire arising in his soul and taking the form of prayer may have for its object something which the Father approves. N.—If ever we have a request refused, it is because it does not agree with the one fundamental, all-important prayer: "If it be good!" Yet this master-prayer, even when not expressed, is always implied, in every prayer offered up in the name of Jesus; and God's answer always brings out into prominence this main request, while, at the same time, he forgives the folly which caused us ourselves to cover over this "If it be good!" *Beaser.*

16. In order that no convinced sinner may despair of mercy, there is no sin that ever was or can be committed (the sin against the Holy Ghost excepted, which none have committed who are willing to be saved in the gospel way) which some that are now in glory have not been guilty of. Nay, more, there is perhaps not a sin which can be thought of that some of God's eminent Scripture saints have not fallen into after their conversion, though, through

grace, they have been enabled to renew the actings of their faith and repentance, and are now singing before the throne "unto him that hath loved and redeemed them, and that hath washed them from their sins in his own blood." *Hill.*

19. The whole world lieth in the wicked one; is entangled in the coils, and bitten by the fangs, and tortured by the venom of the old serpent—the devil. Think upon the passions which predominate in human affairs; think of the vile affections which, like furies, tyrannize over the minds of men: wrath, malice, revenge, envy, pride, suspicions, selfishness, cruelty, slander—these are the oligarchy of diabolical tempers, which usurp the dominion of the world in the name of Satan, and which, with something of his power and of his fury, torment the miserable children of men. How much of the most sanguinary warfare, the most remorseless oppression, the most deadly revenge, the most operative mischief, the most crafty subtilty, the most insulting pride, is perpetually at work in the destruction of human happiness. J. A. J.

20. *We are in him.* *Believers are in Christ*, so as to be partakers in all that he does, and has, and is. They died with him, and rose with him, and live with him, and in him are seated in heavenly places. When the eye of God looks on them, they are found in Christ, and there is no condemnation to those that are in him, and they are righteous in his righteousness, and loved with the love which rests on him, and are sons of God in his sonship, and heirs with him of his inheritance, and are soon to be glorified with him in his glory. And this standing which they have in Christ, and the present and future portion which it secures, are contemplated in eternal counsels, and predestined before the foundation of the world. As the sense of this fact breathes in every page, so also does the sense of the correlative fact, that *Christ is in those who believe*; associating his own presence with their whole inward and outward life. They live, yet not they, but Christ liveth in them, and he is their strength and their song. T. D. B.

21. A strange but fitting conclusion to the Epistle. No farewell salutations to particular persons, as at the close of other Epistles; no blessing even uttered on the whole Church. The tenderness of love only manifests itself in that cordial "little children" with which this father in Christ winds up his address; but all yields to the earnestness with which he would impress upon their hearts the exhortation which he must have esteemed his last, his very last word to them: "Keep yourselves from idols." It is no less than an earnest warning against *everything* which, either in *theory* or in *practice*, would take the place in the Christian life of "the true God and eternal life." *Van O.*

Section 370.

2 JOHN i. 1-13.

1 THE elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only,
 2 but also all they that have known the truth; for the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and
 3 shall be with us for ever. Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and
 4 from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. I rejoiced greatly
 that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from
 5 the Father. And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment
 6 unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this
 is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have
 7 heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. For many deceivers are entered into the
 world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an
 8 antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but
 9 that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of
 Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father
 10 and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not
 11 into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker
 12 of his evil deeds. Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper
 and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.
 13 The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.

THE comprehensive summary of a noble and upright life is "to walk in truth." There is nothing grander, purer, higher. And there is nothing so exactly descriptive of the complete and perfect character. To walk in truth is not only to be what we seem; not only to scorn masks; not only to shun the hollowness of all that the dying man pronounces unreal; not only to withdraw from the path hung about with shows and pageants and shadows, but to walk as God's child, to live as the heir of heaven, to be true at once to truth, to conscience, and to God. No doubt all this was included in the idea of the apostle. It was unquestionably his summary of a Christian life. His highest idea of the truth was, as Paul expresses it, "the truth as it is in Jesus." To him the highest truth, the sum of all truth, the sum itself of truth, of which all science and philosophy were but darkling rays, was Christ the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. To accept him as the great teacher, the great example, the great atoning sacrifice; to be found in him, not having his own righteousness; to be able to say, "for me to live is Christ," "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," and to walk in his steps, the steps of incarnate truth itself—this, beyond question, was what the apostle meant by his expressive phrase, walking in truth. E. H. G.

THIS is not only a private letter, but one addressed to a Christian lady. It is a tribute to the position of respect to which woman is raised by the influence of our holy religion. Apart from Christian ideas and usages, how little is woman accounted of even at this day, in the lands of the Bible; how little regard is paid to her mental and moral capacity! An Oriental is astonished to find that, of the canonical books which form our Bible, two, viz., Ruth and Esther, actually bear the names of women. This circumstance of itself has suggested quite a new estimate of woman's position toward God and his Word. But still more significant of that position is this Second Epistle of John, a canonical book of Scripture, consisting of nothing else but the letter of an apostle to a Christian lady and her children. No one knows the lady's name. The

letter was doubtless sent by a private messenger, and the writer inserted neither his correspondent's name nor his own. It was enough to describe himself as by emphasis "the presbyter," and to address his friend as "elect lady," one who was manifestly chosen of God, and was for her gracious qualities beloved by all around her who "knew the truth." The matters most prominent in the Epistle are John's appreciation of female piety, his joy over young Christians, and his very decided resistance to all who propagated antichristian error. D. F.

1. **Love in the truth.** The love he thinks of is not sentimentalism, is not a mere emotional good nature, but is an intelligent benevolence, which seeks for all men the good that is seen to be the highest and best possible; which intelligently sees a perfect God at the head of the universe, and,

giving him the supreme love of the heart, loves all his creatures for his sake, following his high example, obeying his perfect will. Thus love in creatures, being at once intelligent and moral, rests on the *basis of truth*. H. C.

4. *Apostolic joy over young Christians.* It was in all probability at Ephesus, a busy city to which young men flocked from the country behind, that the aged John saw some of the children of this lady, and was pleased with their demeanor and conduct. In writing to her, he mentions this in words which must have filled her heart with pure motherly delight. "I rejoiced greatly that I found (some) of thy children walking in truth." They were not young children, for they had left home, and had some occupation, as indicated by the expression "walking up and down," or having their course of life in conformity with truth. But their Christian walk as young men might be traced to the Christian training they had received in childhood. It was therefore a fitting subject of congratulation in such an Epistle as this. The oldest and most experienced shepherds devote the most watchful care to the lambs, and the wisest as well as the kindest of our old pastors, teachers, and private Christians are they who attach most consequence to the religious training and development of children and of young men and maidens in the Lord. D. F.

5. What he meant was, that this is the paramount and crowning duty of the Christian believer. He did not say, "Agree with one another in doctrine." He did not say, "Flatter one another, indulge one another." He did not even say, "Teach one another, inform one another." What he did urge was that difficult but necessary grace, "Love one another." That is, love one another in spite of your differences, in spite of your faults; do what you can to serve each other, to lighten each other's trials and inconveniences and burdens; above all, if we may turn the precept into its most practical form, make the best of one another. A. P. S.

6. As the teaching of this Epistle is opposed to the enforced seclusion of religious women from social and family life, so also does it repudiate all reliance on mere raptures and ecstasies as evidences of personal religion. Woman as well as man is to show piety by a steady, consistent obedience to the known will of Christ. "This is love, that we walk after his commandments." When John wrote these words, he was an old and experienced man. He had seen many who once appeared full of fervent feeling and lofty aspiration turn aside from Christ; and now the only evidence of a vital Christianity on which he relied was that of a daily and hearty compliance with the commandments of God. D. F.

10. John, the apostle of love, as if to show us that this grace is entirely consistent with a hatred of evil, launches against the heretics of the day who depraved God's truth by the denial of the incarnation this very pointed sentence of excommunication: "Receive him not, neither bid him God speed." God's truth is his great instrument for saving souls, and a person who seriously mutilates it in a vital part deprives it of efficacy, and thereby does his best to maintain the empire of sin. The apostle of love will have no truce with such a one; will not even harbor him under his roof. E. M. G.—Let not the direction of the apostle be misunderstood. It has no reference to a case of want or distress. No matter what a man's opinions may be, when he is in danger, in pain, or in trouble, he ought to receive our good offices. What the Scripture before us really enjoins is, that we must not regard and treat as brethren those who are actively engaged in undermining the faith. So to do would be to encourage teachers who ought to be discouraged and disowned, and to involve ourselves in some complicity with the evil results that sooner or later ensue on false doctrine. Freedom of discussion is an important element of civilization, but the Church can not admit that a cardinal doctrine, like that of the person of our Saviour, is open to question. D. F.

Section 371.

3 JOHN i. 1-14.

1 THE elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. Beloved, I wish above
2 all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. For I
3 rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as
4 thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk
5 in truth. Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to
6 strangers; which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring
7 forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well: because that for his name's
8 sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive
such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.

9 I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among
 10 them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth,
 prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself
 receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth *them* out of the church.
 11 Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of
 12 God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God. Demetrius hath good report of all *men*,
 and of the truth itself: yea, and we *also* bear record; and ye know that our record is true.
 13 I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee: but I trust I
 14 shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace *be* to thee. *Our* friends
 salute thee. Greet the friends by name.

THE two private letters of "the Presbyter" taken together show us the thoughts of an apostle regarding Christian womanhood and manhood for all generations. The woman is not to be a mere household drudge, but she appears to most advantage in the domestic sphere. Her best credentials are found in her children, nourished and trained in Christ from their earliest recollections, and, when they go out from her into the busy world, walking in the truth; and the beauty of her character and example is most impressively evinced in her love to the saints, and willing obedience to the commandments of God her Saviour. Then the essentials of Christian disposition are just the same in the man as in the woman; but his range is wider and more exposed to view. It is in his power more than in that of a woman to further or hinder the cause of the gospel in the place where he dwells. The model for both the woman and the man is Jesus Christ. He bore witness to the truth at every risk, and obeyed and suffered in perfect love. Let none but Christ "have the preëminence." Let the thought of his sublime ascendancy suppress and put to shame all petty ambitions among his disciples. Jesus is the Perfect Man, in whom all are complete; for "neither is the woman without the man, nor the man without the woman in the Lord." She who would be as "the elect lady" must look not so much to even the best of women as to Jesus. He who would be kind as Gaius, or exemplary as Demetrius, must look not to saints and apostles so much as to Jesus. He who would shun the offensive spirit of Diotrephes should look steadfastly to Jesus, and consider the self-abnegation and humility through which he passed to glory. D. F.

THE third letter of John resembles the second. It has the same style, same length, same recognition of the truth and of Christian life as a walk in truth, the same mode of beginning—the writer not naming himself, but sufficiently indicating himself as "the presbyter"—and the same statement at the end of a preference for personal intercourse and conversation over communication by means of paper and ink. There is also that combination of tenderness with sternness which we always trace in the apostle John. But the position of his correspondents differs. The letter to the lady recognizes her in family life, and warns her against the admission of pernicious teachers into her domestic circle. The letter to the man refers more to public standing and responsibility as "before the Church." Three men are brought before us in this Epistle: Gaius, to whom it is addressed; Diotrephes, who is blamed; and Demetrius, who is praised.

2. From the reports which he had received of the conduct of Gaius toward brethren in the Lord, John infers that his soul was prospering, or moving in a right way, and therefore prays that in all respects it may go as well with him as it does in his spiritual life. Alas! how seldom can we put it thus! We see many a hale and prosperous man for whom

we can fervently wish that his soul prospered as much as his body and his outward estate; but we do not often see spiritual prosperity, as in Gaius, the most prominent and indisputable characteristic of the man. D. F.—Such a measure of outward and general progress as their souls are making in inward and spiritual things would be no great advancement to many. It would be more natural and true to the facts with many to express one's kindly desires in this form: "I wish thy soul may prosper even as thy body, or business, or family prospers." J. Hall.

4. **Walk in truth.** There are some men who walk in falsehood. You might write their biography in a tombstone epitaph that might almost make the marble blush—"a thirty, forty, fifty, seventy-years' lie." It is false to God, false to conscience, false to the reality of things, false to the eternal laws of duty and righteousness. It starts with a false principle, and ends in false results. E. H. G.

5-8. Certain disciples on a missionary tour had come to the town where Gaius lived. We learn that when those missionary volunteers had been haughtily disowned by Diotrephes (v. 10), Gaius kindly received them, although they were "strangers" to him, or personally unknown. When they reached Ephesus, they made a missionary report to the

church there, and, in doing so, mentioned this timely act of Christian love. The apostle thereupon wrote to Gaius to commend his conduct, and to encourage in him the disposition to welcome such brethren, and so to bear himself as a "fellow-helper for the truth." The spread of the gospel among the heathen, now as then, can not be conducted by the whole Church, but it ought to engage the attention and interest of the whole Church on earth. All Christians are not required to leave their homes and go out on this errand; but those who do, whether for a shorter or a longer time, should have encouragement and aid from those who do not render personal service.

It is well to observe that Gaius is thus honored in Holy Scripture, and embalmed in blessed memory, not for any surpassing powers he possessed, any social influence, or any qualities of intellectual eminence, but for truth and love in daily life, and for a simple, unpretending act of kindness. These are the things which men often neglect, thinking it necessary to show their religion in more ambitious and conspicuous ways. But there is really no better proof of personal Christianity than that which Gaius furnished in his adherence to the truth at a time when many departed from it, and his brotherly kindness to those who had no other claim on him than their service to the Lord whom he loved. Always and everywhere that man is to be highly esteemed in the Church who combines firm convictions with a generous heart, who walks in holy truth and heaven-born charity. D. F.

Feeling that we each are members of the Church, that it is our highest country, to which we are bound with a far deeper love than to our earthly country, is not its welfare our welfare, its triumph our triumph, its failures our shame? Church questions are all questions in which God's glory and man's sins or duties are concerned; all questions in the decision of which there is a moral good and evil; a grieving of Christ's Spirit, or a conformity to him. And in such questions as concern the Church, in the more narrow and common sense of the word, seeing that we are all members of the Church, we should not neglect them, as the concern of others, but take an interest in them, and act in them, so far as we have opportunity, as in a matter which most nearly concerns ourselves. T. A.

9, 10. Diotrephes was the reverse of Gaius; a man ambitious, domineering, and ungracious. It does not appear whether he held any recognized office in a congregation, or was one who pushed to the front from mere willfulness and a desire to dictate to others. Either because he was a Jewish Christian and disliked the Gentiles, or because he had no hearty zeal for the truth, he felt no interest in missions to the heathen. If strangers came on such errands, he let them alone, and would not give

them any reception or recognition in the Church. D. F.—Even the venerable John encountered opposition in his own churches. The spirit of this opponent John puts in one Greek word which it may be hard to match perfectly in our tongue; yet we might call him a *power-loving* man, whose master passion was to be *first* everywhere. Consequently he must needs oppose whatever counterworked his ruling passion. This Diotrephes would not receive those whom John commended to the Church by letter. They not being *his* men, nor working under his control, he was bound to oppose. Worse still, he slandered the aged apostle; would neither receive the brethren he sent nor let the Church receive them, and seems to have had power enough to expel them. John writes: "If I should come, I will remember his deeds"—said apparently with reference to some infliction of physical evil—judgment from God—a form of miraculous power which seems to have been lodged in the hands of the apostles to meet cases of this sort. H. C.

12. Demetrius was, like Gaius, a man after the apostle's own heart. Perhaps he was the leader of the missionary band. Perhaps he was the bearer of this letter. In either case, John sends to Gaius a very high testimonial in his favor. Not only did all the brethren who knew him testify to his character; not only did the apostle add the emphatic expression of his own good opinion; but the truth itself bore testimony to Demetrius. He so walked in it that it was familiar with his footsteps, and knew him well. He so reflected it in its influence on his character and life that, while he bore witness to the truth, the truth in turn bore witness to him. This man was an epistle of Christ known and read of all. D. F.

STAGES OF NEW TESTAMENT REVELATION.

WE stand on the declaration of the giver of the word himself, when we consider the progress of Christian doctrine in its communication from God as extending, not only over one stage in which it was delivered by the Lord in the flesh, but through a second stage in which it was delivered by the same Lord through the Spirit. We have the revealed truth presented to us in the Epistles, not only as a communication from God, but also as an apprehension by man. The great transition from the one stage to the other is exhibited before our eyes as already effected. We have the gospel as it existed in the mind of Peter and of Paul, of James and of John. It is thus presented to us in combination with the processes of human thought and the variations of human feelings, in association with peculiarities of individual character, and in the course of its more perfect elaboration through the exigencies of events and controversies. On the gospel doctrine itself, which is thus confirmed, a fresh light seems to be thrown by the spirit of these precious Epistles, the *faith* expounded by Paul kindling into fervent *hope* in the words of Peter, and expanding into sublime *love*

in these of John. At the same time the reader can not fail to note how these writings of the original apostles, by express references, by borrowed language, and by their whole spirit, seem to bind the doctrine which the Epistles have developed to the gospels in which it first began to be opened.

Every age, every Church, every sect, every controversy, in some way or other contributes something to the working out, the testing, or the illustrating of some part of the revelation of God. Thus the history of the apprehension of Christian truth by man, which commences within the New Testament, is continued in the history of the Church to the end of time; and still, while it is continued, it is in some sort a history of progress, and one in which the Spirit of God mingles, and which the providence of God molds. The line of separation between the apostolic period and all the subsequent periods of this history is this: That the apostolic period is *not only* a part of the history of the *apprehension of truth by man*; it is *also* a part of the history of the *communication of truth by God*. It

is the first stage of the one, and the last stage of the other. The aspect which the gospel bears in the writings of the apostles is a communication from God of what it really is, a revelation of what he intended that it should be in the minds of men for ever. This character of the apostolic writings has, without variation of testimony, been acknowledged by the Church from the beginning; but this acknowledgment has been *confined* to these writings, and has never been extended to subsequent expositions or decrees.

The sum of what has been said is this: 1. There are words (definite doctrinal communications) of which it is said by the Lord Jesus, "The words which thou gavest me I have given them." 2. These words are not only those which he spake with his lips in the days of his flesh; they include other words, afterward given through men in the Spirit, during a period of time which is represented to us by the books of the New Testament. 3. Those words were finished in that period, and have received no subsequent additions. T. D. B.

Section 372.

JUDE i. 1-25.

- 1 JUDE, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by
- 2 God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called: mercy unto you, and peace, and
- 3 love, be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common
- salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly
- contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.
- 4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this
- condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying
- 5 the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. I will therefore put you in remembrance,
- though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of
- 6 Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And the angels which kept not their
- first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under dark-
- 7 ness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities
- about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange
- 8 flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also
- 9 these *filthy* dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. Yet
- Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of
- Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.
- 10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally,
- 11 as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them! for they have
- gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and
- 12 perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they
- feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds *they are* without water, carried
- about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the
- 13 roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom
- 14 is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam,
- 15 prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to
- execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their
- ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which
- 16 ungodly sinners have spoken against him. These are murmurers, complainers, walking
- after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling *words*, having men's persons
- in admiration because of advantage.
- 17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our
- 18 Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who
- 19 should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sen-
- 20 sual, having not the Spirit. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy

21 faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy
 22 of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a differ-
 23 ence: and others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment
 24 spotted by the flesh. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present
 25 *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our
 Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

THE motion of the heart Godward, holy and divine affection, makes prayer real and living and acceptable to the *living God*, to whom it is presented—the pouring out of thy heart to him that made it, and therefore hears it and understands what it speaks and how it is moved and affected in calling on him. It is not the gilded paper and good writing of a petition that prevails with a king, but the moving sense of it; and, to the King that discerns the heart, heart-sense is the sense of all, and that which he alone regards. He listens to hear what that speaks, and takes all as nothing where that is silent. All other excellence in prayer is but the outside and fashion of it; that is the life of it. L.—Why is there so little of the life of God in our souls, or the love of God in our hearts, or the peace of God in our bosoms, or the image of God in our lives? Chiefly because we are so little in prayer—cordial, fervent, humble, persevering prayer; because we talk so much *about* God in public, but so little *with* God in private; because we are so much more in every exercise than in devotion; and thus, the blessing of the Holy Spirit not being abundantly vouchsafed, because not fervently implored, a withering blight comes over all our doing, and we read and hear and talk and labor almost, if not altogether, in vain. *Kirke White*.—The most solemn faith in God as a real object is not the most arduous act of the reason and the will. Oh, no; it is *to pray, to pray as God would have us*. Believe me, to pray with all your heart and strength, with the reason and the will, to believe vividly that God will listen to your voice through Christ, and verily do the thing he pleaseth thereupon—this is the last, the greatest achievement of the Christian's warfare upon earth. Teach us to pray, O Lord! S. T. C.

THE "wise master-builders," who placed the first "living stones" upon that "Rock of Ages," are now vanishing from the scene of their labors, at the very time when the newly finished Temple—the type of that spiritual edifice—awaits its destruction from the Roman armies. The greater number of the apostles have early disappeared to the uncertain scenes of their evangelic labors. Of those who fill a prominent place in the Scripture history, JAMES the son of Zebedee has long since died by the sword of Herod, and JAMES, the brother of our Lord, has lately fallen by the tumultuous judgment of the Sanhedrim. JUDE's voice alone is heard, concurring with Peter's in denouncing the corruptions of the last times. During the years included within the range of doubt concerning the martyrdom of Paul and Peter (A. D. 66-68) the final revolt of the Jews has broken out; and an exterminating war only awaits its end in the destruction of the Temple. As the prophecy of that catastrophe finished the public testimony of Christ himself, so did its fulfillment set the seal to the work of his apostles. The events themselves were not a more striking confirmation of the divine truth which had predicted them than was the change that they effected the fulfillment of the divine plan of establishing a Church on earth. S.

Jude was a brother of that James whose Epistle to the Twelve Tribes we have already considered. D. F.—As I believe James, "the brother of the Lord," to be the person intended (v. 1), in consequence I hold this writer to be the Judas of Mat. 13: 55, another brother of our Lord, and a younger son of Joseph and Mary. A.

The short book before us was probably written in Palestine, or some part of Syria, not long before the fall of Jerusalem. It is an Epistle General or

Catholic, addressed to all saints; but its strain is Jewish, like the Epistle of James, and it presupposes in its readers a knowledge of Hebrew history and tradition. While it has much in common with the Epistle of James, it has even more with the Second Epistle of Peter, which it greatly resembles in its vehement invective against those profligate teachers who had begun to disturb and defile the primitive Church. During the last quarter of the first century, some of the Asiatic Churches were notoriously infested with a class of separatists and sectaries who, magnifying their knowledge and exaggerating their liberty, led impure lives, and encouraged others to do likewise. D. F.

1. Sanctified, preserved, and called. In Christ, God chose them "*unto salvation*, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth"; he gave them to the Son as the reward of the "travail of his soul" in man's redemption; and he covenanted with him, on their behalf, to bestow upon them all the grace that should effectually call them into fellowship with him, and *confirm* them in it unto the end. Hence Jude describes them to whom he writes as "sanctified by God the Father, and *preserved in Jesus Christ*, and called." All things that concern them in time are wisely and graciously ordered from the beginning to the end of their experience, with this view—the bringing them to glory. He prepares all events that befall them (dark and intricate as they may seem) for fulfilling the designs of his everlasting love; and in ways as manifold as

the riches of his own wisdom, love, and power, he constrains them, through almighty grace, to obey the call, and henceforth to live indeed. *Goode.*

3. The common salvation. God is most free of his best blessings. He affords salvation in common to all his people. He gives honor and riches but to few of them: he gives Christ and heaven to them all. God sometimes denies a crumb even to him on whom he bestows a kingdom. There are many things that a child of God can not promise to himself, but heaven he may reckon on. *Jenkyn.*

By the faith once delivered to the saints is to be understood the doctrines of the gospel. These were delivered to the saints by holy men, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The saints to whom they were delivered were those who constituted the Church under the old dispensation and the new. The exhortation to contend for them earnestly supposes that they would be powerfully assailed; and yet that they might be known and defended. *L. B.*—A sad characteristic of the age is the *frightful latitudinarianism which is making the most insidious inroads on the faith.* A strong dislike has grown up in the minds of many educated and thinking men for all dogmatic teaching; a strong tendency discovers itself in them to accept nothing of Christianity but the spirit of love and philanthropy, and to apply to all its doctrines those supposed solvents, of which infidelity has always had, in her infernal laboratory, a sufficient store at hand. "Let the doctrines fare as they may," is the cry; "let them thaw away little by little under the objections of the skeptic; all that we care to retain is the spirit which they embody and represent." We must beware, above all things, how we yield into the hands of the adversary, from the impulse of a false liberality, one jot of that precious deposit of the faith which God has solemnly committed to our charge. *E. M. G.*

4. One characteristic of the leaders of this apostasy was *wantonness*. They made the mercy of God in Christ a mere shield to cover their self-indulgence. Instead of purifying their hearts through belief of the truth, they abused the divine grace, as though it relaxed the obligation of continence, and gave some latitude to immorality. So they disgraced the Christian name by living as the heathen, and sheltering their vices under an assertion of divine favor and religious liberty. Another characteristic was *willfulness*. The men denounced by Jude did not deny the name of God or of Christ, for they vaunted themselves as Christians; but they rejected the Lord's authority.

5-7. On the punishment that awaited these men Jude is terribly emphatic. He recalls to mind great judgments in the days of old; the destruction of the murmuring, unbelieving Israelites in the wilderness; the reservation of fallen angels to future punishment; and the burning of "Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them" as with an eternal fire, i. e., a fire out of which there is no restoration, a condign and final judgment. The memory of these terrors, illustrating the holy severity of God, should admonish the saints to give no countenance whatever to the ungodly men who had "crept in" to the Christian community. *D. F.*

7. Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. In these tremendous declarations of Holy Scripture

the same God who promises heaven threatens hell; and the same skepticism which trifles with the one must reject both. Of a truth it is no marvel that such things as these should be bitter and unwelcome to man; that they should naturally tend to fade and disappear from our thoughts like all else we dread and dislike. Who that knows aught of our customary weaknesses can anticipate but that prepossessions, not to be overborne except by the most resolute perseverance of the watchmen of Christ, shall rise against a truth which, were it conceived in its full proportions, would involve the whole face of nature in gloom, would hang the very heavens in black, and make all their daily and nightly glories but the torchlights of a funeral chamber; a truth which loads every instant of life with a weight almost intolerable of responsibility; which, contracting life to a short winter-day, stretches out beyond it the drear, the starless dark of a midnight on which no morrow shall ever dawn; which affrights us with the horrible thought of a duration of woe, counted not by years, but by ages; which tells us—us who live by pity, social enjoyment, mutual kindness, friendship real or supposed—that there can be, and for millions will be, a time when no pity shall exist in the whole wide universe for them; no mercy from God, no compassion from each other, no refuge, no hope; when that on-looking tendency which makes the best happiness of us all shall shrink back upon itself withered and blasted, or exist only to press home to the heart more keenly the reality of eternal, immutable wretchedness? Shall we, indeed, wonder that this mystery of woe—for a mystery it surely is—should ever be an unwilling theme for man to listen to or man to speak? *W. A. B.*

9. The tradition regarding Moses is supposed to be familiar to the readers of this book, and the allusion to it is made with a view to expose the presumption of the false teachers in disparaging dignities. We should not have known this incident, unless Jude had embodied the tradition in his Epistle, any more than we should have known the names of the Egyptian magicians who withstood Moses and Aaron, if Paul had not mentioned Jannes and Jambres. Michael, the archangel, appears in the Book of Daniel as a great prince with God, and the protector of the holy nation, Israel. In this capacity he was occupied with the burial of Moses, Israel's great lawgiver and leader. The point for which Jude makes the allusion is this: the archangel did not speak contemptuously to that mighty spirit of evil, a celestial dignity before he fell, but said, "The Lord rebuke thee." *D. F.*

10-13. It is astonishing to see how those who once seemed sons of the morning now at last by the judgment of God are permitted, being past feeling, "to give themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." A great number of such were in the first gospel days; against whom Peter and Jude and John pronounce the just judgment of God. These are beyond all mercy; these are beyond all promises; these are beyond all hopes of repentance; these have no intercessor, nor any more share in the one sacrifice for sin. For these there remains nothing but a fearful looking-for of judgment. These men go whither they will, do what they will; they may range from opinion to opinion, from notion to notion, from sect to sect, but are steadfast nowhere: they are left to their own uncertainties; they have not grace to establish their hearts; and though some of them have

boasted themselves of this liberty, yet Jude calls them wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. They are left to be fugitives and vagabonds in the earth, to wander everywhere, but to abide nowhere, until they shall descend to their own place, with Cain and Judas, men of the same fate with themselves. *Bun.*—Oh, wretchedness beyond words, that, surrounded by love and invited to glory, man should have no heart for happiness, but should still love to cower in the dark while light ineffable solicits him to behold and to enjoy it! Oh, horror yet more terrific, that he whom love and joy can not attract, even vengeance and torment can not alarm; that, unwilling to receive God as merciful, he can not be taught to remember him as just; or to reflect that he who refuses to prepare for the inheritance of the saints in light is by that very refusal hardening his own heart to the temper of the inheritors of darkness! *W. A. B.*

That sin does not succeed is owing to nothing but want of power and skill. If its malignant nature, as it exists in men and devils, could be fully expressed in action, it would dethrone the God of heaven, abolish his law, overturn his government, extinguish the joy of God and of the universe, and fill the mighty void with everlasting woe. It is a wandering star, which will not obey the impulse of the sun, and which, if able, would blot out the sun, and leave to blackness of darkness every other luminary, that it might roll above the mighty ruin, eclipsed by no superior luster. Let benevolence abandon the throne of the universe, and let sin ascend and take possession of the treasures of knowledge and power, and reign to express its own nature in action, as God reigns to express his love, and it would soon dismay the universe with demonstrations of its evil nature. *L. B.*

13. What a thought it is that every life that sets itself against the Lord is a futile life, that it comes to nothing at last! It is true on the widest scale. It is true on the narrowest. It is true about all those tempests that have risen up against God's church and Christ's gospel like "waves of the sea foaming out their own shame," and never shaking the great rock that they break against. And it is true about all godless lives; about every man who carries on his work, except in loving obedience to his Father in heaven. There is one power in the world, and none else. When accounts are set right at the end, you will find that the power that seemed to be strong, if it stood against God, was weak as water and has done nothing, and is nothing! Do not waste your lives in a work that is self-condemned to be hopeless! Rather ally yourselves with the tendencies of God's universe, and do the thing which will last for ever, and live the life that has hope of fruit that shall remain. Submit yourselves to God! Love Christ! Do his will! Put your faith in the Saviour to deliver you from your sins; and, when the wild tossing of that great ocean of ungodly power and rebellious opposition is all hushed down into dead silence, you and your work will last and live hard by the stable throne of God. *A. M.*

20. The Christians are admonished to keep themselves in the love of God, i. e., in the possession and enjoyment of *Divine* love as the true element and elixir of a spiritual life. And how? 1. By building themselves up on their most holy faith. So the faith was to be contended for, not with a view to barren controversial victory, but because Christian character must be built thereon. It was delivered to the saints in order that they might continue in it, and not be moved away from the hope of the gospel. 2. By praying in the Holy Ghost; for the Divine Spirit (which the false teachers had not, v. 19) helps infirmities, corrects errors, subdues pride, cures lethargy, kindles fervor, and teaches believers how to pray, and what to pray for as they ought. Between the ascension of their Master and the day of Pentecost, the disciples, and Jude among them, prayed much for the Spirit. After the day of Pentecost it became their privilege, and continues to be ours, to pray in the fellowship of the Spirit, through the mediation of the Son, to the Father of mercies and God of all consolation; the Spirit within us making intercession with unutterable pantings of hope for the manifestation of the glory of the sons of God. *D. F.*—Because all the precepts and promises in the law and in the gospel do hang upon this, *believe*; and because the last of the graces of God doth so follow the first, that he glorifieth none but whom he hath justified, nor justifieth any but whom he hath called to a true, effectual, and lively faith in Christ Jesus, therefore Jude, exhorting us to *build ourselves*, mentioneth here only faith as the thing wherein we must be edified; for that faith is the ground and the glory of all the welfare of this building. *Hooker.*

Praying in the Holy Ghost. There is a threefold strength needful in prayer, and God by his Spirit puts these three strengths in us: strength of argument to plead with God; strength of faith in taking hold upon God; strength of patience in waiting upon God till we receive what we prayed for. *Caryl.*

23. Save with fear. There are crises of temptation, as many of us can testify, when the ground was slipping under our feet, when some sophistry was taking the edge off from the right and from duty, when the desired evil seemed so good, and the enticement of sin was growing so irresistible, and the will was becoming so weak, that all was well-nigh lost for us, and we had perhaps half given ourselves over. If at such a time fear—fear of divine wrath, or fear of loss of reputation, or fear of remorse, yes, or fear even of hell—came to the rescue of the discouraged forces of Christian virtue, and we were enabled to refuse and to overcome, ashamed as we might well be of our surprise and of our all but defeat, we had in that experience

a measure of the service that fear could render to our salvation at such a time of imminent peril. Verily we are sometimes saved by fear as well as by hope. T. D. W.

24. Him that is able to keep you. He says, in the first verse, we are preserved by Jesus Christ. This only wise God and this preserving Jesus Christ are in his mind one and the same. The ability of Christ to keep us is grounded on his power over us, and over those who are the tempters of us. Our danger lies partly in our own hearts. He can master those hearts, and, by the agency of his Holy Spirit, sway and incline them as he pleases. And the same as to the world and Satan; he can overrule their temptations. "Be of good cheer," he says to us, "I have overcome the world." "Greater," says John, "is he that is in you than he that is in the world." And how all this magnifies the Lord's power! C. B.—Our Lord and Chief Shepherd will not want one weak sheep or dying lamb that he hath redeemed. He will tell his flock, and gather them all together, and make a faithful account of them to his Father who gave them all to him. *Rutherford.*

We are to be faultless before his glorious presence. His perfect image will be on us; his own pure eyes will see in us no spot or stain. Faultless before the throne—think of that when sin is tor-

menting you. How complete in the end will be your deliverance from it! C. B.—**Of his glory.** The discovery of this glory is the ultimate product of that infinite wisdom and love that have been working from eternity, and for so many thousand years through all the successions of time, toward the heirs of salvation: the last and complete issue of the great achievements, sharp conflicts, glorious victories, high merits of our mighty Redeemer. All these end in the opening of heaven to all believers. This is the upshot and close of that great design; will it not, think ye, be a satisfying glory? *Howe.*

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We may observe with admiration the singular fitness of the few words of Jude to close the series of writings through which the faith has been wrought out and consigned to the Church for ever. It only remains for our last instructor to exhort us "earnestly to contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints"; to warn us of the dangers of relapse; to entreat us "to build ourselves up on our holy faith, and praying in the Holy Ghost to keep ourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life"; and, finally, to commend us "to him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." T. D. B.

THE REVELATION OF JOHN.

Section 373.

1. *The Unity, Progress, and Completeness of Doctrine in the Old and New Testament Scriptures.*

—He who reads through the New Testament finds himself educated as by an orderly scheme of advancing doctrine. The several books seem to have grown into their places as component parts of an organic whole; and “the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” lies before us as an account of a perfected revelation, and a course of divine teaching designed and prepared by one presiding mind. The *reality* of this progress is very visible; and more especially so when we regard the New Testament as the last stage of that progressive teaching which is carried on through the Scriptures as a whole. Glance from the first words to the last, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”—“Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” How much lies between these two! The one the first rudiment of revelation addressed to the earliest and simplest consciousness of man, that, namely, which comes to him through his senses, the consciousness of the material world which lies in its grandeur round him; the other the last cry from within, the voice of the heart of man, such as the intervening teaching has made it; the expression of the definite faith which has been found, and of the certain hope which has been left by the whole revelation of God. The course of teaching which carries us from the one to the other is progressive throughout, but with different rates of progress in the two stages which divide it. In the Old Testament the progress is protracted, interrupted, often languid, sometimes so dubious as to seem like retrogression. Accessions take place in sundry parts, in divers manners, at times under disguises of earthly forms, seeming to suggest mistakes, which have to be themselves corrected. Yet through it all the doctrine grows, and the revelation draws nearer to the great disclosure. Then there is entire suspension. We turn the vacant page which represents the silence of 400 years, and we are in the New Testament.

Now, again there is progress, but rapid and unbroken. Our steps before were centuries; now they are but years. From the manger of Bethlehem on earth to the city of God coming down from

heaven the great scheme of things unrolls before us without a check, without a break. First we are conducted through the manifestation of Christ in the flesh: we see and hear and learn to know the living person, who is at once the source and the subject of all the doctrine of which we speak. He is presented as the *source* of doctrine, delivering with his own lips the first Christian instructions, the first preaching of a present gospel and the pregnant principles of truth. He is presented as the *subject* of doctrine, for it is himself that he offers to us by word and deed as the object of our faith, and the events which we see accomplished in his earthly history are the predestined substance of all subsequent instruction. Then, in the Book of Acts, Christ is preached as perfected, and as the refuge and life of the world. The results of his appearing are summed up and settled; and men are called to believe and be saved. Those who do so find themselves in new relations to each other; they become one body, and grow into the form and life of a Catholic Church. The state which has thus been entered needs to be expounded, and the life which has been begun needs to be educated. The Apostolic letters perform the work. The questions which universally follow the first submissions of the mind receive their answers, and so the faith which was general grows definite. The rising exigencies of the new light are met, both for the man and for the Church; and we learn what is the happy consciousness, and what the holy conversation, which belong to those who are “in Christ Jesus.” Lastly, as members of the body of Christ, we find ourselves partakers in a corporate life and a history larger than our own. We feel that we are taken up into a scheme of things which is in conflict with the present, and which can not realize itself here. Therefore our final teaching is by prophecy, which shows us, not how we are personally saved and victorious, but how the battle goes upon the whole; and which issues in the appearance of a holy city, in which redemption reaches its end, and the Redeemer finds his joy; in which human tendencies are realized, and divine promises fulfilled; in which the ideal has become the actual, and man is perfected in the presence and glory of God.

2. *Relation of the Epistles to the Revelation.*—I know not how any man, in closing the Epistles, could expect to find the subsequent history of the Church essentially different from what it is. In those writings we seem, as it were, not to witness some passing storms which clear the air, but to feel the whole atmosphere charged with the elements of future tempest and death. Every moment the forces of evil show themselves more plainly. They are encountered, but not dissipated. Or, to change the figure, we see battles fought by the leaders of our band, but no security is promised by their victories. New assaults are being prepared; new tactics will be tried; new enemies pour on; the distant hills are black with gathering multitudes, and the last exhortations of those who fall at their posts call on their successors to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ," and "earnestly to contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." The fact is not merely that these indications of the future are in the Epistles, but that they increase as we approach the close, and after the doctrines of the Gospel have been fully wrought out, and the fullness of personal salvation and the ideal character of the Church have been placed in the clearest light, the shadows gather and deepen on the external history. The last words of Paul in the Second Epistle to Timothy, and those of Peter in his Second Epistle, with the Epistles of John and Jude, breathe the language of a time in which the tendencies of that history had distinctly shown themselves; and in this respect these writings form a prelude and a passage to the Apocalypse. Thus we arrive at this book with wants which it is meant to supply; we come to it as men who not only personally are in Christ, and who know what as individuals they have in him, but who also, as members of his body, share in a corporate life, in the perfection of which they are to be made perfect, and in the glory of which their Lord is to be glorified. For this perfection and glory we wait in vain, among the confusions of the world and the ever-active, ever-changing forms of evil. What is the meaning of this wild scene? what is to be its issue? and what prospect is there of the realization of that which we desire? To such a state of mind as this, and to the wants which it involves, this last part of the teaching of God is addressed, in accordance with that system of progressive doctrine wherein each stage of advance ensues in the way of natural sequence from the effect of that which preceded it. T. D. B.

3. *Substance and Design of the Book.*—The Revelation of John forms the third species of apostolic literature, and the most appropriate and sublime conclusion, the divine seal of the whole. The Gospels and Epistles proceeded from a state of divine illumination united with entire self-control and clear consciousness. The Apocalypse is the result of a special act of inspiration, an immediate revelation of Jesus Christ respecting his advent, dictated, as it were, to the entranced seer by the Holy Ghost. P. S.—It is no "fine phrensy," but a wonderful work of divine art, curiously wrought and most delicately balanced. This is carried out into the most minute detail, while it is shown on a large scale in the parallelism of the great cyclical visions. Only the most careless reader can suppose the Book to be tangled and confused. It is a masterpiece of construction, fitted and bound together by wisdom from above. D. F.

In matter and form the Revelation is closely allied to the prophetic literature of the Old Testament, particularly the book of Daniel, combining its boldest and most powerful tones in an overwhelming harmony. But with the poetical, symbolical style it unites also the epistolary in the letters to the seven churches. It intersperses its visions with lyric songs of praise, which afford the soul a delightful resting place amid the rushing crowd of events. And it surpasses all the Hebrew prophecies in the sublimity of its views, the majesty of its imagery, the variety of its symbols, the dramatic vividness, unity, and finish of its composition, the progress of its action, and finally in its specifically Christian element, the reference of all the parts to the crucified and now glorified God-man. Prophecy, alike in the Old Testament and in the New, is founded on the idea of the divine government of the world, unavoidably presupposing that history is not a product of chance, but an unfolding of the thoughts and plans of eternal wisdom, justice, and love, and must therefore always issue in the glory of God, the salvation of his people, and the confusion of his enemies. The grand theme of the Old Testament prophecy is the first coming, that of the New Testament prophecy the second coming of the Lord and his kingdom with all the preparatory and attendant events. P. S.—There is one voice in all its epistles, seals, trumpets, vials, plagues, and visions of glory and joy. **The Lord cometh.** That voice has been sounding along the ages for more than eighteen hundred years; and he has come again and again to the overthrow of one enemy after another, Jew and pagan, priest and emperor; and still it sounds, and still he is coming to the overthrow of superstition, idolatry, and bigotry, wherever found, in whatever form practiced, and by whatever sacred names baptized. Scripture would lead us to be always expecting Christ; and there has always been something present in the world to warrant the expectation. While some who have thought they saw symptoms of his coming to judgment, or of his millennial reign, have been disappointed, others, who have desired his spiritual presence, and have interpreted the providential events of their own times by the light of divine truth, have felt that their prayers for his advent have not been unanswered. *Macdonald.*

The book is a revelation of the connection between things that are seen and things that are not seen, between things on earth and things in heaven; a revelation which fuses both into one mighty drama, so that the movements of human action and the course of visible fact are half shrouded, half disclosed, amid the glory and the terror of the spiritual agencies at work around us, and of the eternal interests which we see involved. We are borne to the courts above, and the temple of God is opened in heaven, and we behold the events on earth as originating in what passes there. There seals are broken, trumpets are sounded, and vials are poured out which rule the changes of the Church and of nations. While we are looking down through the rolling mists on things that pass below, we are all the time before the throne of God and of the Lamb, and among the four and twenty elders, the four living beings, and the innumerable company of angels; and we hear voices proceeding out of the throne, the cries of disembodied spirits, and hallelujahs that roll through the universe. We see, further, that there is cause for this participation of the world above in the events of the world below, for it be-

comes every moment more plain that the earth is the battle-field of the kingdoms of light and darkness. There is a far bolder revelation than we have had before of the presence and action of the powers of evil. The old serpent is on one side as the Lamb is on the other, and the same light which shows the movements of the Head and Redeemer of our race falls also upon those of the enemy and destroyer. T. D. B.

The Book discloses the triumph of Christianity over all enemies and opposers, its universal prevalence in the world for a long series of years, and its termination in an endless period of glory and happiness. It is filled with encouragement, admonition, and consolation. A final and eternal victory of the Church over all her enemies is echoed at every pause; and a crown of glory is held forth by the Judge of all as ready to be placed on the martyr's head. A most painful end, moreover, awaits the enemies of the kingdom of God. Even now such a book as the Apocalypse is greatly needed to encourage the faith and hope of Christians in regard to the prospects of the Church, and to comfort them under their various sufferings and disencouragements. M. S.

We can see a clear testimony running through it to the holiness of God, to the power of Christ, to the providence which is working in or overruling all things, to the divine purpose which all things and all men are willingly or unwillingly subserving, and to that final triumph of good over evil, of Christ over antichrist, of God over Satan, which will be the last and most decisive justification of the ways of God to men. V.—It is a book of very definite teaching on redemption by blood. This, which is expressed or implied in all the Scriptures, has in the Revelation a marked and solemn emphasis. This holy Apocalypse, in the midst of its most heavenly scenes, celebrates the atoning blood. Saints sing and angels speak of redemption by the blood, cleansing in the blood, and victory by the blood of the Lamb. D. F.—From the beginning to the end, through the long conflict, and in the midst of the glorious issue, there is still one title for him who conquers, and judges, and reigns. It is the Lamb who makes war and overcomes; and from the wrath of the Lamb kings and nations flee. It is the Lamb in whose blood his servants also overcome; in whose blood they have washed their robes; before whom they stand in white raiment; and to whom they ascribe salvation. In the Lamb's Book of Life the names of the saved are written. The Holy City is the bride, the Lamb's wife. The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it, and the light of it; and the river of the water of life flows for ever from the throne of God and the Lamb. In the peculiar title, thus studiously employed, and illustrated by the repeated mention of the slaying and the blood, we read the doctrine that the ground of the personal is the ground of the general salvation; that the place which the sacrifice of the death of Christ holds in the consciousness of the believer is the same which it also occupies in the history of the Church, and that he conquers for us, and reigns among us, and achieves the restoration of all things, *because* he has first offered himself for us, and is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. T. D. B.

Notwithstanding the profound depths of this divine book, one feels, in reading it, an impression so sweet and altogether so sublime of the majesty of

God; ideas so lofty of the mystery of Jesus Christ appear; a recognition of the people bought with his blood is so lively; the pictures of his victories and of his dominion are so noble; the songs which celebrate the greatness of those are so wonderful, that there is enough to ravish all heaven and earth. All the beauties of the Scriptures are concentrated in this book; all that is most touching, most vivid, most majestic in the Law and in the Prophets receives here a new splendor, and passes again before our eyes, that we may be filled with the consolations and the graces of all past ages. Here we find again in this apostle the spirit of all the prophets and of all the men commissioned by God. He has received the spirit of Moses, in order to sing the song of the new deliverance of the holy people. He has received the spirit of Isaiah, and of Jeremiah, so as to describe the plagues of the new Babylon, and to astonish the universe with the noise of its fall. It is by the spirit of Daniel that he has disclosed to us the new beast, i. e., the new empire which is the enemy and persecutor of the saints, with its defeat and ruin. By the spirit of Ezekiel he has shown us all the riches of the new temple, where God will be worshiped, i. e., the riches of heaven and of the Church. In fine, all the consolations, all the promises, all the grace, and all the light of the divine books are united in this. All men inspired of God seem to have contributed for it all which they possess of the rich and the magnificent, in order to form the most beautiful picture of Jesus Christ which one can imagine; and we see nothing more clearly shown than that he is truly the word of the Law, the reality of its symbols, the body of its shadows, and the soul of its prophets. *Bosuet.*

A book with such characteristics fitly concludes the holy Bible. Full of allusions to ancient visions, prophecies, and songs, it brings the whole continuity of Scripture to a sublime and worthy close. At last the patience of patriarchs and saints is rewarded; the longings of Israel and of the Church are fulfilled; and the glory of God shines unhindered on a scene of righteousness and peace. D. F.

4. *The date of the Revelation.*—This is given by the great majority of critics as A. D. 95–97. The weighty testimony of Irenæus is almost sufficient to prevent any other conclusion. He says: "It (i. e., the Revelation) was seen no very long time ago, but almost in our own generation, at the close of Domitian's reign." Irenæus had the best opportunity to collect authentic accounts of this fact from one who, like Polycarp, was a personal friend and pupil of the apostle. P. S.—Eusebius also records that, in the persecution under Domitian, John the apostle and evangelist was banished to the island of Patmos for his testimony of the divine Word. There is no mention in any writer of the first three centuries of any other time or place. Unsupported by any historical evidence, some commentators have put forth the conjecture that the Revelation was written as early as the time of Nero. This is simply their inference from the style and contents of the book, and is connected with a theory of the early fulfillment of its chief prophecies. S.—[This is also the view of Trench, Alford, Vaughan, Schaff ("Apos. History," p. 403), Fraser, Barnes, and others, who present considerations in its support that seem to be conclusive. The Neronian date is supported by some German and English scholars, and by Stuart, Macdonald, Cowles, and Fisher. B.]

5. *Interpretation.*—A short account of the dif-

ferent directions in which attempts have been made to interpret the Revelation is all that can be given in this place. The interval between the apostolic age and that of Constantine has been called the *Chilastic* period of Apocalyptic interpretation. The visions of John were chiefly regarded as representations of general Christian truths, scarcely yet embodied in actual facts, for the most part to be exemplified or fulfilled in the reign of Antichrist, the coming of Christ, the Millennium, and the Day of Judgment. The fresh hopes of the early Christians, and the severe persecution they endured, taught them to live in those future events with intense satisfaction and comfort. They did not entertain the thought of building up a definite consecutive chronological scheme even of those symbols which some moderns regard as then already fulfilled; although from the beginning a connection between Rome and antichrist was universally allowed, and parts of the Revelation were regarded as the filling-up of the great outline sketched by Daniel and Paul. Immediately after the triumph of Constantine, the Christians, emancipated from oppression and persecution, and dominant and prosperous in their turn, began to lose their vivid expectation of our Lord's speedy advent and their spiritual conception of his kingdom, and to look upon the temporal supremacy of Christianity as a fulfillment of the promised reign of Christ on earth. The Roman empire, become Christian, was regarded no longer as the object of prophetic denunciation, but as the scene of a millennial development. This view, however, was soon met by the figurative interpretation of the millennium, as the reign of Christ in the hearts of all true believers. As the barbarous and heretical invaders of the falling empire appeared, they were regarded by the suffering Christians as fulfilling the woes denounced in the Revelation. In the dawn of the reformation, the views to which the reputation of Abbot Joachim had given currency were taken up by the harbingers of impending change, as by Wycliffe and others; and they became the foundation of that great historical school of interpretation which up to this time seems the most popular of all. It is impossible to construct an exact classification of modern interpreters of the Revelation. They are generally placed in three great divisions: 1. The *Historical* or *Continuous* expositors, in whose opinion the Revelation is a progressive history of the fortunes of the Church from the first century to the end of time. 2. The *Præterist* expositors, who are of opinion that the Revelation has been almost or altogether fulfilled in the time which has passed since it was written: that it refers principally to the triumph of Christianity over Judaism and Paganism, signalized in the downfall of Jerusalem and of Rome. This is the favorite interpretation with the critics of Germany. 3. The *Futurist* expositors, whose views show a strong reaction against some extravagances of the two preceding schools. They believe that the whole book, excepting perhaps the first three chapters, refers principally, if not exclusively, to events which are yet to come.

Each of these three schemes is open to objection. Against the Futurist it is argued, that it is not consistent with the repeated declarations of a speedy fulfillment at the beginning and end of the book itself (see ch. 1: 3; 22: 6, 7, 12, 20). Christians, to whom it was originally addressed, would have derived no special comfort from it, had its ful-

fillment been altogether deferred for so many centuries. The rigidly literal interpretation of Babylon, the Jewish tribes, and other symbols, which generally forms a part of Futurist schemes, presents peculiar difficulties. Against the Præterist expositors it is urged that prophecies fulfilled ought to be rendered so perspicuous to the general sense of the Church as to supply an argument against infidelity: that the destruction of Jerusalem, having occurred twenty-five years previously, could not occupy a large space in prophecy; that the supposed predictions of the downfall of Jerusalem and of Nero appear from the context to refer to one event, but are by this scheme separated, and moreover placed in a wrong order; that the measuring of the temple and the altar, and the death of the two witnesses (ch. 11), can not be explained consistently with the context. Against the Historical scheme it is urged that its advocates differ very widely among themselves; that they assume without any authority that the 1,260 days are so many years; that several of its applications—e. g., of the symbol of the ten-horned beasts to the Popes, and the sixth seal to the conversion of Constantine—are inconsistent with the context; that attempts by some of this school to predict future events by the help of the Revelation have ended in repeated failures. A suggestion is made, or rather revived, by Dr. Arnold in his Sermons "On the Interpretation of Prophecy": that we should bear in mind that predictions have a lower historical sense as well as a higher spiritual sense; that there may be more than one typical, imperfect, historical fulfillment of a prophecy, in each of which the higher spiritual fulfillment is shadowed forth more or less distinctly. The recognition of this would pave the way for the acceptance in a modified sense of many of the interpretations of the historical school, and would not exclude the most valuable portions of the other schemes. S.

6. *The Series of "Sevens" mainly Parallel, not Consecutive.*—Prominent in the book are certain septenary series. One of these—that of the seven thunders—is not declared, but "sealed up," and, therefore, not to be interpreted. But the four great series are declared—viz., the seven churches addressed; seven seals broken; seven trumpets blown; seven bowls poured out. Does each series, taken by itself, indicate a course of consecutive events? And do the various series follow each other in a direct line of time, so as to form, in anticipation, a continuous history of the Church? The annals of Christendom refuse to arrange themselves in harmony with such a theory of the Apocalypse. It has been attempted to assign the seven seals to Rome Pagan, the seven trumpets to Rome Christian, and the seven bowls of wrath to Rome antichristian. It has been held that the seals denote the overthrow of heathenism, and the success of the Emperor Constantine; that the trumpets announce the irruption of the northern barbarians, and the ruin of the Moslem power; and that the bowls of wrath began to be poured out at the French revolution in the end of the last century, and are being poured out still. But it is a vain and desperate attempt to lay these prophetic series alongside of the actual annals of Europe. The effort to arrange such history in three or four grand divisions, and subdivide into twenty-one or twenty-eight successive epochs, has led, on the one hand, to such puerile handling of Scripture, and, on the other, to such capricious and arbitrary emphasizing

of particular events and dates, as is positively repulsive to a sober and reverent mind. Better the most vague and hazy conception of the contents of this Book, if accompanied by some recognition of its poetic grandeur, than a prosaic interpretation brought about by fixing, in the most arbitrary way, on particular passages of European history, slighting other events perhaps quite as important as those which are selected, and passing over centuries in silence.

There is a parallelism between some of the series in question that points to a conclusion quite at variance with the theory of historic continuity. This is particularly obvious in the case of the series of trumpets as compared with that of vials or bowls. They go over the same course of events, and are synchronous, not successive. The latter reiterates the lessons and warnings of the former, according to that fashion of doubling or repeating the sense which belongs to Hebrew poetry, proverb, prophecy, and dream. Who can read Old Testament prophecy and psalm without being struck by the use made of *refrain* and iteration? And why should we not see in the duplicate dreams of Joseph and of Pharaoh, and in the virtual repetition of Nebuchadnezzar's dream of successive empires in a dream of Daniel, a hint of the manner in which the visions of John are connected together, and ought to be interpreted? In fact, the prophetic movement is not in straight lines from one date to another, but in mighty cycles or wheels, more or less coincident; and one may say of them in the words of Ezekiel, "As for the rings, they were so high that they were dreadful." But it is not meant that one cycle is a mere repetition of another. There is eschatological progress. There is an indication of growing intensity of good and of evil. The tragic element especially becomes more prominent; and with increasing severity, each series or cycle of judgment moves the world further on toward the last judgment in the great day of God. D. F.

In sorting the prophecies of Scripture with their events, we must allow for that latitude which is agreeable and familiar unto divine prophecies, being of the nature of the Author, with whom "a thousand years are but as one day"; and, therefore, they are not fulfilled punctually at once, but have springing and germinant accomplishment throughout many ages, though the height or fullness of them may refer to some one age. *Bacon*.

—We may be honestly persuaded that the proper key to the full scientific and historical understanding of this remarkable book has not yet been found, without thereby being obliged in the least to doubt its divine origin and high, practical value. It belongs, in fact, to the nature of every divine prophecy to unveil itself but gradually, and to be fully intelligible only in the light of its fulfillment. So the prophetic writings of the Old Testament remained half understood or misunderstood till the appearance of Christ; as in fact the whole Old Testament becomes clear only in the New. Nay, even the apostles were long entangled in all sorts of carnal prejudices. It was only by degrees, and under the special guidance of their Master, that they rose to a deeper spiritual knowledge of the Messianic promises. Nevertheless, to souls anxiously waiting for the salvation of Israel these prophecies, though in many points misapprehended, were an inexhaustible source of spiritual strength, comfort, and refreshment. Precisely the same may be said of the last

strains of the beloved disciple, in which at the close of the apostolic age, and the century of miracles, soaring yet once more on eagle's wings to behold the eternal triumph of his divine Master and the glory of the bride "adorned for her husband" on the sanctified earth, he bequeathed to the church militant these precious visions under the seal of the Holy Ghost, as a cordial for all her hours of temptation and affliction. As such the Apocalypse has already been in fact of the most valuable service to the people of God; during the bloody persecutions by the Roman power in the first three centuries; at the descent of the barbarian hordes amid the storms of the migration; under the conquests of Mohammedanism; and in every heavy calamity and persecution which has since befallen the Church. Hence also its significance did not cease with the dissolution of the old Roman heathenism, any more than did the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies stop with the events of Jewish history to which they primarily refer. The age of the Neronian and Domitianic persecutions is not the goal, but only the historical starting-point of the Apocalypse, and the basis of its interpretation. As the kingdom of Christ advances, so rises also the empire of Antichrist and false prophecy in ever new and more dangerous forms; and every new conflict of the two and every new victory follows the same general laws, and forms a new and higher fulfillment of the prophecy. P. S.

7. *Of Symbols.* Most copious and varied are the Apocalyptic symbols; and they must be carefully studied, and consistently and soberly interpreted. There are symbols in *numbers*, e. g.: 4, the number of the earth, or mundane space; 4 quarters, 4 winds, etc. 7, the number of completion and of rest. Its half, $3\frac{1}{2}$, is the sign of broken and limited operation; but when a divine cycle of creative work or providential government is indicated it is marked by 7. The sign of protracted labor, never reaching rest, is 666, the number of the wild beast. 10, the number of the world's activity and development. Therefore, both in the Book of Daniel and here, a world-power has 10 horns. 12, the number of Church order and plenitude; 12 stars, 12 gates, 12 foundations, 12 apostles, 12 fruit harvests from the tree of life. From 10 and 12 are formed greater numbers, 1,000, 144, and 144,000.

There are symbols in *colors*, e. g.: White, denoting purity (white garments), righteousness (a white throne), joy (a white cloud), victory (a white horse). Red, for bloodshed and war. Purple, for imperial luxury and pomp. Emerald green, for patient, winning grace. Black, for calamity and distress.

There are symbols in *animated forms*: The *zoa*, composite figures, expressive of the whole life in creation, and the redemption of the whole creation to God. The lamb, a symbol of Jesus Christ, as he once suffered, and is now enthroned. The eagle, indicating swift movements in the region of thought and opinion. Horses, representing movements on the earth. A wild beast, a cruel trampling power. Frogs, unclean spirits. Locusts, all things that waste and torment.

There are symbols in the *elements and forces of nature*: The air, the sphere of life, and of intellectual and spiritual influence. The earth, the place of nations. An earthquake, sudden shaking of nations. The sea, human society tossed and troubled. A cloud is the chariot of divine manifestation. A storm of lightning and hail denotes a great crisis or

judgment. These are only examples of apocalyptic symbols.

In its symbolism, and in the whole tenor of its prophecy, this book rests on visions of an earlier date, especially those imparted to Daniel, Ezekiel, and Zechariah. It is vain to attempt an interpretation of it without considerable familiarity with the Old Testament, for, though written in Greek, the book is entirely Hebrew in its images and allusions.

There is also a very marked connection with that prophecy of the Master Jesus Christ which he poured into the ears of his disciples on the Mount of Olives. In particular, there is the same scenic or panoramic combination of events remote from each other, but having the same character and intention. Two, if not more, horizons of judgment are in view at once, the nearer a foreshadow of the more distant. D. F.

Section 374.

REVELATION i. 1-20.

- 1 THE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his
- 2 servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ,
- 3 and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.
- 4 JOHN to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the firstbegotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us
- 6 from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of
- 8 the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.
- 9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and
- 10 for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto
- 12 Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one* like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot,
- 14 and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and *his* hairs *were* white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes *were* as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as
- 16 if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his
- 17 countenance *was* as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and
- 18 the last: *I am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the
- 20 things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

EVERY blessing that belongs to our inheritance centers in this great truth, that he "who was dead" is now "alive for evermore." In him newly born, we in him die, rise, and ascend; our life is the reflection of his; if spiritually quickened by him, we too, like him, are even now, and hereafter are destined yet more gloriously to be, "alive for evermore"! "For evermore"! Words easily uttered, but in compre-

hension vaster than human thought can grasp, till man, entering upon eternity, shall rise to faculties fitted for the scene! "For evermore": for an existence to which the age of the earth, of the starry heavens, of the whole vast universe, is less than a morning dream; for a life which, after the reiteration of millions of centuries, shall begin the endless race with the freshness of infancy, and all the eagerness that welcomes enjoyments ever new. The blight of all our earthly pleasures is decay; our suns have scarcely risen when they set; we have but just persuaded ourselves that we are happy when the happiness is vanished. Pining after something that will endure, we are not to be for ever disappointed. Born for eternity, eternity shall surely be ours. But oh! agony insufferable, if the eternal life of Christ—the Christian's warrant of justification, of sanctity, of happiness—be but the guarantee of a death as everlasting as his everlasting life.

The time *shall* come—we know not *when*, we know not *how*—but come it shall, when every deathless spirit shall awake to the world of deathless retribution, and each shall utter for himself the words of Christ: "Behold, *I* am alive for evermore!" How such words shall be uttered, with the anguish of anticipated woe, with the remembrance of years misspent, warnings despised, opportunities neglected, or with the blessed recollection of faith unwavering amid a hostile world, of tempers meek and loving in despite of all its bitterness, of temptations met and vanquished, of services that, never indeed sufficient, were still sincere—those humble but rapturous recollections that in their fearful joy are bright already with the glory they herald: *which* shall be our destiny when that long-promised morn shall have dawned, as under God it lies with ourselves, may God in his mercy enable us wisely to resolve! W. A. B.

1. "The revelation of Jesus Christ *which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants the things which must come to pass,*" is a repetition and a particular application of that assurance on which all the gospel rests, "*I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me.*" Even the visible discovery of this fact is not withheld. If Paul, as the great expositor of the present spiritual life, had seen Jesus Christ himself, and received immediately from the Lord that which he had delivered unto men, so John, as the prophet of the things to come, saw the well-remembered form again, surrounded with the symbols of majesty and judgment, and looked upon his countenance, now like the sun shining in his strength, and heard his voice as the sound of many waters. Thus the continuity of the line of prophecy within the canonical books is made as clear as that of the line of doctrine; both commencing in the words of Jesus in the flesh, both perfected by the words of Jesus in the Spirit. T. D. B. —The truth brought into the world by the Son does not consist of new metaphysical ideas about God, but rather of the revelation of his Father character. To make this revelation, it was sufficient for Jesus to reveal himself as the Son; for to prove himself Son is to teach the world what it never would have suspected—that God is essentially a Father. And if he is Father in his inmost essence, and in virtue of an eternal relation, how could his relations to his creatures fail to have also a paternal character? Such is the new explanation which the Son has given of the divine being, and which he alone as the Son could give. It is the initiation of the earth into the deepest secret of heaven: God is from all eternity Father—that is to say, *love*. *Godet*.

4. **The seven churches of Asia.** The "Asia" of the New Testament is not the continent of Asia nor "Asia Minor," but a Roman province which embraced the western part of the peninsula of Asia Minor, and of which Ephesus was the capital. It was a senatorial province, and was governed by a proconsul. Among its many important cities were those of the Seven Churches of the Apocalypse. It included the territory subdivided into Mysia, Lydia, and Caria. It is referred to in Acts 2: 9;

6: 9; 19: 26; and 1 Pet. 1: 1. Note the position of the Seven Churches on map, page 94. B.

Grace unto you and peace. This opening salutation may fitly remind us (for in reading the Apocalypse we are often in danger of forgetting it) that the book is an Epistle, that besides containing within its bosom those seven briefer Epistles addressed severally to the Seven Churches in particular, it is itself an Epistle addressed to them as a whole, and as representing in their mystic unity all the Churches, or the Church.

By "*the seven Spirits*" we must understand, not indeed the sevenfold operations of the Holy Ghost, but the Holy Ghost sevenfold in his operations; "that doth his sevenfold gifts impart." He is regarded here not so much in his personal unity as in his manifold energies; just as light, being one, does yet in the prism separate itself into its seven colors; for "there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit" (1 Cor. 12: 4). The manifold gifts, operations, energies of the Holy Ghost are here represented under the number seven, being, as it is, the number of completeness in the Church. We have anticipations of this in the Old Testament.

5. Christ is indeed "*the first begotten of the dead,*" notwithstanding that such raisings from the grave as that of the widow's son, and Jairus's daughter, and Lazarus, and his who revived at the touch of Elisha's bones (2 K. 13: 21), went before. None of them could be truly said to be "begotten from the dead," but rather begotten to die again; for to be born and begotten from the dead includes an everlasting freedom from the power and approach of death.

"Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." The words are richer still in comfort, when we read, as we ought, "*Unto him that loves us,*" whose love rests evermore on his redeemed. T.—This is the current phraseology of the Scriptures. It is the burden of prophecy. It pervades and vitalizes the whole Levitical ritual. It is the constant teaching of the Redeemer

himself. It is the harmonious, joyful testimony of the apostles. It is the sublime song of the redeemed in heaven. All, all concur in declaring that Christ died to redeem his people from the curse of the law, and make them kings and priests unto God his Father. H. A. B.

There is no such thing as age in his sacrifice; centuries can not give antiquity to his atonement; time can not wear out its virtues. His blood is as precious now as when it first was shed, and the fountain for sin and uncleanness flows with a stream as full and purifying as when first it was opened. And how? Simply because by his intercession he perpetuates his sacrifice; and his offering, though not repeated on earth, is incessantly presented in heaven. It was enough that he should once die to make atonement, seeing he ever lives to make intercession. He is now carrying on in heaven the very office and work which he commenced when upon earth; and, though there is no visible altar and no literal sacrifice, no endurance of anguish and no shedding of blood, yet still he presents vividly and energetically the marks of his passion, and the effect is the same as though he died daily, and acted over again and again the scene of his tremendous conflict with "the powers of darkness." E. M.

6. "*To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*" A fuller doxology, being threefold, occurs 4:9, 11; and a fuller yet, being fourfold, at 5:18; and the fullest of all, the sevenfold doxology, at 7:12. A study of these would serve to remind us of the prominence which the doxological element assumes in the highest worship of the Church, the very subordinate place which it oftentimes takes in ours. We can make our requests known unto God, and this is well, for it is prayer; but to give glory to God, quite apart from anything to be directly gotten by ourselves in return, to thank God for his great glory, this is better, for it is adoration; but, if better, it is rarer as well. T.

7. The book, being entitled the Unveiling of Jesus Christ, opens with this announcement of his appearing: "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him; and whosoever they were that pierced him; and all tribes of the earth shall wail because of him." We seem to hear again the words of our Lord in that great prophecy which he pronounced while he sat on the Mount of Olives a day or two before his death—a prophecy which underlies much of the phraseology of this book: "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Mat. 24:30). D. F.—**Shall wail.** These words set forth the despair of the sinful world, of "all the tribes of the earth," when Christ the Judge

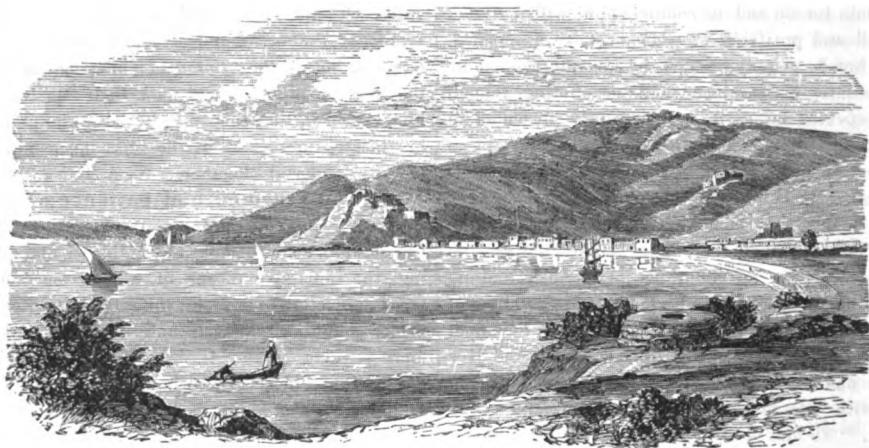
shall come to execute judgment on all that obeyed not his gospel, who pierced him with their sins; they describe their remorse and despair, but give no hint of their repentance. The closing words, "*Even so, Amen,*" are to be taken as God's own seal and ratification of his own word. T.—The crucifiers of every age and nation shall shrink in horror and dread before the blaze of his advent glory! In that fearful hour, how happy, beyond all that thought can conceive or words declare, for those who, familiar with the cross, can look upon it, not as the symbol of the sorrow and shame they have willingly inflicted, but as the symbol of sufferings in which they were willingly united *with* their Master, with him crucified, that they may be with him glorified, his blessed associates in the bliss unspeakable of his own immortal kingdom! W. A. B.

9. **The kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.** Kingdom and patience! as if in Jesus Christ were made compatible authority and suffering, the impassive throne of a monarch and the meek subjection of a cross, the reigning power of a prince and the mild endurance of a lamb. What more striking paradox! And yet in this you have exactly that which is the prime distinction of Christianity. It is a kingdom erected by patience. It reigns in virtue of submission. Its victory and dominion are the fruits of a most peculiar and singular endurance. By this I mean not the reward, but the proper results or effects of endurance. Christ reigns over human souls and in them, erecting there his spiritual kingdom, not by force of will exerted in any way, but through his most sublime passivity in yielding himself to the wrongs and the malice of his adversaries. And with him, in this most remarkable peculiarity, all disciples are called to be partakers; even as the apostle in his exile at Patmos writes: "I John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus." H. B.

Patmos. One of the group called the Sporades, lying twenty-four miles off the coast of Asia Minor, southwest of Ephesus. It is now called Patino, and is about twenty-five miles in circumference, and has only about six hundred inhabitants. D. F.—"I John was," or rather "became a dweller," "in the isle that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." He stood on the heights of Patmos in the center of a world of his own. The island, then probably less inhabited than now, was almost a solitude. "He was in the Spirit," withdrawn from earthly things, like Moses on Sinai, or Elijah on Carmel. But the view from the topmost peak, or, indeed, from any lofty elevation in the island, unfolds an unusual sweep, such as well became the "Apocalypse," the "*unveiling*" of the future to the eyes of the solitary seer. It was "a great and high mountain," whence he could see things to come. Above, there was always the broad heaven of a Grecian sky; sometimes bright, with its "white cloud," sometimes

torn with "lightnings and thunderings," and darkened by "great hail," or cheered with "a rainbow like unto an emerald." Over the high tops of Icaria, Samos, and Naxos rise the mountains of Asia Minor, among which would lie, to the north, the circle of the Seven Churches to which his addresses were to be sent. Around him stood the mountains and islands of the archipelago—"every mountain and island shall be moved out of their places"; "every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." When he looked around,

above or below, "the sea" would always occupy the foremost place. He saw "the things that are in the heavens and in the earth and in the sea." The angel was "not to hurt the earth or the sea," nor "to blow on the earth or on the sea." "A great mountain," like that of the volcanic Thera, "as it were burning with fire," was "to be cast into the sea." The angel was to stand with "his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth"; "the vial was to be poured out upon the sea"; the voices of heaven were like the sound of the waves beating



Patmos.

on the shore, as "the sound of many waters"; "the millstone was cast into the sea"; "the sea was to give up the dead which were in it"; and the time would come when this wall of his imprisonment, which girdled round the desolate island, should have ceased; "there shall be no more sea." Such was the scene of the Apocalypse, varied, doubtless, by other images drawn from the prophetic books of the older Scriptures, and from the report or the actual sight of the great cities of the earth. We understand the Apocalypse better for having seen Patmos. But we can understand the Gospel and Epistles of John as well in England as in Patmos or Ephesus, or even in his own native Palestine. A. P. S.

10. On the Lord's day. Though the name, "the Lord's day," probably had here its rise, the thing, the celebration of the first day of the week as that on which the Lord brake the bands of death and became the head of a new creation, was as old as Christianity itself. T.—The Jewish Sabbath was partly of political institution and partly of moral obligation. So far as it was a political appointment, designed to preserve the Jews distinct from other nations, it is abrogated; so far as it was of moral obligation, it remains in force. Our Lord evidently designed to relax the strictness of the observance. Christianity is not a hedge placed round a peculiar people. A slave might enter into the spirit of Christianity, though obliged to work as a slave on the Sabbath; he might be "in the Spirit on the Lord's day," though in the mines of Patmos. Cecil.

11. These seven words of warning and encouragement so penetrated to the heart of things that,

meeting the needs of these seven Churches, they also met the needs of all others subsisting in similar or nearly similar conditions. Typical and representative Churches, these embodied, one or another of them, I will not say *all* the great leading aspects of the Church in its faithfulness or its unfaithfulness, but they embodied a great many, the broadest and the oftenest recurring. The seven must in this point of view be regarded as constituting a complex whole, as possessing an ideal completeness. T.

12. What the apostle saw was not seven candlesticks, which are a modern piece of furniture, but seven lamps. There is a distinct reference in this, as in all the symbols of the Apocalypse, to the Old Testament. We know that in the Jewish Temple there stood, as an emblem of Israel's work in the world, the great seven-branched candlestick burning for ever before the veil and beyond the altar. The difference between the two symbols is as obvious as their resemblance. The ancient lamp had all the seven bowls spring from a single stem. It was a formal unity. The New Testament seer saw not one lamp with seven arms rising from one pillar, but seven distinct lamps—the emblems of a unity which was not formal, but real. They were one in their perfect manifoldness, because of him who walked in the midst. In which difference lies a representation of one great element in the superiority of the Church over Israel, that for the hard material oneness of the separated nation there has come the true spiritual oneness of the Churches of the saints, one not because of any external connection, but, by reason that Christ is in them. The seven-branched lamp lies at the bottom of the

Tiber. There let it lie. We have a better thing, in these manifold lights, which stand before the Throne of the New Temple, and blend into one, because lighted from one Source, fed by one Spirit, tended and watched by one Lord. A. M.

The Jewish Church was one, for it was the Church of a single people; the Christian Church, that too is one, but it is also many—at once the "Church" and the "Churches." These may be quite independent of one another, the only bond of union with one another which they absolutely require being that of common dependence on the same head, and derivation of life from the same spirit, and are fitly represented by seven, the number of mystical completeness. In the image itself by which the churches are symbolized there is an eminent fitness. The candlestick, or lampstand, as we must rather conceive it here, is not light, but it is the bearer of light, that which diffuses it, that which holds it forth and causes it to shine throughout the house, being the appointed instrument for this. It is thus with the Church. God's word, God's truth, including in this all which he has declared of himself in revealed religion, is light; the Church is the light-bearer, light in the Lord (Eph. 5: 8), not having light of its own, but diffusing that which it receives of him. Each too of the faithful in particular, after he has been illuminated (Heb. 6: 4), is a bearer of the light; "lights in the world, holding forth the word of life" (Phil. 2: 15).

13-16. With the Hebrew symbolism the first necessity is that the symbol should set forth truly and fully the religious idea of which it is intended to be the vehicle. Thus the New Jerusalem "lieth foursquare; the length and the breadth, and the height of it are equal" (21: 16). A city, constituting thus a perfect cube, is simply inconceivable to us; but the divine seer did not care that we should conceive it; he was only careful to express the fact that this was a city which should never be moved. In this as in so many other cases, how the idea would appear when it clothed itself in an outward form and shape, whether it could clothe itself in this at all, and, if it could, whether it would find favor and allowance at the bar of taste, as satisfying the conditions of beauty, this was quite a secondary consideration. Nay, we may affirm that this was not a consideration at all; for indeed, with the one exception of the cherubim, there was no intention that the symbol should embody itself outwardly, but rather that it should remain ever and only a purely mental conception, the unembodied sign of an idea;—I may observe, by the way, that no skill of delineation can make the cherubim themselves other than unsightly objects to the eye. Thus in this present description of Christ, sublime and majestic as it is beyond all conception of ours, it is only such so long as we keep it wholly apart from any external embodiment. T.—It was a "mystery" full of voice, full of light; and he who filled it was girt in the robe and golden zone of divine beauty and gracefulness. It was full of voice for teaching, and of light for illumination; and the garment which was girt there was as a vesture of righteousness, zoned with truth. Its voice was as "many waters" for sounding forth, and as "a two-edged sword" for piercing; its light was as a flame of fire for searching, and as the sun in his strength for shedding perfect day; and its garment was as holiness for an enrobing glory, and as truth for a girdle of gracious beauty. Such was the wondrous symbol in its dress: one like

unto the son of man, standing in the midst of seven golden candlesticks, and holding in his hand seven shining stars: more glorious in array than words could describe, and more powerful for operation than thought could conceive. What, then, was the symbol in its *signification*? Not Christ's flesh and blood commingled and co-united with the bodies and souls of individual Christians, effecting thus a perpetual and living incarnation of himself; but Christ, showing his relation to his light-bearing churches, and to those true ministers whom he upholds with his right hand, and who, as starry lights, catch and cast forth through his churches upon the world his own glorious effulgence of saving truth and life. "The seven stars," said the interpreting form, in the very idiom of Christ's native tongue as he spake on earth—"the seven stars are (represent) the angels of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks are (represent) the seven churches." This, then, was not Christ incarnate in a darkly incomprehensible symbol; but it was the most gorgeously luminous symbol ever conceived of Christ and his churches; of Christ upholding his true ministers with his right hand; speaking through them his two-edged word of life, in sounds terribly piercing to the sinner, and affectingly solemn to the saint; and casting, through them on the churches, and through the churches on the wide world, the effulgent daylight of his own saving truth. This was "the mystery," the *meaning*, of the symbol. It was a mystery, not because it was *incomprehensible*, but because it was rich in a meaning *designed* to be understood, and luminously intelligible the moment the word of interpretation was spoken.

In this symbolic mystery, Christ sets forth to all ages the relation which he holds to his Church, as one whole, composed of many branches; exhibiting himself as the source and upholder of its ministry, the source and dispenser of its light; its centrally supreme and governing head, directing its movements in the divinely merciful work of slaying sin, and of spreading both the light of truth and the garment of holiness over all the earth. And this relation of Christ to his Church, this agency of Christ through his Church, must become more and more perfectly apprehended and appreciated. His Church must carry less and less of the darkness of *superstitious* mystery, and more and more of the light of *evangelic* mystery; till finally, what was represented to the lesser Asia by the mystic circle of the seven golden candlesticks, with their accompanying seven shining stars, shall have widened and thrown its circumference around the globe; becoming thus the one Church of all lands, and, with its numberless stellar angels, making universal the light both of the knowledge and of the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. J. S. S.

13. The beloved Apostle by this "*like unto the Son of man*" would imply that in this sublime apparition he recognized him whom he had once known on earth, the born of the Virgin Mary; who even then had claimed to be executor of all judgment, because he was the Son of man. 14. **His eyes as a flame of fire.** The words do not say merely that nothing can escape his searching, penetrative glance; they express the indignation of the Holy One at the discoveries of evil which he thus makes. These "*eyes of fire*" do not merely look through the hypocrite and the sinner, but *consume* him, him and his sins together—unless indeed he will suffer them to consume his sins, that so he may live. For

indeed in the symbolism of Scripture fire is throughout the expression of the divine anger; and, seeing that nothing moves that anger but sin, of the divine anger against sin. 15. "His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace." This grand and terrible image sets forth to us Christ in his power to tread down his enemies; at once to tread down and to consume them. T.

16. He it is who holds the stars in his right hand, and walks among the candlesticks. That strong grasp of that mighty hand—for the word in the original conveys more than "holds," it implies a tight and powerful grip—sustains and guards his servants, whose tasks need special grace, and whose position exposes them to special dangers. They may be of good cheer, for none shall pluck them out of his hand. That strengthening and watchful presence moves among his churches, and is active on their behalf. The symbols are but the pictorial equivalent of his own parting promise, "Lo, I am with you always!" A. M.

17. Though John was in the Spirit when he had the vision of Christ, yet it made him fall at his feet as dead; and also turned Daniel's beauty into corruption, it was so glorious and so overweighing a glory that he appeared in. But we shall at the day of our resurrection be so furnished that we shall with the eagle be able to look upon the sun in his strength. We shall then "see him as he is," who now is in the light that no eye hath seen, nor any man can see till that day. Bun.

The very majesty of his celestial state, far from forming a ground of separation, seems made the ground of consolation and confidence to his poor disciples; when John sank in lifeless terror before the apparition of his glorified Master, the divine visitant did not abridge the splendors of his presence, but gave the disciple strength to endure them; to allay the shrinking apostle's fears. He did not speak of past humiliation, but of present glory. He did not diminish, but assert, the full magnificence of his claims, and fixed them as the basis of a high and holy trust. "Fear not! I am the First and the Last!" W. A. B.—This prerogative is three times claimed for the Lord Jehovah in Isaiah; and in like manner three times in this Book. It is the expression of absolute Godhead: "I am the first and the last, and beside me there is no God" (Isai. 44: 6). He is from eternity to eternity, so that there is no room for any other. All creation comes forth from him, and returns to him again, as from whom and by whom and to whom are all things. T.

18. "I am he that liveth." That word, "liveth," is a word of continuous, perpetual life. It describes the eternal existence which has no beginning and no end; which, considered in its purity and perfectness, has no present and no past, but

one eternal and unbroken present—one eternal now. It is the "I am" of the Jehovah who spoke to Moses. "He that liveth" is the Living One; he whose life is the Life complete in itself, and including all other lives within itself. Those years shut in out of the eternities between the birth and the ascension, that resurrection opening the prospect of that life which never was to end—these are the never-failing interpretation to the man who believes in them of the temporal and eternal in his own experience. Christ comes and puts his essential life into our human form. In that form he claims the truest brotherhood with us. He shares our lot. He binds his life with ours so that they can never be separated. What he is, we must be; what we are, he must be for ever. By the cross of love, he, entering into our death, takes us completely into his life. And when he had done all this he rose. Out of his tomb, standing there among human tombs, he comes, and lo, before him there rolls on the unbroken endlessness of being. And not before him alone—before those also whom he had taken so completely to himself. His resurrection makes our resurrection sure. Our earthly life, like his, becomes an episode, a short, special, temporary thing, when it is seen like his against an immortality. P. B.

It is the mystery of redemption that establishes a truth so astounding as that man is to live for ever by placing it in a subordinate position to the still more amazing truth of the union of the divine and human natures in the person of the Mediator. Our Lord, in his private conversations with his disciples, avails himself of the stores of tropical expression for the purpose of fixing in their minds the belief of an intimate and indissoluble union between themselves and him. The Author of Immortality, resplendent in his title as "Prince of Life," "the Living One," he who "has life in himself," who is abstractedly "the Life and the Light of Men," and is "alive for evermore"; and "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever"; the possessor of all duration, "whose goings forth have been from everlasting; whose name is Father of Eternity"; he who thus draws to himself all honors as Fountain of Existence, sums up every other assurance, when he tells his followers that, "BECAUSE HE LIVES, THEY SHALL LIVE ALSO," as if formally to pledge his own immortality for theirs; or, as if they might fear extinction, when he, the Lord of Life, should be no more. I. T.

19. "And have the keys of hell and of death." We should read rather "of death and of hell," for so all the best manuscripts and versions have it. In the natural and logical order it is death which peoples hell or hades; it is a king Death who makes possible a kingdom of the dead (6: 8; 20: 13, 14); for by "hell" or hades this invisible kingdom or domin-

ion of the ~~dead~~ is intended, and that in all its extent, not merely in one ~~dark~~ province of it, the region assigned to the lost. All who have thoughtfully compared our version with the original must regret that the one word "hell" covers in it two words so different in meaning as *hades* and *gehenna*, the first "Sheol," the gathering-place of all departed souls (Prov. 27 : 20), the second the lake of fire of this book (19 : 20 ; 20 : 10), the final abode of the lost. All must lament the manifold confusions which out of this have arisen; the practical loss, indeed, among our people of any doctrine about *hades* at all. The relations of *hades* to *gehenna*, and also to paradise, are well put in this extract from Jeremy Taylor: "The word *hades* signifies indefinitely the state of separation, whether blessed or accursed; it means only 'the invisible place,' whither whose descends shall be no more seen. *Paradise* and *gehenna* are the distinct states of *hades*." T.—*Hades* is the world unseen, which has its door or portal by which men enter into it. Death is the departure from the seen world, which seen world has its door of exit by which men pass out of it. Hence death is called, in two or three passages of Scripture, *exodus*, or going out. Peter speaks of his *exodus*, or death; and Moses and Elias, at the Transfiguration, talk with the Lord on the subject of his *exodus*; a word which our translators have rendered *decease*. There are many doors or avenues by which men pass out of this life, none of which can be opened except by the key which the risen Son of God holds in his hand. E. M. G.

He abolished death; he destroyed him that had the power of death; he was the destruction of the

grave; he hath finished sin, and made an end of it; he hath vanquished the curse of the law, nailed it to his cross, triumphed over them upon his cross, and made a show of these things openly. Yea, and even now, as a sign of his triumph and conquest, he is alive from the dead, and hath the keys of death and hell in his own keeping. *Bun.*—Stand still now in spirit, and think that the door is unclosing for thee, and that the great things of eternity are about to be revealed to thy apprehension. A solemn moment! Flesh and blood thrill with awe and fear, like the apostles at the Transfiguration, as they enter into the cloud. But if thou art a sincere believer and follower of Christ, *HE* is *HERE*, and the light of his countenance shall stream in upon thine eye, and the divine music of those words shall break upon thine ear: "I, the Good Shepherd, the Rock of Ages, the Man who drunk to the dregs of the cup of death, I, the Resurrection and the Life, even I have the keys of hell and death." E. M. G.

19. John is commanded to write: the things which he had seen, i. e., the vision given to him of the Son of man; the things which are, i. e., wonders in heaven; and the things which shall be hereafter, i. e., future judgments, defeats, and victories. D. F.—This vision is the natural introduction to all that follows, and indeed defines the main purpose of the whole book, inasmuch as it shows us Christ sustaining, directing, dwelling in his Churches. We are thus led to expect that the remainder of the prophecy shall have the Church of Christ for its chief subject, and that the politics of the world, and the mutations of nations, shall come into view mainly in their bearing upon that. A. M.

Section 375.

REVELATION ii. 1-11.

- 1 UNTO the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;
- 2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast
- 3 found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured,
- 4 and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left
- 5 thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of
- 6 his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.
- 8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the
- 9 last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I *know* the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not,
- 10 but *are* the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have . . .
- 11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

WHAT Christian is there who does not feel pierced through by the words, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love"? Sometimes we are uplifted by high-wrought feelings till no service seems too hard, no self-denial too severe; our resolution appears sufficient for a repetition of all previous trials and many besides them. In the warmth and earnestness of our feelings old temptations fall off like a garment, and we are more disposed to wonder that we were ever enslaved than to fear that we shall be enslaved again. Selfishness, impurity, cowardice, falsehood, indolence—these seem impossible thenceforward for ever. And then comes the languor which is almost sure to follow; the return to our ordinary ways and habits; the gathering of old temptations with new ones added; the discovery that these high impulses have not made, after all, any great difference in our character; the want of delight in worship, public or private; the loss of keen sensibility of conscience. Resolutions once made with great fervor seem the fruit of mere excitement. And so we are in danger of being untrue to our first love; because when we come into this world our eyes are not strong enough to pierce below the surface and see the truth of God behind the unreality of things, and our memory is not able to retain the impression of our purer and better moments. We must not allow ourselves to be cast down, nor to despair because our hearts seem colder at one time than at another. The test of the cold heart is the yielding to sin; and, if we are clinging to Him and to his will, we may be quite sure that what we take for coldness of heart is a trial, not a treason. It is not inconstancy to our first love that we are not so passionate as we were, if we have not given our hearts to any other love or swerved from the duties which love imposes. The will does not really lose its strength to obey because the hour for feeling is past and the hour for real obedience has come. The power to serve is still left, though the service no longer seems easy or delightful: and the knowledge to serve remains behind as well as the power. F. T.

SEVEN Churches are selected in the province of Asia, where the apostle John, in his later years, wielded a patriarchal influence. These were not all the Churches in the province, but seven are taken to represent the whole visible Church; and such seven, as in their diversities of faithfulness and unfaithfulness, zeal and lethargy, give opportunity for the most various counsels, reproofs, and promises with a view to the profit of the Church in all time coming. D. F.—Here, as everywhere, the word of God and the history of the apostolic Church evince their applicability to all times and circumstances, and their inexhaustible fullness of instruction, warning, and encouragement for all states and stages of religious life. P. S.—What notable contrasts do these seven offer—a Church face to face with danger and death (Smyrna), and a Church at ease, settling down upon its lees (Sardis); a Church with abundant means and loud profession, yet doing little or nothing for the furtherance of the truth (Laodicea), and a Church with little strength and small opportunities, yet accomplishing a mighty work for Christ (Philadelphia); a Church intolerant of doctrinal error, yet too much lacking that love toward its Lord for which nothing else is a substitute (Ephesus), and over against this a Church not careful nor zealous, as it ought to be, for doctrinal purity, but diligent in works and ministries of love (Thyatira); or, to review these same Churches from another point of view, a Church in conflict with heathen libertinism, the sinful freedom of the flesh (Ephesus), and a Church or Churches in conflict with Jewish superstition, the sinful bondage of the spirit (Pergamos, Philadelphia); or, for the indolence of man a more perilous case than either, Churches with no vigorous forms of opposition to the truth in the midst of them, to brace their energies and to cause them, in the act of defending the imperiled truth, to know it better and to love it more (Sardis, Laodicea). These Churches are more or less *representative* Churches, having been selected because they are so; the great Head of the Church contemplates

them for the time being as symbolic of his universal Church, implying as much in that mystic seven, and giving many other indications of the same.

The seven Epistles are all constructed precisely on the same model. They every one of them contain: 1. A command in exactly the same form to the seer that he should write to the Angel of the Church. 2. One or more glorious titles which Christ claims for himself, as exalting the dignity of his person, and thus adding weight and authority to the message which he sends; these titles being in almost every case drawn more or less evidently from the attributes ascribed to him, or claimed by him, in the manifestation of himself which has just gone before (1: 4-20). 3. The actual message from Christ to the Angel of the Church, declaring his intimate knowledge of its condition, good, or bad, or mixed, with a summons to steadfastness in the good, to repentance from the evil—all this brought home by the fact that he was walking up and down in the midst of his Churches, in readiness to punish and in readiness to reward. 4. A promise to the faithful, to him that should overcome—the heavenly blessedness being presented under the richest variety of the most attractive and often the most original images. There is not one of these promises which does not look on to, and perhaps first find its full explanation in, some later portion of the book. 5. Finally, the whole is summed up with an exhortation which shall give a universal character to these particular addresses, a summons to every one with a spiritual ear that he should give earnest heed to the things which were indeed spoken to all. In the addresses to the four last Churches the position of 4 and 5 is reversed. . . . It is recorded of the admirable Bengel that it was his wont above all things to recommend the study of these Epistles to youthful ministers of Christ's word and sacraments. And indeed to them they are full of teaching, of the most solemn warning, of the strongest encouragement.

1. Ephesus, the chief city of Ionia, "light of

Asia," as the Ephesians themselves styled it, asserting in this style that primacy for Ephesus which Smyrna and Pergamos disputed with it, had now so far outstripped both its competitors that it was at once the civil and ecclesiastical center of that "Asia" with which we have to do. Wealthy, prosperous, and magnificent, a meeting-place of oriental religions and Greek culture, and famous on many grounds in heathen antiquity, it was most famous of all for the celebrated temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world, about which we read so much, Acts 19 (read pages 135, 136). But Ephesus had better titles of honor than these. It was a city greatly favored of God. Paul labored there during three years; Timothy, Aquila, Priscilla, Apollos, Tychicus, all contributed to build up the Church in that city. And, if we may judge from Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, and from his parting address to the elders of that Church, nowhere did the word of the gospel find a kindlier soil, strike root more deeply, or bear fairer fruits of faith and love. John too had made it the chief seat of his ministry during the closing years of his protracted life; from whence he exercised a wide jurisdiction over the whole of "Asia." From a church to which so much was given much would be required.

Who walketh. The seer had indeed already beheld the Lord "*in the midst of the seven candlesticks*," but not "*walking*" in their midst. The word expresses the unwearied activity of Christ in his Church, moving up and down in the midst of it; beholding the evil and the good; evermore trimming and feeding with oil of grace the golden lamps of the sanctuary.

3. The original as it stands in the best critical editions: "*And hast patience, and didst bear for my name's sake, and hast not grown weary.*" The Lord here praises the angel and in him the Church at Ephesus, that he and it had borne the burden and heat of a long day's toil without fainting or waxing weary.

4. On the question, *when* the Apocalypse was given, we have a certain amount of implicit evidence here, in this reproach with which the Lord reproaches the Ephesian Angel; such as has its value in confirming the ecclesiastical tradition which places it in the reign of Domitian, as against the more modern view which gives the reign of Nero as the date of the composition of this book. It has been well observed that in Paul's Epistle to the Church of Ephesus there are no signs, nor even presentiments, of this approaching spiritual declension with which the great Searcher of hearts upbraids it here. Writing to no Church does he treat of higher spiritual mysteries. There is no word of blame in the Epistle, no word indicating dissatisfaction with the spiritual condition of his Ephesian converts. He warns them, indeed, in his parting charge given at Miletus, against dangers threatening them at once from within and from without (Acts 20 : 29, 30); but no word indicates that they by any fault of theirs were laying themselves open to these. Those who place the Apocalypse in the reign of Nero hardly allow ten years between that condition and this—too brief a period for so vast and lamentable a change. It is inconceivable that there should have been such a letting-go of first love in so brief a time. Place the Apocalypse under Domitian, and thirty years will have elapsed since Paul wrote his Epistle to Ephesus. The outlines of the truth are still preserved; but the truth itself is not for a second gen-

eration what it was for the first. The latter has the same watchwords as had the earlier, but they do not rouse as they did once. The virtue which they once had has gone from them. Apparently there is nothing changed; while in fact everything is changed. How often has something of this kind repeated itself in the Church! T.

Left thy first love. No evil is more marked among the Christian Churches of this day than precisely the absence of this "spirit of burning." There is plenty of liberality and effort, there is much interest in religious questions, there is genial tolerance and wide culture, there is a high standard of morality, and, on the whole, a tolerable adherence to it—but there is little love and little fervor. Where is that Spirit which was poured out on Pentecost? Where are the cloven tongues of fire, where the flame which Christ died to light up? Where? The question is not difficult to answer. His promise remains faithful. He does send the Spirit, who is fire. But our sin, our negligence, and our eager absorption with worldly cares, and our withdrawal of mind and heart from the patient contemplation of his truth, have gone far to quench the Spirit. Is it not so? Are our souls on fire with the love of God, aglow with the ardor caught from Christ's love? A. M.—The real object of the subsequent life, as a struggle of experience, is to make a fixed state of that which was initiated only as a love. It is to convert a heavenly impulse into a heavenly habit. It is to raise the Christian childhood into a Christian manhood—to make the first love a second or completed love; or, what is the same, to fulfill the first love, and give it a pervading fullness in the soul; such that the whole man shall be for ever rested, immovably grounded in it. H. B.

5. "*And repent, and do the first works.*" Christ does not say "Feel thy first feelings"—that perhaps would have been impossible, and even if possible, might have had but little value in it—but "*Do the first works*," such as thou didst in the time of thy first devotedness and zeal. Not the *quantity*, but the *quality*, of the works was now other and worse than once it had been. **Will remove thy candlestick.** The removing of the candlestick from a place implies the entire departure of Christ's grace, of his Church with all its blessings, from that spot, with the transfer of it to another; for it is *removal* of the candlestick, not *extinction* of the candle, which is threatened here—judgment for some, but that very judgment the occasion of mercy for others. And so it has proved. The candlestick has been removed, but the candle has not been quenched; and what the East has lost the West has gained. How awful for Ephesus the fulfillment of the threat has been every modern traveler who has visited the ruins of that once famous city has borne witness. T.

Forgetfulness makes us as if things had never been; and so takes away from the soul one great means of stay, support, and encouragement. When choice David was dejected, the remembrance of the hill Hermon was his stay; when he was to go out against Goliath, the remembrance of the lion and the bear was his support; so when those that have had the power of the things of God upon them can think of this when they are withdrawn, it will have some kind of operation upon the soul. And therefore you shall find that the recovering of a backslider usually begins at the remembrance of former things. "Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do thy first works." *Bun.*

6. "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." Very beautiful is the tenderness of the Lord in thus bringing forward a second time some good thing which he had found at Ephesus.

7. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." These words recur in all the Epistles; with only this difference, that in the former three they occur *before*, in the latter four *after*, the final promise. That in every case the words usher in, or commend, truths of the deepest concernment to all, we gather from a comparison of the passages, all of them of deepest significance, where the same summons to attention recurs (*Mat.* 11 : 15; 13 : 9, 43; *Mark* 7 : 16; *Rev.* 13 : 9); so that Irving has perfect right when he affirms, "This form always is used of radical, and as it were generative, truths, great principles, most precious prom-

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." It is deeply interesting and instructive to observe how in this, and probably in every other case, the character of the promise corresponds to the character of the faithfulness displayed. They who have abstained from the idol meats, from the sinful dainties of the flesh and world, shall, in return, "eat of the tree of life"; or, as it is in the Epistle to Pergamos, "of the hidden manna" (2 : 17). They who have not feared those who can kill the body only, who have given, where need was, their bodies to the flame, shall not be hurt by the second death (2 : 11). They whom the world has not vanquished shall have dominion over the world (2 : 26, 27). They who keep their garments here undefiled shall be clad in the white and shining garments of immortality there (3 : 4, 5). They who overcome Jewish pretensions (and the earnest warnings of the Epistle to the Hebrews show us that this for some was not done without the hardest struggle) shall be made free, not of an earthly but of a heavenly Jerusalem (3 : 12). The only Church in which any difficulty occurs in tracing the correlation between the form of the victory and the form of the reward is the last.

Paradise. We may trace the word through an ascending scale of meanings. From any garden of delight, which is its first meaning, it comes to be predominantly applied to the garden of Eden, then to the resting-place (in the invisible world) of separate souls in joy and felicity, and lastly, to the very heaven itself; and we see eminently in it what we see indeed in so many words, how revealed religion assumes them into her service, and makes them vehicles of far higher truth than any which they knew at first, transforming and transfiguring them, as in this case, from glory to glory.

8. The next in order to Ephesus of the Seven Churches is Smyrna; the next not only in the spiritual order here, but in the natural as well, lying as it

does a little to the north of that city. Smyrna was one of the fairest and noblest cities of Ionia. This Church must have been founded at a very early date, though there is no mention of it either in the Acts or the Epistles of Paul. T. —Smyrna was



Smyrna.

ises, most deep fetches from the secrets of God, being as it were eyes of truth, seeds and kernels of knowledge." These words proclaim to us that they are matters of weightiest concernment to the whole Church of God, which Christ is uttering here.

considered, in the time of the apostles, the second city of Asia, Ephesus holding the first rank. One of its early bishops was Polycarp, who had been the disciple of John. Like Ephesus, it was ruined in the Turkish invasion, yet its admirable situation for commerce revived it, and it is now large and opulent. The Apostolic Church in Smyrna seems to have been harassed by the insults of the Jews, the original persecutors, who retained their hostility and even their power long after the fall of their city. *Croly.*

9. These words constitute a very beautiful parenthesis, declaring as they do the judgment of Heaven concerning this Church of Smyrna as contradistinguished from the judgment of earth. Men saw nothing there save the poverty, but he who sees not as man seeth saw the true riches which this seeming poverty concealed, which indeed the poverty, rightly interpreted, *was*; even as he too often sees the real poverty which may lie behind the show of riches; for there are both poor rich men and rich poor men in his sight.

The synagogue of Satan. A hard saying, a terrible designation on the lips of him who uses not such words at random, but one which they, once the chosen people of the Lord, had wrought with all their might to deserve. Nothing else indeed was possible for them, if they would not be his people indeed; they could not be as the heathen, merely *non-Christian*, they must be *anti-Christian*. The measure of their former nearness to God was the measure of their present distance from him. As nothing is accidental in this book, so it is worth remarking that, as we have here "*the synagogue of Satan*," so presently, "*the throne of Satan*" (2 : 13), and then lastly, "*the depths of Satan*" (2 : 24); "*the synagogue of Satan*" representing the Jewish an-

tagonism to the Church, "*the throne of Satan*" the heathen, and "*the depths of Satan*" the heretical.

10. "*Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer.*" The great Captain of our salvation never keeps back or conceals what those who faithfully witness for him may have to bear for his name's sake; never entices recruits into his service, or seeks to retain them under his banner by the promise that they shall find all things easy and pleasant there. He here announces that bonds, and tribulation, and death itself are before as many as at Smyrna shall continue faithful to the end. But for all this they are *not* to fear. Presently he will declare to them *why* they should not fear. T.—"*Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*" We are to be faithful unto death, this day, and every day. We are to live a life of entire consecration; crucified unto the world and the world unto us. And if we have sufficient faith to let him day by day and in all things dispose of us, take what he will, give what he will, send where he will, we need not envy those who literally suffered martyrdom for his name's sake. For us, too, there is laid up a crown of life. G. B.—When eternal life is promised to faith, or love, or hope, it is upon supposal that those graces, being planted in the heart, shall finally prosper. He that is faithful to the death shall inherit the crown of life. It is love that never fails that shall enter into heaven. "It is hope firm unto the end" that shall be accomplished in a glorious fruition. *Bates.*

11. This "*second death*," setting forth as it does the death in life of the lost, as contrasted with the life in death of the saved, is a phrase peculiar to the Apocalypse. But, though the *word* is not on the lips of the Lord during his earthly life, he does not shrink from proclaiming the fearful *thing*. T.

Section 376.

REVELATION ii. 12-29.

12 AND to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath
13 the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas *was* my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan
14 dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of
15 Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also
16 them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will
17 come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

18 And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write ; These things saith the Son of God,
 19 who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet *are* like fine brass ; I know thy
 works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works ; and the last
 20 *to be* more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou
 sufferest that woman Jezabel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce
 21 my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her
 22 space to repent of her fornication ; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a
 bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of
 23 their deeds. And I will kill her children with death ; and all the churches shall know
 that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts : and I will give unto every one of you
 24 according to your works. But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as
 have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak ; I
 25 will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have *already*, hold fast till I
 26 come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give
 27 power over nations : And he shall rule them with a rod of iron ; as the vessels of a potter
 28 shall they be broken to shivers : even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the
 29 morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

THE *secret* of the Lord is with them that fear him, and is felt by dwelling with God, by thinking of God more than by talking of him. To each of his servants he giveth "a white stone, and in the stone a new name is written, which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it." F. W. R.—He that overcometh—every victorious soul prevailing by faith and by righteousness in the long and patient battle of life—shall have secret satisfactions springing up in his heart, known only between himself and his Lord. They will not consist in outward applauses, in visible successes, in any worldly compensations whatever. The chief of them all will be the silent assurances of his personal affection who is the purest, highest, holiest. Faith must dwell in her own sanctuary, see by her own light, feed on her own secret and immortal manna, be content with her own joy, cling to the white stone with the ineffable name, and wait for her spiritual justification and victory. F. D. H.

And I will give him the morning star. In the last chapter of the Book we read, *I Jesus am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.* The words before us are, therefore, *I will give myself to him.* But myself especially in one character ; as the light of life ; as the light which springs up in the morning after a long night of gloom and storm ; as the joy and comfort of the weary watcher, the compensation for long waiting, and the prize of long struggling. It is not wholly unlike the words of Peter with reference to the prophetic word : *Whereunto ye do well if ye give heed, as to a lamp giving light in a murky place, until day dawn and the day-star arise in your hearts.* The promise is that that day shall dawn, that that day-star shall at last rise upon our hearts. V.

12. Pergamos. Although of high antiquity, its greatness, splendor, and importance did not date very far back. It only attained these under the successors of Alexander ; of whom one made Pergamos the capital of his kingdom—the same kingdom which a later of his dynasty, Attalus III., bequeathed to the Romans. It was famous for its immense library, collected in rivalry with that of Alexandria ; our "parchment" (pergamenum) deriving its name from thence ; for splendid temples of Zeus, of Athene, and of Apollo ; but most of all for the worship of Æsculapius, the remains of whose magnificent temple outside the walls of the city still remain. T.

"*The two-edged, the sharp sword.*"—We read of this sword in the first chapter and also in the Epistle to the Hebrews. *The word of God is living and*

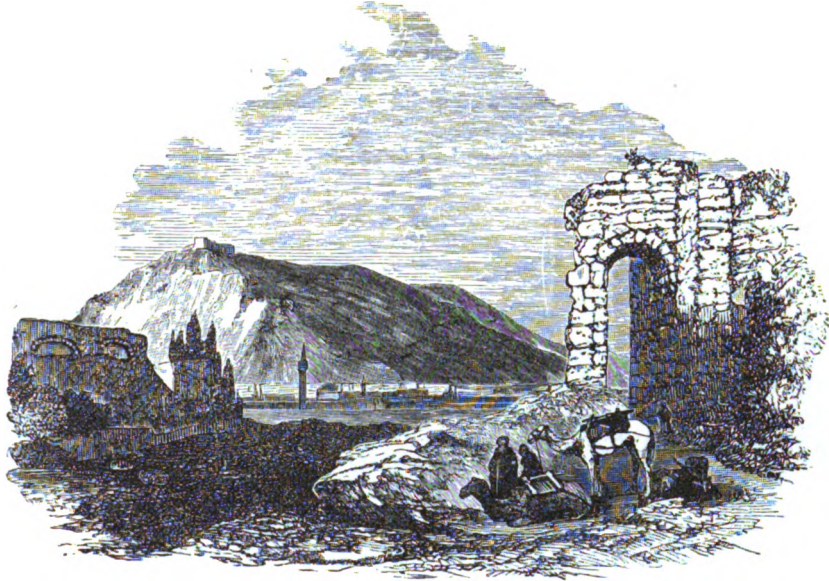
active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents. This sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, proceeds out of the mouth of Christ.

13. Where the throne of Satan is. A very fearful description, and indicating a very merciful recognition on the part of Christ of the difficulties and of the temptations of his people. In this case he was able to testify that difficulties and temptations, of an outward kind at least, had not overcome their constancy. They had held fast what they had been taught of Christ.

14. But what the fires of martyrdom could not do, a more secret and insidious snare might effect. They who could brave martyrdom for Christ can not always resist an enemy in their own camp—

some bosom sin may do what intimidation and persecution have failed to effect. Listen, then. *But I have against thee a few things.* How serious a beginning! Which of us can hear unmoved when Christ says, *I have against thee a few things? Thou hast there, in Pergamos, men holding the teaching of*

Balaam, who taught to Balak how to throw a stumblingblock before the sons of Israel—namely, both to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. That strange mixture of a man, as Balaam has been called but too truly, a man who heard the words of God and saw the vision of the Almighty,



Pergamos.

yet whose heart went after covetousness, and made a fatal compromise between the service of God and the service of Mammon; when he found that he was not allowed to curse Israel, and thus to possess himself of the promised reward in one way, suggested to Balak a more subtle but far more potent spell, in the form of a temptation to Israel through the lusts of the flesh. The iniquities described in the 25th chapter of the Book of Numbers, following immediately upon the unsuccessful visit of Balaam in which cursing itself had been supernaturally turned into blessing, are expressly ascribed in a later chapter of that book (ch. 31) to the secret agency of Balaam.

15. There is no occasion for distinguishing here between the doctrine of the Nicolaitans and the doctrine of Balaam. The Nicolaitans were persons who talked loudly of the liberty of Christ, and used that liberty *for an occasion to the flesh.* They were among those described in the Epistle of Jude as *ungodly men turning the grace of God into lasciviousness.* V.

17. To eat of the hidden manna. The seeing of Christ as he is, and through this beatific vision the being made like to him, is identical with this eating of the hidden manna; which shall, as it

were, be then brought forth from the sanctuary, the holy of holies of God's immediate presence, where it was withdrawn from sight so long, that all may partake of it; the glory of Christ, now shrouded and concealed, being then revealed at once to his people and in them.

18. Thyatira, a city of no first-rate dignity, was a Macedonian colony; and it may be looked at as a slight and unintentional confirmation, in a minute particular, of the veracity of the Acts, that Lydia, a purple-seller of Thyatira, is met exactly in the Macedonian city of Philippi, this being precisely what was likely to happen from the close and frequent intercourse maintained between a mother city and its daughter colonies. From this Lydia, whose heart the Lord had opened to attend to the things spoken of Paul, the Church at Thyatira may have taken its beginnings. She who had gone forth for a while, to buy and sell and get gain, when she returned home may have brought home with her far richer merchandise than any she had looked to obtain.

19. "*And the last to be more than the first.*" The faithful in Thyatira were growing and increasing in this service of love, this patience of faith; herein satisfying the desire of him, who evermore

desires for his people that they should abound more and more in all good things. **20.** The whole condition of things at Thyatira was exactly the reverse of what it was at Ephesus: there much zeal for the maintenance of sound doctrine, but little love, and as a consequence, no doubt, few ministrations of love; here the activity of faith and love, but

insufficient zeal for the maintenance of godly discipline and doctrine, a patience of error even where there was not a participation in it. **Jezebel.** A comparison of this verse with vs. 14-16 leaves no doubt that the Jezebelites, and Balaamites, and Nicolaitans, with secondary differences no doubt, were yet substantially the same: all libertine sects, dis-



Thyatira.

claiming the obligations of the moral law; all starting with a denial that Jesus Christ was come in the flesh, and that in the flesh therefore men were to be holy; all alike false spiritualists, whose high-flying pretensions did not hinder them from ending in the foulest fleshly sins; or which rather were themselves the means of entangling them therein.

21. I gave her space to repent, and she repented not. The fact that punishment does not at once overtake sinners is constantly misunderstood by them as an evidence that it never will overtake them (Eccl. 8 : 11; Isa. 26 : 10; Ps. 26 : 11); that God does not see, or, seeing, does not care to avenge. Christ opens out here another aspect under which this delay in the divine revenges may be regarded. The very time during which ungodly men are heaping up for themselves greater wrath against the day of wrath, was a time lent them for repentance (Rom. 2 : 4; 2 Pet. 3 : 9), if only they would have understood the object and the meaning of it.

25. "*But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.*" It is on this condition that he will impose on them no additional burden. What they

have of sound doctrine, of holy living, this they must hold fast, must so grasp it that none shall wrest it from them, till the day when the Lord shall come, and bring this long and painful struggle for the maintenance of his truth to an end. Ever and ever in Scripture, not the day of death, but the day of the Lord Jesus, is put as the term of all conflict.

26. "*To him will I give power over the nations.*" The royalties of Christ shall by reflection and communication be the royalties also of his Church. They shall reign; but only because Christ reigns, and because he is pleased to share his dignity with them.

28. Thus does he who is "fairer than the children of men" claim all that is fairest and loveliest in creation as the faint shadow and image of his perfections. When Christ promises that he will give to his faithful ones the morning star, he promises that he will give to them himself, that he will impart to them his own glory and a share in his own royal dominion; for the star is evermore the symbol of royalty, being therefore linked with the scepter (Num. 24 : 17). All the glory of the world shall end in being the glory of the Church, if only this abide faithful to its Lord. T.

Section 377.

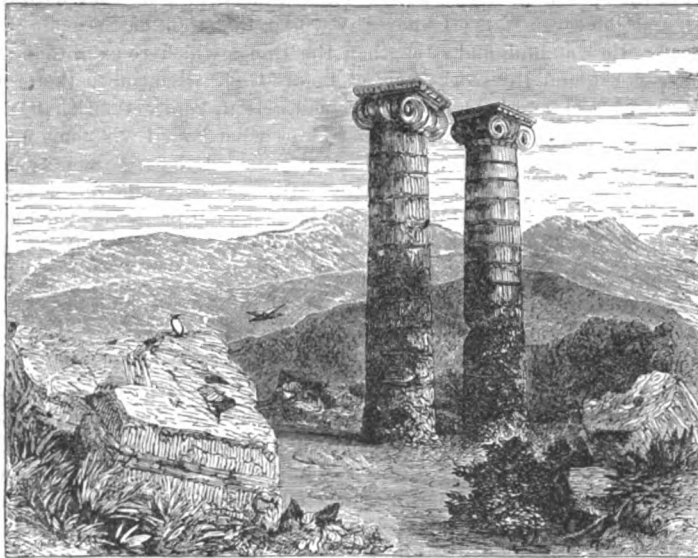
REVELATION iii. 1-22

- 1 AND unto the angel of the church in Sardis write ; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars ; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that
 2 thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are
 3 ready to die : for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not
 4 watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon
 5 thee. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments ; and
 6 they shall walk with me in white : for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment ; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life,
 7 but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.
- 7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write ; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth ; and
 8 shutteth, and no man openeth ; I know thy works : behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it : for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and
 9 hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie ; behold, I will make them to come and worship
 10 before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all
 11 the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly : hold that fast
 12 which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out : and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which
 13 cometh down out of heaven from my God : and *I will write upon him* my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.
- 14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write ; these things saith the Amen,
 15 the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God ; I know thy works, that
 16 thou art neither cold nor hot ; I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art
 17 lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing ; and knowest not that
 18 thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked : I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ; and white raiment, that thou mayest be
 19 clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear ; and anoint thine eyes with
 20 eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten : be zealous there-
 21 fore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock : if any man hear my voice, and
 22 open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set
 down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

CHRIST approaches the door of the heart, and says, when there is no ear to listen, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." In the hour of thought, in the depth of night, in the shadow of trial, in the agony of remorse, he makes the soul feel that it is alone with himself. *Ker.*—The thought of a Divine Person, our Lord and our God, knocking for admittance ; coming to us divested of his terrors, and pleading with us as a suppliant ; this is the meaning of everything which befalls us, this the object of every pang of remorse, of every chastisement for sin, of every disappointment of a heart's wish, of every dispensation of an afflicting Providence, of every pain and sorrow, of every sickness and care, of every loss and woe, that Christ may make his knock heard ; that the owner of the mansion may hear at last that calm patient ceaseless sound, and bestir himself to let the stranger in. V.

1. *Sardis* was the ancient seat of the Lydian kings, and memorable as the city of Croesus. It was, like all the leading cities of Asia, magnificent, intellectual, and profligate. It perished in the general decay of Asia Minor. The crime imputed to the

surely saw. T.—The dead thing that has a name to live is deadly; it deals in death; it assimilates all around to itself; it testifies powerfully against vital religion by the exhibition of a lifeless religion. If the light in you be darkness, how great that dark-



Ruins of Sardis.

ness! How mightily grew Sardis! how large the place it occupies in the ecclesiastical history of the last eighteen centuries! how baneful its influence upon the other Churches, so that they had almost to hide their diminished heads; and how largely is it represented at the present day upon the earth! Men know our name; Christ knows our works. G. B.

It is a very instructive fact, that everywhere else, in the Epistles to all the Churches save only to this and to Laodicea, there is mention of some burden to be borne, of a conflict either with foes within

Church of Sardis is inactivity in the preservation and diffusion of the faith. Its punishment is appropriate. It shall be taken by surprise. *Croly.*

He who hath the seven Spirits of God.

The same expression occurs in the first chapter. When the Spirit of God is thus described in a sevenfold character, it is designed, no doubt, to express his diffusion (as we call it) through the universal Church, the manifold gifts and graces by which he pervades all the congregations of Christ's people everywhere. And here we are reminded that wherever the Holy Spirit acts, he acts as the Spirit of Jesus; it is he who *has* the seven Spirits of God. V.

A name that thou livest. The fact that Sardis should have had this name and fame of life is very startling, and may summon each and all to an earnest heart-searching. There would be nothing nearly so startling if Sardis had been counted by the Churches round about as a Church fallen into lethargy and hastening to death. But there is no appearance of the kind. Sardis had a name that she lived, was well spoken of, regarded, we may well believe, as a model Church, can therefore have been by no means wanting in the outer manifestations of spiritual life; while yet all these shows of life did but conceal the realities of death; so he, before whose eyes of fire no falsehood can endure, too

the Church or without, or with both. Only in these two nothing of the kind occurs. The exceptions are very significant. There is no need to assume that the Church at Sardis had openly coalesced and joined hands with the heathen world; this would in those days have been impossible; nor yet that it had renounced the *appearance* of opposition to the world. But the two tacitly understood one another. The world could endure it, because it too was a world. T.

2. If watching were absent, work would become *formal and dead*. The labor of the hands, as we all feel, degenerates quickly into barren routine, if there be not a constant effort to keep the heart fresh. Duty can never live long separate from truth, Christian service from Christ. There must be oil in the lamp if it is to burn. It is watching unto prayer that brings in this divine life, that quickens the powers, and makes them rise up for new and higher work. The special danger of our age is that we may lose perception of the real soul and end of all our labor in the multiplied machinery that carries it on. Our very Christian activities will lead to decline and death if spiritual life is not growing within, in proportion to them, if we are not realizing more strongly our own individual spiritual wants, living more in the presence of eternity, and remembering that admonition which stands connected with

Christ—"Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die." *Ker.*—God wills that with all due regret for what we have lost, we do not forget what we still have. Let us concentrate all the elements of life which are scattered in the midst of us. Let us unite our efforts, our prayers. Let us ask life for the community, that life which we want, and which doubtless comes only by individuals to the community; but which is reflected from the community to individuals. Life in the Spirit, love in the Spirit, the Spirit himself, that is truth in truth itself; life in life, eternity in love, the Spirit, that is Jesus Christ within us. This we must conquer on our knees, this we must urgently beg, this energetically will. A. V.

3. "Prize now"—this is what the warning word of a gracious Lord would say—"that which thou didst once prize at so high a rate, which came to thee so evidently as a gift from God, accompanied with the Holy Ghost from heaven; and repent thee of all the coldness and heartlessness with which thou hast learned to regard it." **I will come on thee as a thief.** The Lord takes up and repeats here his own words, twice spoken, with slight variations, in the days of his ministry on earth; words which must have profoundly impressed themselves on those who heard them, and on the early Church in general, as is evidenced from the frequent references to them in other parts of the New Testament. It is the *stealthiness* of Christ's advent, and thus his coming upon the secure sinner when least he is looked for, which is the point of the comparison.

4. Here are many promises in one. The promise of life, for only the living walk, the dead are still; of liberty, for the free walk, and not the fast bound; of beauty, for the grace and dignity of long garments only appear to the full when the person wearing them is in motion. And all this has its corresponding truth in the kingdom of heaven. God's saints and servants here in this world of grace, and no doubt also in that world of glory, are best seen and most to be admired when they are engaged in active services of love. And such they shall have. They shall walk with their Lord, shall be glorified together with him; his servants shall serve him. And why? "*for they are worthy.*" There are those who "*are worthy*" according to the rules which free grace *has* laid down, although there are none according to those which strict justice *might* have laid down; and God is "faithful" in that having set forth these conditions of grace he will observe and abide by them. T.—"They shall walk with him in white; they shall follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." It is true that there will be a great difference in many things. The Jerusalem above, golden and glorious, with the temple where they serve him day and night, shall be some-

thing else than that where he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself. The goodly land of Canaan, flowing with milk and honey, could have no glory at its best compared with the better country when that promise is fulfilled—"Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off." *Ker.*

5. *He that conquereth.* Not he who has been without sin, not he who has never fallen. Not these; but they rather who have had a hard fight for it with self and sin, with world and flesh and devil, separately now, and now combined; who fell often, but ever rose again; were often defeated, but never vanquished; were often struck down, but only upon their knees; and, by the help of prayer and faith and patience, were made conquerors at last through the grace of him that loved them. These, having confessed Christ below, shall be confessed by him as his before his Father and before his angels. V.

But I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. Christ had spoken when on earth of confessing those who confessed him before his Father in heaven and before the angels. That "in heaven" is of course omitted now, for there is no longer any contrast between the Father *in heaven* and the Son *on earth*; but the two confessions, which were separated before, appear united now; and in general we may observe of this Epistle that, in great part, it is woven together of sayings which the Lord had already uttered once or oftener in the days during which he pitched his tent among men; he now setting his seal from heaven upon his words uttered on earth. T.

7. *Philadelphia* (brotherly love). A city of the province of Lydia, in Asia Minor, about seventy miles east of Smyrna. It contains a population of about 15,000, one twelfth of whom are nominal Christians. This church was highly commended, more than any of the seven, and while her sister cities have fallen into decay, she still survives with the remains of her Christian temples and worship. Gibbon says of her: "Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect—a column in a scene of ruins." A tall column still graces those ruins, so that this church appears like a symbolic realization of the 12th verse. *Croly.*

10. "Because thou has *kept* my word, therefore in return I will *keep* thee." The promise does not imply that the Philadelphian church should be exempted from persecutions which should come on all other portions of the Church. It is a better promise than this; and one which, of course, they share with all who are faithful as they are—to be kept *in* temptation, not to be exempted *from* temptation.

11. **Behold, I come quickly.** This announcement of the speedy coming of the Lord,

the ever-recurring key-note of this book, is sometimes used as a word of fear for those who are abusing the Master's absence, careless and secure as those for whom no day of reckoning should ever arrive; but sometimes as a word of infinite comfort for those with difficulty and painfulness hold-

Church, him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God. V.

The name of the city of my God. He that hath the name of this city written upon him is hereby declared free of it. This heavenly city which hath the foundations, and for which Abraham looked,

the "continuing city," is but referred to here; the full and magnificent description of it is reserved as the fitting close of the book; and not of this book only, but of the whole Bible. It goes by many and glorious names in Scripture. "That great city, the holy Jerusalem," John calls it, claiming for it this title of "holy," which the earthly Jerusalem once possessed, but which it had forfeited for ever. "Jerusalem which is above," Paul calls it, while elsewhere for it is "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem."



Philadelphia.

ing their ground; he that should bring the long contest at once to an end; who should at once turn the scale, and for ever, in favor of righteousness and truth, is even at the door. Such a word of comfort is this announcement here: "Yet a little while, and thy patience shall have its full reward; only in the interval, and till I come, *hold that fast which thou hast.*" That which Philadelphia "*had*" we have just seen—zeal, patience, with little means accomplishing no little work. T.

12. Those whom the Lamb has redeemed are the fittest to worship him. While they speak of his power to save as none others can, and sing of his grace and love as none but they can sing of them, they are living proofs of the might of that power and the riches of that grace and love. The mere presence of a redeemed sinner in heaven is a nobler setting forth of Jehovah's glory than any words could be, than all the songs of all the angels. "Him that overcometh," says our Lord, "will I make a pillar," a trophy, a monumental column, "in the temple of my God." C. B.—It is a little striking, as a mere coincidence, that travelers describe, among the few ruins of Philadelphia at this day, four strong marble pillars standing in one spot, which once supported the dome of a church, and on the sides of these pillars inscriptions. It is added, *One solitary pillar of high antiquity has been often noticed, as reminding beholders of the remarkable words in the Apocalyptic message to the Philadelphian*

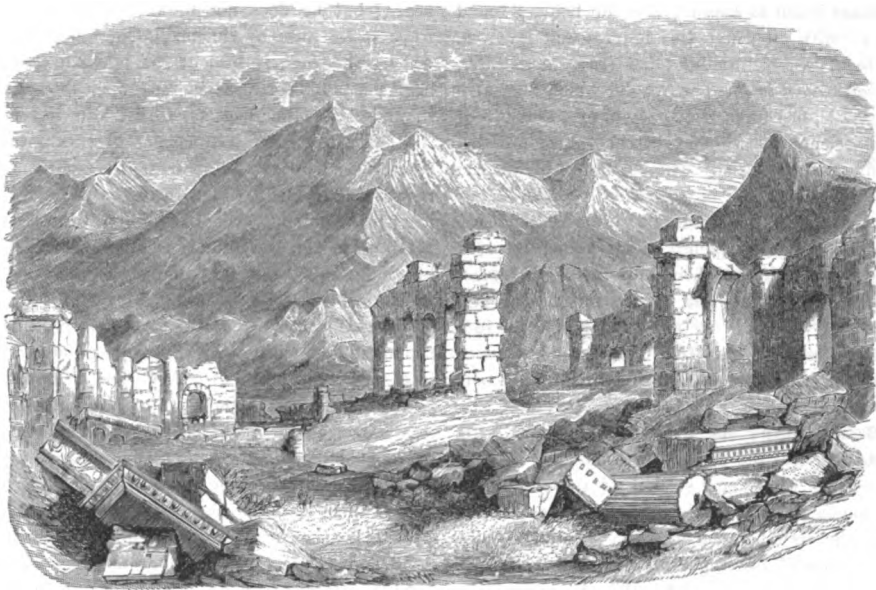
I can not leave this Epistle, so full of precious promises to a Church which, having little strength, had yet held fast the word of Christ's patience, without citing a remarkable passage from Gibbon (*Decline and Fall*, c. lxiv.), in which he writes like one who almost believes that the threatenings and promises of God did fulfill themselves in history: "In the loss of Ephesus the Christians deplored the fall of the first angel, the extinction of the first candlestick, of the Revelation; the desolation is complete; and the temple of Diana or the church of Mary will equally elude the search of the curious traveler. The circus and three stately theatres of Laodicea are now peopled with wolves and foxes; Sardis is reduced to a miserable village; the God of Mahomet, without a rival or a son, is invoked in the mosques of Thyatira and Pergamus, and the populousness of Smyrna is supported by the foreign trade of the Franks and Armenians. Philadelphia alone has been saved by prophecy, or courage. At a distance from the sea, forgotten by the emperors, encompassed on all sides by the Turks, her valiant citizens defended their religion and freedom above fourscore years, and at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies and Churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect—a column in a scene of ruins—a pleasing example that the paths of honor and safety may sometimes be the same." T.

14. Laodicea, on the Lycus, was a city in Southern Phrygia, between Philadelphia and Colosse. In Roman times it was a foremost city among those of the second rank in Asia Minor. T.—All has perished now. He who removed the candlestick of Ephesus has rejected Laodicea out of his mouth. The fragments of aqueducts and theatres spread over a vast extent of country tell of the former magnificence of this city. Modern travelers speak of its

present state as one of blank dreariness. "Nothing can exceed," says one of these, "the desolation and melancholy appearance of the site of Laodicea; no picturesque features in the nature of the ground on which it stands relieve the dull uniformity of its undulating and barren hills; and with few exceptions, its gray and widely scattered ruins possess no architectural merit to attract the attention of the traveler. Yet it is impossible to view them without interest, when we consider what Laodicea once was, and how it is connected with the early history of Christianity." It is indeed in that connection that its name still lives among us. V.

The state of things in the Seven Churches marks

evidently a period considerably later than that of Paul's Epistles addressed to the same parts. The germs of error apparent in those Epistles had expanded into definite sects (Rev. 2 : 6, 15); the first ardor of some churches had cooled (Rev. 2 : 4, 5; 3 : 2), while that of others had further kindled (2 : 19). The days of the martyrdom of Antipas, Christ's servant, are referred to (2 : 13) as certainly not recent. Again, Laodicea is described (3 : 17) as wealthy and proud. Now that city was destroyed by an earthquake between the sixth and tenth years of Nero, and recovered by her own means, unassisted by the state. This would take some years to accomplish, and still more time would be required to bring



Ruins of Laodicea.

about such a state of careless ease as is here described. A.

Beginning of the creation of God. Not he whom God created the first, but he who was the fountain-source of all the creation of God, by whom God created all things (John 1 : 1-3; Col. 1 : 15, 18); even as elsewhere in this book Christ appears as the author of creation.

15, 16. Best understood by regarding the "cold" here as one hitherto untouched by the powers of grace. There is always hope of such an one, that, when he does come under those powers, he may become a zealous and earnest Christian. But the "lukewarm" is one who has tasted of the good gift and of the powers of the world to come, who has been a subject of divine grace, but in whom that grace has failed to kindle more than the feeblest spark.

17. "And knowest not that thou art the wretched and the miserable one, and poor, and blind, and naked." The Laodicean angel and Church were walking in a vain show and imagination of their own

righteousness, their own advances in spiritual insight and knowledge. **18.** There is a certain irony, but the irony of divine love, in the words. He who might have commanded, prefers rather to counsel. To the merchants and factors of this wealthy mercantile city he addresses himself in their own dialect. Christ here invites to dealings with himself. He has gold of so fine a standard that none will reject it. The wools of Laodicea, of a raven blackness, were famous throughout the world. He has raiment of dazzling white for as many as will receive it at his hands. There were ointments for which many of the Asiatic cities, perhaps Laodicea among the number, were famous; but he, as he will presently announce, has eyesalve more precious than them all. Would it not be wise to transact their chief business with him?

What things does the Lord name, which when the man has made his own, he shall be no longer "poor, and blind, and naked"? They are three. And first, as he is "poor"—"gold tried in the fire,

that thou mayest be rich." A comparison with 1 Pet. 1 : 7, teaches us that by this "*gold*" we must understand faith; for faith being a gift of God, must therefore be bought of Christ; and such faith as would stand the test, would endure in the furnace of affliction. Then should he be rich indeed. Secondly, as he is "*naked*," "*Buy of me*," says the Lord, "*white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed*." We should understand by this raiment not merely the righteousness of Christ *imparted*, but also that righteousness *imputed*; for both are needful, the one as needful as the other, if the shame of our nakedness is not to appear; it is the being "*found in him*" with all which this implies and involves. And then, lastly, "*anoint thine eye with eyesalve, that thou mayest see*." The eye for which this salve is needed is, of course, the spiritual eye, that eye of the conscience by which spiritual things are discerned and appreciated. The beginning of all true amendment is to see ourselves as we are, in our misery, our guilt, our shame; and the ability to do this is the first consequence of the anointing with that eyesalve which the Lord here invites this angel to purchase of him. The Spirit convinces of sin, and by this "*eyesalve*" we must understand the illuminating grace of the Holy Ghost, which at once shows to us God, and in God and in his light ourselves.

19. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. He, the great Master-builder, squares and polishes with many strokes of the chisel and the hammer the stones which shall find a place at last in the walls of the heavenly Jerusalem. In this "*as many*" lies the same emphasis as in the "*every son*" of Heb. 12 : 6. *All* whom He loves are included in the same discipline of correction, are made sooner or later to be able to say, "Thy loving correction shall make me great" (Ps. 18 : 35). Others may be let alone (Ps. 73 : 5, 12; Isa. 1 : 5); but not they. Not a few, if their prosperity lasts a little longer than that of others, fancy that they are to be exceptions to this rule. But it is never so. They can only be excepted from the discipline through being excepted from the sonship. T.

20. When we read the gracious words of the Saviour in the *gospel*, we might well think that divine condescension could go no further. There, he bids us to come to him, to pray for pardon and not faint, to knock at the door of mercy, to strive for entrance at the strait gate, promising us certain and full salvation, if we thus, with sincere earnestness, endeavor after eternal life; and, surely, they, who will not seek him, deserve to perish. But *here*, he takes the very means to win our love which he requires of us to win his. He comes nigh to us, stands knocking at our hearts, calling upon us to open the door and admit him, entreating leave to

enter that he may have fellowship with us, and we with him. The last vestige of excuse is taken away, the last shadow of doubt should pass from our minds. We need no longer seek for him, he has found us. The question is no longer, Will he hear our prayer? but, Shall we hear his? Not, Will he open the door of heaven to us? but, Shall we keep our hearts closed against him? His readiness to save is assured; it is now for us to decide whether we will be saved or not. *Bethune*.—Christ indeed knocks, claims admittance as to his own; so lifts up his voice that it may be heard, in one sense *must* be heard; but he does not break open the door, or force an entrance by violence. There is a sense in which every man is lord of the house of his own heart; it is his fortress; he must open the gates of it, and unless he does so, Christ can not enter. And, as a necessary complement of this power to open, there belongs also to man the mournful prerogative and privilege of refusing to open: he may keep the door shut even to the end; he may thus continue to the last blindly at strife with his own blessedness; a miserable conqueror, who conquers to his own everlasting loss and defeat. T.

I will come in to him. His presence is promised, and with it the light, and comfort, and bliss, and glory of it. Of these the heart can not hold much, and the little it can hold it is not always in a frame to enjoy; but oh to have Christ in the heart, to have the King of glory making our unworthy souls his dwelling place, living, abiding, acting in them—whether he reveal his presence, or cloud at seasons the glory of it—who does not say, "This indeed is blessedness? I have my sorrows, but with Christ within me, I have still within me a fountain of amazing joy." C. B.

21. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." A magnificent variation of Christ's words spoken in the days of his flesh: "The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them. Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." Wonderful indeed is this promise, which, being the last and the crowning, is also the highest and most glorious of all. Step by step they have advanced, till a height is reached than which no higher can be conceived. And more wonderful still, if we consider to whom this promise is here addressed. He whom Christ threatened just now to reject with loathing out of his mouth, is offered a place with him on his throne. But indeed so it is; the highest place is within reach of the lowest; the faintest spark of grace may be fanned into the mightiest flame of divine love. T.—What combatant would not be satisfied if he were promised the lowest place of honor among the conquerors? But nothing less than the highest of all, the place of honor, not on the foot-

stool, but in the center of the throne; in truth, only in such a loving heart as that of God could such a promise originate, and an eternity will be required by slow degrees to comprehend its import! Then open the door wide, so that nothing bars entrance within. And, "overcome!" The crown is a thousandfold worthy of the struggle, and he who holds it forth stands with us! *Van O.*

My Father's throne. Here are two thrones

mentioned. *My throne*, saith Christ; this is the condition of glorified saints who sit with Christ in his throne; but *my Father's* (i. e., God's) *throne* is the power of divine majesty; herein none may sit but God, and the God-man Jesus Christ. To be installed in God's throne, to sit at God's right hand, is to have a godlike royalty, such as his Father hath, a royalty altogether incommunicable, whereof no creature is capable. *Mede.*

Section 378.

REVELATION iv. 1-11.

- 1 AFTER this I looked, and, behold, a door *was* opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I
- 2 will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and,
- 3 behold, a throne was set in heaven, and *one* sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and *there was* a rainbow round about the throne, in
- 4 sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne *were* four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had
- 5 on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are
- 6 the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne *there was* a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, *were* four beasts full of eyes
- 7 before and behind. And the first beast *was* like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and
- 8 the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast *was* like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and
- 9 is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that
- 10 sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast
- 11 their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

He sees a throne in heaven and one sitting on it, bright and pure as richest precious stone; and round his throne a rainbow like an emerald, the sign to us of hope and faithfulness, mercy and truth, which he himself appointed after the flood to comfort the fearful hearts of men. Around him are angels crowned; men like ourselves, but men who have fought the good fight, and conquered, and are now at rest; pure, as their white garments tell us; and victorious, as their crowns tell us. And from the throne came thunderings, and lightnings, and voices, as they did when he spoke to the Jews of old—signs of his terrible power as judge, and lawgiver, and avenger of all the wrong which is done on earth. And there are there, too, seven burning lamps—the seven spirits of God which give light and life to all created things, and most of all to righteous hearts. And before the throne is a sea of glass, the same sea which John saw in another vision, with us human beings standing on it; the sea of time, and space, and mortal life, on which we all have our little day. It seems to us to be a great thing now—time, and space, and the world; and yet it looked small enough to John as it lies in heaven before the throne of Christ, and he passes it by in a few words. For what are all suns and stars, and what are all ages and generations, and millions and millions of years, compared with eternity, with God's eternal heaven, and God whom not even heaven can contain? C. K.

THE series of seven seals is here introduced by a glorious vision. The divine throne is seen in heaven, surrounded by twenty-four thrones for the presbyters who represent the redeemed Church, and by four composite cherubic figures, instinct with life, symbols of the vital powers of creation in harmony with redemption. These all praise the Lord; but the creation, symbolized by the Zoa [unhappily translated *beasts*], only speaks *of* the Lord, while the Church, represented by the presbyters, speaks *to* him, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power." D. F.

The purpose of this chapter and the following is to authenticate the connection of the Jewish and the Christian dispensations. The Deity, the God of Israel, as he appeared to Isaiah (ch. 6) and Ezekiel (ch. 1), is seen combined with the Christian Saviour and the Holy Spirit in the development of the seals, a course of Providence, relative to the Christian Church. His splendor is imaged by precious stones, the usual emblem of all that is most magnificent and luminous. The "rainbow" is probably expressive of the divine mercy exercised in the act of covenant and probation. The "*living creatures*" resemble the cherubim and seraphim of Isaiah and Ezekiel; and under the shapes of the lion, the bull, the man, and the eagle, are emblematic of the supremacy, strength, wisdom, and rapidity of Providence. The "glassy sea" (v. 6), a natural and usual image of tranquillity, signifies the perfect peace of the Church when it shall stand in the presence of God. *Croly*.

It is from the earlier visions of the Apocalypse, from the openings of the door, the sights of the throne, and the four-and-twenty seats, and the angels, and the elders, and the living creatures, and the white-robed, palm-bearing host, and the harpers with their lofty hymns of praise, that many persons' notions of heaven are chiefly borrowed. Nor are they wrong in taking up the representations given in these visions of the position and services of the redeemed as faithful types and patterns of the destiny in reserve for those who at death do immediately pass into glory—of the adoration and praises which throughout eternity shall be ascending from their lips encompassing the throne. But it should ever be remembered that the pictures given in these visions of the place and circumstances and outward condition of the redeemed contain but a description of the state of disembodied spirits during that intermediate period which intervenes between death and the resurrection. They tell us nothing of that state which is to follow upon the resurrection, when, invested once again with a material framework, the spirit shall be fitted to renew its intercourse with material things. It is not its materialism which unfits this world, even as it now is, from becoming the

eternal home of the redeemed. What we want in order to turn earth into heaven, is not to have brighter skies above us, or lovelier landscapes around us; the skies are bright enough, the landscapes lovely enough, for beings a thousand times holier and a thousand times happier than we. Nor would any outward change whatever bring the unforgiven, the unaccepted, the unredeemed sinners of our race a step nearer to the true heaven. That heaven we desire ever to remember is a condition rather than a place, an inner state of the soul rather than an outward habitation for the body. Nevertheless, a correspondence shall exist between the sinless, purified, exalted estate of the redeemed hereafter and that material habitation which shall be prepared for them. W. H.

1. It was at once a most sublime and a most practical feature in the prophetic vision vouchsafed to John that so large a part of its scenes was laid *in heaven* rather than *on earth*. "A door was opened in heaven," i. e., a door opening *into* heaven; the very door of entrance to the heavenly world. This door into the world above was set open to lift their thought above the murderous edicts of tyrants, and their souls above all fear of prison, torture, and death; to inspire them with the Christian heroism of faith and love and hope of a blessed immortality. H. C.

2. The words in the original rather signify that "a throne *was lying* in heaven, and there was one sitting upon the throne." The throne had been lying in heaven, and its occupant had been sitting upon it long before the apostle's eyes were opened to discern it—yea, long before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made—even from everlasting. The beloved disciple, "becoming in the Spirit" at a certain moment, perceived what had been enacted from eternity, and shall never pass away, "a throne set in heaven and one sitting thereupon."

3. "He that sat was to look upon like a jasper and sardine stone," an appearance of the divine majesty in the person of God the Father, exactly harmonizing with that which the prophet Ezekiel had seen of old. "Upon the likeness of the throne," says he, recording *his* vision, "was the likeness, as the appearance of a man above upon it, and I saw as the color of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire." That is to say, the form which both prophet and apostle saw seated on the heavenly throne, was of a clear, brilliant flame-color, partly red like the sardine, or, to use a modern term, the carnelian, and partly of the lighter hue of yellow amber. E. M. G.

6. "*In the midst*," etc.; or, according to a Greek idiom, *between it and the throne*, in the interval between the sea and the throne. "*Four beasts*": *four living creatures*. As the four-and-twenty elders are the representatives of the Church, so the four living beings are representatives of creation. The number four is characteristic of the earth, with its four quarters, four courses, and four winds. The figure, originally taken from the cherubim in the tabernacle, was applied in the visions of the prophet Ezekiel, in a manner from which the description before us is transferred. V.

7, 8. The cherubim here have *six* wings, like the seraphim in Isa. 6, whereas the cherubim in Ezek. 1 : 6 had *four* wings each. They are called by the same name, "*living creatures*." But, whereas in Ezekiel each living creature has all four faces, here the four belong severally one to each. The *four living creatures* answer by contrast to the four world-powers represented by *four beasts*. *Fausset*.—Adoration at the throne, activity in the temple—the worship of the heart, the worship of the voice, and the worship of the hands—the whole being consecrated and devoted to God—those are the service of the upper sanctuary. *Here* the flesh is often wearied with an hour of worship; *there* "they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." And it matters not though sometimes the celestial citizens are represented as always singing, and sometimes as always flying; sometimes as always working, and sometimes as always resting; for there the work is rest, and every movement song; and the "*many mansions*" make one temple, and the whole being of its worshipers one tune—one mighty anthem, long as eternity, and large as its burden, the praise of the great Three-One—the self-renewing and ever-sounding hymn, in which the flight of every seraph and the harp of every saint and the smile of every raptured spirit is a several note, and repeats ever over again, "*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*" *Hamilton*.

11. **Thou hast created all things.** To make anything but God his own end were to set something above God. When as yet there was no creation, and no providence, God contained in himself all the reasons of what was afterward to be; and these reasons still remain. To create was in a manner to reveal himself—the earliest revelation; not by words, but acts, and every creature, with all

that proceeds from it, is a part of this display. The addition of spiritual and intellectual agencies, men and angels, afforded indeed spectators of this glory, and judges of this skill. But all creature minds, however spiritual and however free, are infinitely inferior to Jehovah, and infinitely too small to afford the real motive of the universe, which must have been eternal, which must have been God. All the boundless combinations and interchanges of matter and mind (the latter being far the more complicated and wonderful), all the play of wheel in wheel, of cause in cause, of thought in thought, of passion in passion, conspire to work out one and the same result—the glory of God. J. W. A.

For thy pleasure they are. God delights in his law, as the transcript of his nature; he delights in his Son, as the express image of his person; in the whole plan of salvation, as unfolding the riches of his goodness and wisdom; in the holiness of his intelligent universe, as reflecting his own moral character; in their happiness, as the effect of his power, his grace, and his mercy. For the same reason he delights in all his purposes and all his works—in his providential government—in the God-exalting truths of his word—in the enlargement, purity, and final perfection of his Church, and the fulfillment of all the designs of infinite love and mercy. As God thus delights in the manifestation of himself—that is, in his own glory—so all his acts, guided by his infinite wisdom and performed by his almighty power, are directed to this end. N. W. T.

We may fearlessly say that we men are of too noble a make and too lofty a mien to give the strength of our thoughts and hearts to any beneath the throne of him who made us. No mortal man, no angel, no creature however noble and eminent, may claim in its own name and for itself the homage of a soul which, living once, lives for ever. Our end in thought, and affection, and effort must be none other than the end for which the best of men, for which the angel, for which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for which the almighty God himself lives, and thinks, and loves, and works. For whom does God live? For himself; that he may contemplate, and love, and glorify himself. And such is the high honor that he has put on us men, that the end of our being is none other than that of his own; nor can we refuse to love and to serve him without forfeiting our true patent of nobility among the creatures of his hand. H. P. L.

Section 379.

REVELATION v. 1-14.

1 AND I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the
 2 backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice,
 3 Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven,
 nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.
 4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither
 5 to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the
 tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven
 6 seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and
 in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven
 7 eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and
 8 took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had
 taken the book, the four beasts and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, hav-
 ing every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of
 9 saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open
 the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of
 10 every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings
 11 and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many
 angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was
 12 ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice,
 Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength,
 13 and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the
 earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I
 saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, *be* unto him that sitteth upon the
 14 throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the
 four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

THAT song of angels which ceases neither day nor night—we would not detract from its harmony or its significance. Verily the majesty of the Invisible is deserving of such homage; and the wonders of creation even of old waked into melody the sons of God, when with the morning stars they “shouted and sang together for joy.” Yet there is a song more rapturous and elevated, such as breaks from the lips of each new inmate, and is echoed by the sympathetic choir of the saints, until all heaven rings with the gladsome acclamation, “Worthy the Lamb that was slain, for he has redeemed *me* by his blood.” Although angels join in that song, it has a significance which they can never learn. They can never say, This Lamb was slain *for us*. Accordingly, the nearest to the throne of Jesus are those who represent the Church of the redeemed. They commence the new and exalted strain, “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests.” Next after them, the angels who circle around, unable to repress their sympathy and admiration, to the number of “ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands,” cry with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.” And, finally, the whole intelligent universe is introduced as uniting in this glorious tribute, and the chorus that swells all hearts and voices is, “Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” *Homer.*

It is to be noted that this revelation of God is as the God of his Church. The Father seated on the throne; the Lamb in the midst of the throne, bearing the marks of his atoning sacrifice; the sevenfold Spirit with his lamps of fire—this is Jehovah the

covenant God of his redeemed. And next we have creation, symbolized by the four living beings; the Church, patriarchal and apostolic, represented by the twenty-four elders; and the innumerable company of angels, ministering in their glory and might, now

by one of them, now by another, throughout the course of the prophecy. A.

1-7. In the right hand of God is seen a sealed roll; and Jesus Christ, appearing as a lamb which had been slain, takes the roll amid loud acclamations of praise, and proceeds to open its seven seals. Thus, while the preliminary vision to the first series represents Christ as the inspector of the Churches, this reveals him as the powerful ruler in the midst of the throne, who "has prevailed to open the roll, and to loose the seven seals thereof." D. F.

5, 6. Here the divine nature of our Lord is distinctly displayed. He is in the *midst* of the throne. The Saviour is in intimate union with the Father. The throne is subsequently called "the throne of God and the Lamb." He is also in intimate union with the Holy Spirit. He is the Lamb, having "seven horns"—a customary Scripture expression of majesty and power. The number seven implies perfection. The Saviour is thus Omnipotence and Omniscience—God! The connection of the Jewish and Christian dispensation is sustained as in the previous chapter. Christ is at once the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," and "the Lamb that was slain": the Jewish conqueror and the Christian sacrifice. *Croly.*—**Lion of the tribe of Judah.** Under this emblem Jesus Christ is represented, alluding to the prophetic benediction of the patriarch Jacob (Gen. 49: 9). Judah was the regal tribe, and famous for its warlike exploits; distinguished by a succession of illustrious princes and conquerors, the descendants of David, who were at most but the forerunners and representatives of an incomparably greater personage, the Son of God, who, after he had vanquished the powers of darkness, was to be invested with an everlasting dominion, that all nations, tongues, and people should serve him. *R. Hall.*

6. Surely these notes of preparation, this wonderful and splendid preliminary process, would lead us to anticipate in the person of him who alone was able to open the book the appearance at least of surpassing glory; and yet, while the apostle looks with admiring expectation for the coming of one thus hailed and announced, he beholds not a being wearing an aspect of resistless power, and seemingly able to trample upon principalities and powers, but "a Lamb as it had been slain," a being, wearing amid all the grandeur by which he was surrounded the imagery of death. It was the glorified humanity of Jesus Christ upon which he gazed, bearing yet the evidences of a cruel and languishing death, to which it had submitted; the print of the nails was there, the gash of the spear was there. Exalted though he was, the evidences of his humiliation had not been effaced; there amid all his glory were the traces of his previous infamy and suffer-

ing: the crucified is not lost in the glorified. We can not measure his power, his dignity, or his happiness; but, whatever they may be, they have not removed Christ to a distance from his members; he is still linked with all "who sorrow in Zion"; for, though he is in the midst of the throne, and surrounded by the praises of heaven, he is there, and is praised there, "a Lamb as it had been slain"; and while he bears the marks of the scourge, the nails, and the spear, we are safe in believing that he can feel for us in trouble, and succor us in trial. It is precisely this combination of the emblems of grandeur and the mementoes of sorrow which makes the exhibition so beautiful and interesting to us: there are the traces of his sorrow to teach us his sympathy; there is the throne to reveal to us his power; and thus the Lamb in the midst of the throne is still our sympathizing and Almighty Saviour. E. M.

Once I was troubled to know whether the Lord Jesus was a man as well as God, and God as well as man; and truly, in those days, let men say what they would, unless I had it with evidence from heaven, all was nothing to me. I was much troubled about this point, and could not tell how to be resolved; at last, that in Rev. 5: 6 came into my mind: "And lo, in the midst of the throne, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb." "In the midst of the throne"—thought I, there is the Godhead; "in the midst of the elders"—there is his manhood; but oh, methought this did glisten; it was a goodly touch, and gave me sweet satisfaction. *Bun.*

9. It must be that each soul in heaven being for ever full of love will for ever be full of praise. Every new sight of grandeur or of beauty, and every new contrivance of the Creator's wisdom or power, will but prompt the beholder to praise the wondrous Creator. Every intellectual height reached in the infinite progress of the soul, onward and upward, must awe it into a profounder sense of the glory of the great Intelligence. Every active pursuit will swell the tide of gratitude and praise to him the ceaseless worker, in whom all persons and things "live, move, and have their being"; while the loving and holy soul, ever consciously dwelling in him who is everywhere present, must derive from increasing knowledge of and communion with the infinite and glorious One a source of exulting, endless praise—praise which will be intensified by the sympathy and song of the great minds and great hearts of the "innumerable company of angels" and of "just men made perfect"! But if in that voiceful temple any one song of praise will more than any other issue from a deeper love, or express a deeper joy, that must be the song of the redeemed! For that is a "new song" never heard before by the angels in the amplitudes of creation,

and which the strange race of mankind alone can sing. N. M.

While duration rolls away its ages, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever—the Lamb on the throne! And for us, saved by the blood, cheered by the presence, consoled by the love, blessed with the gifts, and enlightened with the glory of Jesus, is not such a heaven enough? “Worthy,” cry the mingled voices of saints and angels, “worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing.” “Worthy,” again cry his redeemed, in a song which angels may not sing, but in which, with holy ecstasy, we will join, “worthy art thou; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.” N. W. T. —We will embalm his name in our hearts. We will embalm it by a life savoring of his loveliness. We will embalm it by our praise, which shall be prolonged while we have breath, and sink away at last upon our dying lips. And we will embalm it among the songs of the upper world. While gratitude and truth remain, the name and the love of Jesus shall never be forgotten. It shall be the sweetest part of our heaven to see him on the

throne—to see him bending with infinite delight over his beloved Church, to hear that shout of praise from all the redeemed, from all the angels, from all the holy creation. It shall be our heaven to bow with them and join the song. *Griffin.*

10. The four-and-twenty presbyters whose thrones compass the throne of God and of the Lamb represent the entire host of the redeemed. Twenty-four are selected for the whole, perhaps, because there were twenty-four courses of priests; and, under the present dispensation, all believers are priests and kings. G. B.

12-14. Everything we hear in that world is the voice of praise and thanksgiving—the universal burst of gratitude and wonder and love in songs of joy and transport, filling all its arches and making all its pillars tremble. What meetness, then, for heaven can he have who has no taste for the service and worship of God on earth? Alas! he knows not the meaning of the eternal song: “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain.” Not a single note in that song can he sing, not a single sentiment can he adopt, not a single ecstasy can he feel. Love, love only, produces all this; and love he hath not. On him, heaven were a gift bestowed in vain. N. W. T.

Section 380.

REVELATION vi. 1-17; vii. 1-17; viii. 1

6:1 AND I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise
 2 of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white
 horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went
 3 forth conquering, and to conquer. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the
 4 second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse *that was* red: and
 power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should
 5 kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword. And when he had opened
 the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black
 6 horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in
 the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of
 7 barley for a penny; and *see* thou hurt not the oil and the wine. And when he had opened
 8 the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked,
 and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with
 him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with
 9 sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. And when he
 had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the
 10 word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, say-
 ing, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them
 11 that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was
 said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also
 12 and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled. And I beheld
 when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun be-
 13 came black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven
 fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a
 14 mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together: and every
 15 mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the
 great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond
 man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;
 16 and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sit-

- 17 teth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?
- 7 : 1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: *and there were sealed a hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.*
- 9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.
- 13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.
- 8 : 1 And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

If the mere conception of the reunion of good men, in a future state, infused a momentary rapture into the mind of Tully, what may we be expected to feel who are assured of such an event by the *true sayings of God*? How should we rejoice in the prospect—the certainty rather—of spending a blissful eternity with those whom we loved on earth, of seeing them emerge from the ruins of the tomb and the deeper ruins of the fall, not only uninjured, but refined and perfected, “with every tear wiped from their eyes,” standing before the throne of God and the Lamb *in white robes and palms in their hands, crying with a loud voice, Salvation to God that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever!* What delight will it afford to renew the sweet counsel we have taken together, to recount the toils of combat, and the labor of the way, and to approach, not the house, but the throne of God in company, in order to join in the symphonies of heavenly voices, and lose ourselves amid the splendors and fruitions of the beatific vision! To that state all the pious on earth are tending: and if there is a law from whose operations none are exempt, which irresistibly conveys their bodies to darkness and to dust, there is another not less certain or less powerful which conducts their spirits to the abodes of bliss, to the bosom of their Father and their God. The wheels of nature are not made to roll backward; everything presses on toward eternity; from the birth of time an impetuous current has set in, which bears all the sons of men toward that interminable ocean. Meanwhile heaven is attracting to itself whatever is congenial to its nature, is enriching itself by the spoils of earth, and collecting within its capacious bosom whatever is pure, permanent, and divine, leaving nothing for the last fire to consume but the objects and the slaves of concupiscence; while everything which grace has prepared and beautified shall be gathered and selected from the ruins of the world to adorn that eternal city *which hath no need of the sun neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God doth enlighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.* R. Hall.

The Lamb, alone found worthy, opens, one after another, the seals of the closed book or roll, so that when they are all opened, it may be unrolled and read. One point should be urged, which is very commonly passed over: viz., that the roll is never during the prophecy actually opened, nor is any part of it read. The openings of its successive seals are but the successive preparations for its contents to be disclosed: and as each is opened, a new class of preparations is seen in prophetic vision. When the seventh is loosed, and all is ready for the unfolding and reading, there is a symbolic silence, and a new series of visions begins. A.

The opening of each separate seal is not the opening of a portion of the roll, but a necessary preliminary to the opening of the entire roll. What the prophet sees, as each particular seal is broken, is not something in the roll itself, but something which occurs on the stage of vision at the moment when that step is taken toward the unfolding of God's counsels. In the case of the first four seals, the act of breaking is followed by a loud utterance from one of the four living beings which represent the universe of animated creation. The vision which is thus introduced affects creation in some one of its great departments. The utterance itself consists of the single word, *Come*; not, as the ordinary reading gives it, *Come and see*. The latter would have been addressed to the prophet: the former is more probably addressed to the Lamb of God, whose coming in glory is the desire and *expectation of the creation*, and is in some definite manner promoted and advanced by that which the accompanying vision denotes. V.

Ch. 6. The roll of divine purpose, as unfolded in seven portions, seal by seal, produces the following results: 1. A figure of conquest on a white horse, white being the color of triumph (v. 2). 2. A figure of civil war on a red horse, taking away peace from the earth (v. 4). 3. A figure of dearth or scarcity on a black horse, black being a sign of mourning (vs. 5, 6). 4. A figure of devastation; death riding on a livid horse, with hades like a hearse, or moving, yawning grave following after (v. 8). This devastation proceeds under the four forms mentioned by the old prophets, war, famine, pestilence, and the ravages of wild beasts (compare Ezek. 14:21). These four judgments being directed against life on the earth, are successively announced by the four *zoa*. Evidently they coincide with "the beginning of sorrows" foretold by our Saviour in his great prophecy or eschatological discourse, delivered on the Mount of Olives three days before his death. 5. The martyrs are to be avenged, but not yet. The Lord had said, in the discourse to which we have just referred, "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake." When the fifth seal was broken John saw the souls of the martyrs, like the life blood of ancient sacrifices, poured out at the bottom of the altar. They cried, as once the blood of Abel cried to God from the ground; and they were clothed with favor, and hidden to rest awhile till the cup of persecution was full (vs. 9-11). 6. Universal panic. A great earthquake denotes the convulsion of society. Portents in the sky announce revolution and disaster (vs. 12-14). It is supposed by the terrified dwellers on the earth to be the great day of the wrath of the Lamb (vs. 15-17). D. F.—At the opening of the sixth seal we have reproduced the well-known imagery of

our Lord's discourse and of the Old Testament prophets, describing the very eve and threshold, so to speak, of the day of the Lord: the portents which should usher in his coming, but not that coming itself. For the revelation of this, the time is not yet. First (ch. 7) his elect must be gathered out of the four winds, the complete number sealed before the judgments invoked by the martyred souls descend on the earth, the sea, the trees. The Seer must be vouchsafed a vision of the great multitude whom none can number, in everlasting glory. The day of the Lord's coming is gone by, and the vision reaches forward beyond it into the blissful eternity. Why? Because then, and not till then, shall the seventh seal, which looses the roll of God's eternal purposes, be opened, and the book read to the adoring Church in glory. Then (8:1) we have the last seal opened, and the half-hour's silence—the "beginning," as Victorinus sublimely says, "of eternal rest."

Thus far the vision of the seals necessarily reached onward for its completion. But there is much more to be revealed. God's judgments on the earth and its inhabitants are the subject of the next series of visions. The prayers of the martyred saints had invoked them. Then follow the seven trumpet-blowing angels. A.

6. Four beasts. The *zoa, living creatures*, are the heavenly representatives of all created life worshipping before the throne in heaven. T.

In verse 8, for "*Hell*," substitute "*Hadés*"; Hell is the place of punishment, as now understood, whereas the abode of the departed is here meant. A.—Hades is described here as the *hearse of death*, following to receive those whom death strikes down. Thus the first four visions have given us the various images of conquest, of civil war, of scarcity, and of mortality. Each of these is presented to the eye of a suffering and buffeted church, as one of those *all things* which are in the hands of God, and which are *working together* for eventual good to the cause of Christ on earth.

9. Bleeding souls at the foot of the altar, as symbols in vision, are no incongruity. *The Lamb as it was slain*, is no incongruity. In vision everything assumes form and shape, as if it were material. M. S. **10.** The righteous blood shed upon the earth, in the cause of Christ, is, if rightly understood, a sign, not of the discomfiture of his truth, but of the certainty of his coming to judgment. So Paul uses it (2 Thes. 1:4-10). And the opening of the *sixth seal* is followed by signs of this very result. We recognize in this passage much of the imagery of the Old Testament prophets.

9. Beneath the altar. We have not yet had an altar described as part of the scene; but the transition to the imagery of the earthly temple, with its great altar of burnt-offering standing in front of the building, is easily and naturally made. The word here used for the *souls* of the martyred saints is that which expresses their natural life rather than their spiritual: their spirits are in the Paradise of the blessed. **10. Dost thou not judge and avenge our blood.** It is not that saints in Paradise desire vengeance: it is the voice of their blood crying from the ground, and rising into the ears of a righteous Judge who can not suffer iniquity and cruelty to triumph as now for ever.

12. Whatever secondary fulfillments this opening of the sixth seal may have found in history—as in the fall of the Roman Empire, or in the destruc-

tion of idolatry, or in the demolition of any great persecuting and oppressing power in any age of the world—who does not feel as he listens to it that it has one, and can have but one, full and exhaustive accomplishment in the events which shall precede and usher in the second coming of our Lord himself for judgment? The key to its meaning is to be found, in every particular, in our Saviour's great prophecy, and delivered in answer to the question of his disciples (Mat. 24). This 6th chapter, closing with the result of the opening of the sixth seal, stops just short of this actual coming of the Son of man. It is the ancient belief that the Book of Revelation was written after the destruction of Jerusalem, under Domitian, not under Nero. If this be so, remark that John, and he who taught and inspired John with the vision of truth, did not consider the prophecy of our Lord contained in the chapter referred to, to be completed and done with, as many would now tell us, when Jerusalem fell. The ruin of Jerusalem, and of the Mosaic and Levitical institutions with it, was a fulfillment, but not the fulfillment, of our Saviour's words. Those words are manifold in their accomplishment. Wherever there is a church in a world; wherever there is a power of unbelief, ungodliness, and violence, throwing itself upon Christ's faith and people, and seeking to overbear and to destroy: whether it be the power of Jewish bigotry and fanaticism, as in the days of the first disciples; or of pagan Rome, with its idolatries and its cruelties, as in the days of John and of the Revelation; or of papal Rome, with its lying wonders and its anti-Christian assumptions, in ages later still; or of open and rampant atheism, as in the days of the first French Revolution; or of a subtler and more insidious infidelity, like that which is threatening now to deceive, *if it were possible, the very elect*—wherever and whatever this power be, then, in each successive century, the words of Christ to his first disciples adapt themselves afresh to the circumstances of his struggling servants; warn them of danger, exhort them to patience, arouse them to hope, assure them of victory; tell of a near end, for the individual and for the generation; tell also of a far end, not for ever to be postponed, for time itself and for the world; predict a destruction which shall befall each enemy of the truth, and predict a destruction which shall befall the enemy himself whom each in turn has represented and served; explain the meaning of tribulation, show whence it comes, and point to its swallowing up in glory; reveal the moving hand above, and disclose, from behind the cloud which conceals it, the clear, definite purpose and the unchanging, loving will. Thus understood, each separate downfall of evil becomes a prophecy of the next and of the last; and the partial fulfillment of our Lord's words in the destruction of Jerusalem, or of John's words in the downfall of idolatry and the dismemberment of Rome, becomes itself in turn a new warrant for the Church's expectation of the second advent and of the day of judgment. V.

16. The wrath of the Lamb. The word, even in a context of vengeance and woe, still whispers mercy, grace, and peace. Even on the judgment-throne it is rich with the tender memories of Gethsemane and Calvary; even amid the dread solemnities of Omnipotent anger it speaks of a scene more sublimely divine than all their terrors. It utters the chosen title of crucified innocence, of patience un murmuring, of love self-sacrificing. W.

A. B.—*The wrath in God is as much more intensely revealed in the incarnate life and ministry of Christ, as the love is, or the patience, or any other character of God.* Since he is the Lamb, in other words, the most emphatic and appalling of all epithets will have its place, viz., the wrath of the Lamb. Our Christ must be the real king—Messiah—and no mere victim; he must govern, have his indignations, take the regal way in his salvation. His goodness must have fire and fiber enough to make it divine. His character is weak, unkingly, unchristly, and it can not be more, till the wrath is added to the patience of the Lamb. As he has come into the flesh to unfold God's human sympathy and tenderness, so, to maintain what is only fit proportion, he must needs be clothed in the rigors of judicial majesty. He, then, is to be the judge, as he himself openly declares, and before his judgment-seat all mankind, including all his rejecters, shall be gathered. He will separate them to their fit award. He will say, "ye did it not to me." He will speak the "depart." And this is the wrath, and this the day of wrath! H. B.—If we with our bodily eyes were to see the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and were to hear that trumpet call, at which the dead shall arise, can we, can our consciences tell us what would be our feelings at that sight and sound? Should we be filled with fear to our inmost souls, as if certain death were coming upon us, or should we look up to him whom we beheld amid the blessed company of his saints and angels, as to one whom we had long known, long loved, long desired to see, so that, love casting out fear, we should be full of joy amid all the terrors of the perishing world, because our Saviour and Redeemer was come, and our trial was over, and our perfect rest and happiness was at hand? Should we say to the mountains, "Fall on us," and to the hills, "Cover us"? or should we say, rather, "Lo, this is our God! we have waited for him, and he will save us"? T. A.

17. If there were no other argument for a future life, sin would furnish one, never to be refuted. We need descend into no depths of abstruse reasoning here—the simplest notions are conclusive enough. There is a cause standing over between the impartial Judge and ourselves; and a time for the hearing and decision of it must certainly come. If indefinitely delayed and forgotten, all loyal orders must harbor dissatisfaction and fear; while all who have actually been called to account and punished, will protest against the partiality. If conscience be but awake, the transgressor, as he stands at the verge of the present life, may thus properly decide upon his own fate. "I have sinned and perverted that which was right. Let me hide myself in the darkness of the grave! No; for God's ministers, and all beings—good and evil—shall demand me at the hands of death, and forbid I should be forgotten. The dust may not screen me—the clouds may not cover me. Corruption may not say I am lost and gone. The highest tribunal is waiting my appearance; and, unless I am made there to stand, the honor of all government is blasted—the perfections of God impugned. True, I am insignificant; but yet am party in a cause in which the wisdom and purity and power of the eternal God are in question." I. T.—God regulates the movements of conscience, and God allows of no apology for sin. He can forgive it; he can forget it; he can blot it out as a cloud and a thick cloud; he can bury it in

the depths of the sea; he can carry it away, so that no, more mention shall be made of it; but he never, no, never can excuse it. And the man who rejects Christ now, and treats him with scorn, and, instead of forsaking his sins, extenuates and apologizes for them, may be sure, that if not before, he will be startled by the trumpet peal of judgment; and then all his sophistry will leave him, and all his apologies will vanish, and as the great white throne is set, and the Judge descends, there will be a cry of agony, "This is Jesus whom I crucified; hide me from the presence of the Lamb." E. M.—If no immortal punishments were awaiting us, still the mere fact of being alienated from Christ, the gentle and the loving, who gave himself up to death for us, and suffered everything to rescue us from that punishment, and reconcile us, who were enemies by our transgressions, to his Father—this is greater than any punishment, and sufficient to arouse our souls, and induce us to be continually watchful. *Chrys.*

Ch. 7. Six seals have been broken; and the breaking of each has been followed by a certain sign witnessed on the stage of vision. It has been shown how each one of the great classes of human suffering is in reality under the control of God, and how each one is premonitory of and preparatory for the return of Christ in glory. The cry of creation which introduces each is the brief and significant *Come*, addressed to the Lamb that was slain, and expressing that earnest expectation of the creature itself, which is waiting, ever waiting, for the manifestation of the sons of God. There has been seen the white horse of conquest, and the red horse of discord, and the black horse of scarcity, and the pale horse of mortality; there has been seen, as the fifth seal was broken, the vivid image of Christian martyrdom; and at the opening of the sixth, the fearful representation of those last terrors which shall instantly precede the second advent of the Son of man. We were prepared therefore to expect the immediate opening of the seventh and last seal, and with it the arrival of the consummation of all things. But a whole chapter intervenes. Might it not be apprehended that amid convulsions so terrific as those described under the opening of the sixth seal the Church itself might founder? Who shall secure Christ's servants against being involved in that catastrophe? Such is the misgiving to which the particular revelation now before us would minister.

1. The winds are symbols of judgment, and the four winds indicate the universality of that judgment. The angels are to be its executioners, so described in the verse which follows. But at present they are seen restraining the winds. **3.** *Until we have sealed.* One alone actually impresses the seal: the rest concur and assist by restraining the operation of judgment until the sealing is accomplished. The image of the sealing is derived from the book of the prophet Ezekiel (9 : 2-6). There, too, are found the executioners of vengeance, in contrast with the one sealer.

And can we doubt, after proceeding thus far, what is the precise thing designated by the sealing? We have seen God's judgments abroad in the earth; we have seen the train and procession of executioners starting with the sword of Roman conquest, and ending with the prognostications of the instantly impending advent. And we have traced the very same line of prediction through our Lord's own prophecy of the things that should come, as written

in the 24th chapter of Matthew's gospel. We have seen there also the very same order and sequence; wars and rumors of wars; nation rising against nation; famines, pestilences, then martyrdoms; then, after those tribulations, the sun darkened and the moon withdrawing her light, and the sign of the Son of man already seen in heaven. He is, as it were, in act to descend. The sixth seal is opened, the seventh is trembling for its breaking. At that point the one prophecy says, I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, restraining the four winds of final, devastating, desolating judgment; and I saw another angel rising from the east, and bidding them wait till he should have sealed, for distinction and preservation, the servants of his God and theirs; and the other prophecy says, *The Son of man shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.* What can be more precise, to the very letter, to the very end, than the coincidence of the two prophecies? What more evident, to one who will judge of Scripture by Scripture and ask the Holy Spirit who inspired both to interpret to him each by each, than that the sealed of the one are the elect of the other, and that the loving purpose and the preserving care in the one and in the other is the same, not less in the occasion of its exercise than in the nature of its operation? **V.**

9. The Scriptures do not intimate that in the ultimate winding up of things the aggregate of God's people will be small. The Bible seeks to excite no tears, no lamentations, because so few will join in the chorus of redemption. It gives no intimation that the Father's house will lack occupants, or that any of its apartments will stand vacant. The whole tone of the Bible, when it speaks of the final issue of time—the final results of all this world's history—is one of jubilee and triumph, never of sorrow and despondency. There is no intimation that God will make a sad failure out of this enterprise of earth, or that he will lack hearts and voices redeemed from earth to praise him. There will be no thinness in the ranks, no poverty of hearts or voices, when all his people, the portion of the Lord, shall be gathered in. **J. D.**—And when we look at the numbers without number of the redeemed, and at the wonderful revelation of the glory of God, of his mingled justice and mercy, which is made, and shall be for ever, in every one of these, we see a result worthy of this strange scene of six thousand years, of its central figure, the cross of Christ, and of its closing scenes, the final conflagration, and the general judgment. **M. H.**

10-12. This we are told they do. They worship. They satisfy, it would seem, in perfection, that mysterious instinct of devotion—that inborn craving to look upward and adore, which, let false philosophy say what it will, proves the most benighted idolater to be a man, and not a brute—a spirit, and not a merely natural thing. They have worshiped, and so are blest. They have hungered

and thirsted after righteousness, and now they are filled. They have longed for, toiled for, it may be died for, the true, the beautiful, and the good; and now they can gaze upward at the perfect reality of that which they saw on earth, only as in a glass darkly, dimly, and afar; and can contemplate the utterly free, the utterly beautiful, and the utterly good in the character of God and the face of Jesus Christ. They entered while on earth into the mystery and glory of self-sacrifice; and now they find their bliss in gazing on the one perfect and eternal sacrifice, and rejoicing in the thought that it is the cause and ground of the whole universe, even the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. C. K. —Every image which denotes the purest joy is introduced into this description of the ultimate blessedness of the redeemed. They are clad in white, the wedding garments of a great festivity. Music is the natural utterance of their delight. Nor is this a strained and artificial expression. It is full-toned chorus; it is hearty praise; it is jubilant adoration. And as that doxology of the Redeemer waxes louder and fuller, the very pillars and arches of heaven are tremulous with joy. Divested of all that is tropical and symbolical in form, the one idea conveyed to us is, that the climacteric of redemption is *full, irrepressible, eternal joy*. A religion which falls short of positive and unfailing pleasure, as the ultimate law of life, can not meet the necessities of humanity. Redemption is an advance on creation. It more than regains what was lost, more than restores what was original. The burden of that heavenly song is *salvation, blessing, and thanksgiving*. The second Paradise is better than Eden. The joy of man redeemed, restored, and perfected, is greater than that of man in the glory of his innocence. W. A.

What a brave encouragement is it for one that is come for grace to the throne of grace, to see so great a number already there on their seats, in their robes, with their palms in their hands and their crowns upon their heads, singing of salvation to God and the Lamb! And I say again—and speak now to the dejected—methinks it would be strange, oh, thou that art so afraid that the greatness of thy sins will be a bar unto thee, if among all this great number of pipers and harpers that are got to glory, thou canst not espy one that, when here, was as vile a sinner as thyself. Look, man; they are there for thee to view them, and for thee to take encouragement to hope, when thou shalt consider what grace and mercy have done for them. Behold, tempted soul; dost thou not yet see what a throne of grace here is, and what multitudes are already arrived thither, to give thanks unto his name that sits thereon, and to the Lamb for ever and ever? And wilt thou hang thy harp upon the willows, and go drooping up and down the world, as

if there was no God, no grace, no throne of grace, to apply thyself unto for mercy and grace to help in time of need? Hark; dost thou not hear them what they say? "Worthy," say they, "is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." And this is written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope; and that the drooping ones might come boldly to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. *Bun.*

11. Angels welcome them as partakers of their joy, and delight in their happiness. When man was created, "these morning stars sang together; these sons of God shouted for joy." When he was redeemed, their bright hosts flew to earth, and sang, "Glory to God in the highest." When a sinner repents, there is joy in the presence of the angels; and in the midst of all the sorrows and trials and temptations here below, they are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation. With warmth of affection will these holy beings welcome us to their blissful society above! With what transport will they lead us up to the throne of God and the Lamb, and point us to the surrounding glories of our eternal abode; with what joy will they relate, and we hear, the account of their embassies of love to us, while we were here training for heaven! And while we celebrate the grace that brought us through, and dwell on the wonders of redeeming love, though they sing not our song, yet with a voice as the sound of many waters and the voice of mighty thunderings, they will strike the chorus to our praises.

14-17. The description is highly figurative, but it conveys to us the clearest conception of unqualified good, and the total absence of all evil. There, and above all, *sin* shall be no more; there nothing that defiles shall enter. Every cause of sin will be removed: no enticing companions to seduce, nor carnal body to corrupt, nor deceitful heart to ensnare; no evil world to tempt, no Satan to deceive, no cessation of divine influence on the soul. All sufferings are forgotten, or remembered only to bless God, who counted them worthy to suffer for his name. From these hills of salvation, they shall look back on their passage through this troubled life, and—the winds and waves having ceased—shall enjoy the everlasting calm of heaven. Everything is done by infinite wisdom and goodness to banish the very elements of evil, to dispel the slightest shade of misery. With his own hand of mercy, their *Father*, God, hath wiped away all tears from their eyes. N. W. T.

17. The Lamb who is in the midst of the throne, appearing still as the Lamb of Calvary—for the scenes of that great sacrifice have left their enduring impression on all the life and joy of heaven—

Jesus, their once crucified Redeemer, is still as ever their *Shepherd*, and shall feed them, and he shall lead them unto living fountains of waters. Food for their mental and moral nature—thought, knowledge, truth, such revelations of God and of God's works as will minister to the endless growth of sinless minds around the throne of God shall be supplied to them by their well-known Shepherd. Has he not constituted that being, social, intellectual, and moral? and has he not nurtured each and all of its growing powers on such scale as the scenes of earth admit, so that with infinite facility he can resume their education and carry it on from one stage of progress to another, all along the march of heaven's eternal ages? All this and more may be included and implied in the simple words—"The Lamb who is in the midst of the throne shall *feed* them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." H. C.

8 : 1. We see reason to doubt whether the book itself, the sealed book which the Lamb takes out of the right hand of God, and of which he has now broken each successive seal, is ever read to us; whether its contents are not rather reserved for a future state, to be the subject of satisfying and adoring meditation through the ages of the eternal age. The breaking of each of the first six seals is followed by a new sign, a new scene, a new disclosure: but the consequence of the opening of the seventh seal is not sign nor scene, not speech nor disclosure, but silence: it is the signal for the dropping of the curtain upon the stage of vision, and when it rises again, it is for a new act, with other performers and amid altered circumstances. The impediments are removed, the scroll is spread, the divine reader is prepared: but the actual reading is not for earth, but for heaven. V.

Section 381.

REVELATION viii. 2-18; ix. 1-21; x. 1-11; xi. 1-19.

- 8 : 2 AND I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven
3 trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and
there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all saints
4 upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, *which*
5 *came* with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And
the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast *it* into the earth: and
there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.
- 6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. The first
7 angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon
8 the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. And
the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the
9 sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which
10 were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. And the
third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it
11 fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of
the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and
12 many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. And the fourth angel
sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the
third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not
13 for a third part of it, and the night likewise. And I beheld, and heard an angel flying
through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of
the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to
sound!
- 9 : 1 And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to
2 him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there
arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace: and the sun and the air were
3 darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts
upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.
4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any
green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their
5 foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should
be tormented five months: and their torment *was* as the torment of a scorpion, when he
6 striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall
7 desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts *were* like unto
horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads *were* as it were crowns like gold, and their
8 faces *were* as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth

- 9 were as *the teeth* of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings *was* as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.
- 10 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power
- 11 *was* to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, *which is* the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue *is* Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath
- 12 *his* name Apollyon. One woe is past; *and*, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.
- 13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar
- 14 which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels
- 15 which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of
- 16 men. And the number of the army of the horsemen *were* two hundred thousand thousand:
- 17 and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of horses *were* as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three *was* the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and
- 19 by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails *were* like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them
- 20 they do hurt. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood; which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:
- 21 neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.
- 10 : 1 And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow *was* upon his head, and his face *was* as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of
- 2 fire: and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and
- 3 *his* left foot on the earth, and cried with a loud voice, as *when* a lion roareth: and when
- 4 he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto
- 5 me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. And the
- 6 angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are
- 7 therein, that there should be time no longer: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.
- 8 And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go *and* take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon
- 9 the earth. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take *it*, and eat *it* up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was
- 11 bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.
- 11 : 1 And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise,
- 2 and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the
- 3 Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty *and* two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and*
- 4 threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he
- 6 must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite
- 7 the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them,
- 8 and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.
- 9 And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they
- 11 that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood
- 12 upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven
- 13 in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven

14 thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become *the kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament; and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

NOTHING is great in this world but the kingdom of Jesus Christ; nothing but that, to a spiritual eye, has an air of permanency. The history of the past has been but a history of the rise and fall of individuals and of nations; but amid all the changes and overturnings which have thus far gone to fill up the annals of time, the kingdom of Christ has remained, and, under the protection of him whose wisdom and power are symbolized by the seven spirits of God abroad in all the earth, it is steadily advancing, enlarging its boundaries on every side, and going on to fill the earth. The days which are passing now are the days of the Son of man; and each successive one as it passes, heaving into being new and surprising events, is but an illustration of the wisdom and the might of Him who sits upon the throne, as they all mark the different stages of that grand revolution which is going on, and which in its issue shall show the earth converted into a noble temple, and that consecrated to Christ; and whose melody, issuing simultaneously from every dwelling-place, shall be but the echo of the anthem long since raised in heaven—the anthem of praise to the “Lamb that has been slain.” E. M.

Chs. 8-11. Seven trumpets blown. The introduction to this series is a vision of high solemnity in the presence of God (8 : 2-6). There is a presentation of the prayers of saints with incense, and, as a sign of the answering of those prayers “by terrible things,” there is a casting down of altar-fire upon the earth. The same golden censer that wafted up the incense receives and pours down the fire. Thus the way is prepared for a series of devouring judgments.

Seven angels “prepared to sound” the trumpets which were given to them. The results which ensue are arranged in several respects like those which follow the breaking of seals. Thus, in either case, there is a difference marked between the first four and the remaining three. [The first four complete the world-wide judgments, and with the fifth the three woes on mankind begin. A.] There is an interval between the sixth and seventh, occupied by two episodic visions. The greatest intensity of terror is under the sixth; and then, as under the seventh seal there was silence in heaven, so under the seventh trumpet the mystery of God is finished. D. F.—When the seventh is about to sound the consummation of God’s judgment passes unrecorded, as it did under the seals; and at the seventh trumpet we have the song of thanksgiving and triumph in heaven. Such remarkable correspondence carries its own explanation: the two visions of the seals and trumpets run to one and the same termination. A.—This section of the prophecy does not follow chronologically upon the former, that of the seals. As the former, so this also had no doubt a minor fulfillment, perhaps many minor fulfillments,

in times near to (or in part coincident with) those of John himself; and certainly the former, no less than this, carries us down to the very end of time. The two visions, briefly distinguishable as that of the seven seals and that of the seven trumpets, are on the whole rather parallel to each other than consecutive.

The trumpet had various sacred associations in the history and ritual of Israel. In the giving of the law on Mount Sinai it was the last signal of God’s immediate presence (Ex. 19 : 16, 19). Hence its solemn application in the New Testament (1 Thes. 4 : 16). The trumpet was the appointed summons to sacrifice and to worship (Num. 10 : 10). It was the signal of war; announcing its approach, and summoning to defense (1 Sam. 13 : 3). But, various as were the Old Testament associations, all sacred and solemn, with the sounding of the trumpet, there was one only with the particular combination here found, that of *seven* trumpets (Josh. 6 : 2-5). This passage contains the key to the prophecy now before us. In the days of John the Church of Christ was a little army compassing a mighty stronghold, peopled with gigantic powers, and ready to laugh to scorn its few and feeble assailants. But the vision of the seven trumpets was full of hope, full of comfort, for them. It bade them remember the siege of Jericho in the days of old, when by faith alone the victory was won, without one blow struck or one engine aimed by man. Even so shall it be in that greater and more magnificent war by which *the kingdoms of the world* are to be made at last *the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*. The great city with its walls and bulwarks before which the little

army of the faithful is encamped, and which must fall before they can gain entrance into the heavenly Canaan, is now the world of sin, of apostasy, of unbelief; the world, calling itself by different names in different centuries, but uniform and unchanged through all ages at least in this, that *it is not subject to the law of God*, and is not on the side of Christ in his warfare against the enemies of human good and human happiness. Against this world, changing ever in its form, but unchanged and unchangeable in its deep inner principles, the Church which is Christ's army has to make war in Christ's name. And how? *Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before my servant, before my people, before the ark of my covenant, before my word and my will and my outstretched arm, thou shalt become a plain; for the battle is the Lord's, and the cause of his Church is his cause.* V.

The effects produced, as the trumpets are successively blown, may be summarily stated thus: 1. Havoc on the earth. 2. Convulsion; part of the sea turned into blood. 3. Bitterness. 4. Darkness. All these woes fall upon "a third part" of the earth, the sea, the rivers and fountains, and the heavenly orbs. There is a marked reserve. The judgments recall the plagues of hail, flood, and darkness that fall on Egypt; and, like those plagues, they stop short of extermination, being intended for humiliation and warning. 5. The letting loose of hellish malice for a season. 6. The loosing of "four angels, which are bound in the great river Euphrates." That river represents the peoples and multitudes that sustain the mystic Babylon (17 : 15); and a great force among them, held in for a time, breaks forth. A mighty host goes out to kill and slay. After seven thunders have been uttered, and a vision had of the death and resurrection of two witnesses, the last step in the series is reached. 7. Great voices are heard in heaven. Under the seventh seal, heaven was silent; but now "great voices" proclaimed the world-sovereignty of "our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." Therefore the Church, represented by the twenty-four presbyters, gives solemn thanks to the "Lord God Almighty."

Some of the historical interpreters give definite meanings to this series in a wonderful fashion. The first trumpet announces the invasion of Italy by Alaric, the second sounds for Genseric, the third for Attila, the fourth for Odoacer, the fifth for Mohammed, and the sixth proclaims the Turkish invasion of Christendom, and capture of Constantinople. All this seems wild and arbitrary in the extreme. The cycles of visions repeat the same lessons and warnings, announcing judgments and distress of nations before the coming of the Lord. Yet they are not mere repetitions. The revelation under the trumpets is in advance of that under the seals. It shows more fully the agencies to be employed for and against the Church, and mentions evils and oppositions which are yet more clearly developed under the next revolution of the wheel. D. F.

8 : 3. *There was given to him much incense, that he might give it to the prayers of all the saints on to, that is, to be offered upon, the golden altar.* The incense was used to give a sweet scent to that fire-offering upon which it was thrown. When the angel has incense given him to throw upon the prayers of the saints, it indicates that those prayers may now rise with acceptance to the throne of God; in

other words, that the time for actually offering them, because the time when God will answer them, is now fully come. And then there goes up the smoke of the incense out of the angel's hand, *for* (that is, to give a sweet scent to) those prayers which before were lying as it were savorless because premature. We Christians know of *one* and but one *Mediator*. The angel's part is not one of intercession or of mediation: he comes simply to testify that God's time is come, and that the prayers of the saints for deliverance and for victory have been heard and shall now be answered.

And now the angel has taken the censer, and he filled it from the fire of the altar, and cast the contents upon the earth. The censer had fulfilled its first office, that of scenting and perfuming the prayers of the saints: now it has a ministry of judgment. The very censer, which had just been used to give fragrance to the prayers of the saints, was immediately afterward employed to scatter fire from off the same altar upon the earth. Prayer, then, has two aspects. It brings an answer of peace to the offerer: it brings an answer of judgment upon the world of evil. And does not this passage give us what I may indeed call a formidable idea of the consequences of Christian prayers? The final answer to such prayers, the fulfillment of the cry uttered from generation to generation, *Thy kingdom come*, is the discomfiture and destruction of all evil; sin first of all, and with it all those who have determinately taken part with sin. Yes, the prayer of a Christian man may be *set forth*, as the Psalmist says, *before God as incense*; but it returns back upon earth in the shape of a fire to consume evil.

9-13. *The sixth judgment.* A voice is heard from among the four horns of that golden altar on which lie for sacrifice the prayers of saints. It is the cry of God's oppressed people on earth which brings down this judgment upon the world of their oppressors. The judgment itself consists in setting free four angels hitherto bound; in giving scope, that is, to the operation of a particular agency thus far restrained by God's long-suffering toward *the world of the ungodly*. The angels are four in number, in allusion to the four corners of the earth, or the four winds, to express the world-wide character of the judgments foretold. The place of their binding first and then of their loosing is the river Euphrates, marked in the Old Testament as the boundary between the kingdom of Israel and the kingdoms of the East, whether Assyrian, Chaldean, or Persian, as the limit from beyond which came the hosts of invading nations to make war upon the nations and upon the city of God. The Euphrates is thus used as a general emblem of the seat of God's hosts of war gathered for attack upon an unbelieving or apostate world. (See Isa. 13.) Who the enemy is against whom the hosts of the Lord are thus mustered may be gathered from the 20th and 21st verses. He is the world sunk in sin, and therefore hostile to the Church.

The predictions of chapters 8 and 9, like those in the section of the seven seals, are manifold, not single, in their fulfillment. Wherever war has been employed, under God's overruling providence, to humble pride and to break up overgrown and overbearing powers, there have these chapters had an accomplishment again and again, and each separate accomplishment has been in its turn a prediction and prognostication of the greatest accomplishment

and of the last. Those hordes of invading barbarians which broke up the monster empire of Rome, and out of whose conquests modern Europe eventually grew, were one fulfillment—they were not the only fulfillment—of these prophecies. Never were the figures of locust-swarms, with their teeth as of lions and their hair as of women, more strikingly exemplified than in those irruptions. But they did not exhaust these prophecies. The words of God are manifold in their application, just because they deal not with instances only, but with principles.

10 : 7. The statement is that a time is fixed in God's counsels for the completion and termination of the present mixed state; that the sounding of the seventh trumpet, according to the figurative language of this portion of the Book of Revelation, shall be the signal for the close of that which is; and that this purpose and determination of God is good news to his servants. V.—[For a more complete and satisfactory exposition of this and other points, read Dr. Vaughan's judicious and admirable Lectures upon this book. B.]

10 : 8 to 11 : 14. These episodes between the sixth and seventh trumpets, are distinctly introductory to that which is next to follow. A little book is given to the seer, sweet to his mouth, but bitter in digestion, with an announcement that he is yet again to prophesy to many nations—that a fresh series of prophetic visions, glorious indeed but woful, was now to be delivered by him.

These begin by the measurement of the temple of God—seeing that it is *the Church herself*, in her innermost hold, which is *now to become the subject of the prophecy*. The course of the two witnesses, recalling to us by their spirit and power Moses and Elias, is predicted; and during the prediction, one principal figure of the subsequent visions is by anticipation introduced: the wild beast that cometh up out of the abyss. That this is so, is at once fatal in my estimation to the continuous historical interpretation. I can give no explanation of the two witnesses. I have studied the various solutions, and I own that I can not find any which I can endorse as satisfactory. A.

11 : 1, 2. Even before Jerusalem was destroyed, even while the material temple was still standing—how much more now, when (as we believe) the sword of Roman conquest had already done its work upon the holy city and its sanctuary—the name of the temple of God had been transferred from the building on Mount Zion to the living community of believing men. Now, to measure this temple is to mark out its extent; to ascertain how much (if I might so express it) is temple; what are the dimensions, what the limits, of that which is really holy. Like the very different yet not wholly divergent vision of the sealing, it is the object of this passage to indicate the safety, because the indelible consecration, of God's true servants. The shrine is to be measured: the court is to be left out. There shall always be a true Church, a true spiritual divine temple: but there shall be appended to it a larger space which must be described rather as an outer court of that temple, a community which partakes not in the true worship of devotion and self-dedication, and which, whatever its profession and whatever its name, is in reality a multitude without grace and without vitality.

3. The witnesses are in one sense ideal, but in another sense they are real persons: they are the

witnesses of revelation, the witnesses of truth, the witnesses of the gospel, the witnesses of God, the witnesses of Christ, in every age: personified here as two in number. The two witnesses must raise the voice of their prophesying during the interval longer or shorter, the symbolical three years and a half, forty and two months, or twelve hundred and sixty days of mingled fidelity and defection, of a measured shrine and a trampled court; and then, then at length, *in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, who is about to sound, then shall the end come; then shall the mystery of God be finished even as he evangelized his servants the prophets* (10 : 7).

4. The witnesses here are said to be *the two olive-trees and the two candlesticks which stand before the Lord of the earth*. And the vision of Zechariah (4 : 11-14) has taught us to connect the two emblems. The olive-trees are the feeders of the lamps. *Through the two golden pipes they empty the golden oil out of themselves* into the lights which shine before God. How glorious a description of the office of the earthly witnesses! They are channels of grace, and they are concentrations of light. The Church in her darkest times shall not lack, has not lacked, these. V.

6. The *half* of the mystic seven is a ruling number in the apocalyptic periods. Three years and a half had been the duration of the drought prayed for by Elijah (Jas. 5 : 17); "a time, times, and the dividing of time" (= three years and a half), was the prophetic duration of the persecution of the saints in Dan. 7 : 25. Thus we find here that the two witnesses, one of whose powers is to shut up heaven that there shall be no rain, shall prophesy 1,260 days, i. e., three years and a half; also the testimony of three witnesses is to endure forty-two months (= three years and a half), as that of Moses endured through the forty-two stations of Israel in the wilderness. Three days and a half are the bodies of the witnesses to lie unburied in the street of the great city (v. 9); again, for 1,260 days is the woman to be fed in the wilderness; again, forty-two months is the period of the power of the first wild beast, which ascended from the sea (13 : 5). Of these latter periods no satisfactory solution has ever been given. Again and again, the interpreters of prophecy have fixed a time for the end of them; again and again, that time has passed unsignaled by any event; again and again, these interpreters have shifted on their ground into the as yet safe future. A.

7-13. There is a triumph over the fall of Christ's witnesses. The world rejoices over them, as one after another they pass away from the scene of their testimony; for deeply had the sting of their words and the sting of their deeds, the reproof of their gospel, and the reproof of their example, entered into the souls of their despisers and their adversaries. For three days and a half, for the half of the seven, for a period short and incomplete, the triumph of the world, the dance around the corpses, is suffered to continue: men send gifts one to another, as in a day of feasting and of joy over glad tidings. But there comes for the faithful witnesses a *morning of joy* after this *night of weeping*; their cause triumphs, though they may be no more; their memory revives, and

is honored when honor can no more elate: they themselves are in the heavenly mansions: already rest, hereafter glory! V.—Christianity, like civilization, may be overborne at different points, or turned from its course; but it must recover its lost ground. It is a guardian power, which has long been carrying the human family, as in its bosom, over a rugged road, and beneath inclement skies; but will not be stayed until it have fulfilled its trust. I. T.

15. "The kingdom (sovereignty) over the world is our Lord's, and his Christ's." The kingdoms of the world give way to the kingdom over the world exercised by Christ (Dan. 2 : 44). The earth-kingdoms are many; His shall be one (Zech. 14 : 9). *Fausset*.—Can the earth be enlightened? Can the nations be disenthralled? Can the whole creation, which has groaned and travailed together in pain until now, be brought out of bondage into glorious liberty? Yes, all this can be done, and will be done: *First*, by the judgments of heaven, in which the Son of man will come upon the strong man armed, and take away his armor; *secondly*, by the universal propagation of the gospel, before the light of which idolatry, imposture, and superstition will retreat abashed; *thirdly*, by frequent and, at last, general revivals of religion, giving resistless power to the gospel, as it is preached to every creature. L. B.—The means are at command, and just so soon as the Spirit is poured out like water upon the thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground, we shall find the great cause of the world's conversion moving on toward its ultimate triumphs, with an efficacy and a glory that will awaken new songs in heaven. Expansion is the very law of the Saviour's kingdom. Christianity embraces every feature of increase and perpetuity; and, whenever it shall please God to give the Spirit in primitive fullness and power to all our churches and all our missionaries, we shall be prepared to hear it shouted on earth, and echoed from heaven, "*The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ! D. Magie.*"

16. *The twenty-four elders.* The scenery of the fourth and fifth chapters still continues; the council is still sitting in heaven upon the fortunes of earth; with such additional features as we have from time to time noticed in the sections which followed. And here the adorations of the fifth chapter are renewed, in special acknowledgment of the assumption of universal dominion by the Lord and his Christ.

18. *And to destroy those who destroy the earth.* There is only one word in the original language for *destroying* and *corrupting*. To defile is to destroy. To corrupt the earth is to destroy the earth. It is, to spoil God's work; to mar and to disfigure by its abuse that which God made all beautiful and all

holy. See then what a sinful life is! See how God's enemies, that is, the ungodly and the sinful, are regarded in heaven! They destroy the earth. God meant everything for one use, and they turn everything to another use. God meant his creation to be enjoyed by his creatures; enjoyed with moderation, enjoyed with thankfulness, enjoyed in kindness, in tenderness, in love; and behold, we have gone forth to trample and to waste, to sully and to defile, to turn to selfish indulgence, to use as instruments of vile temptation, or as implements of unholy warfare, those things or those persons, those members and faculties, those bodies, those minds, those souls, which might have been and which ought to have been altogether applied to his service and made vocal with his praise. And now at last the season is come to destroy those who have thus destroyed the earth.

19. *The temple of God was opened. The secret place of his dwelling* was thrown wide open, giving sight, giving access, giving place and abode for men. The eye of John rests once again in vision upon the lost ark of his nation: he sees it in heaven, and he sees it disclosed to public gaze. There is no longer any enclosing wall, no longer a concealing curtain. What could this indicate but that the mystery of God is now finished, his counsels accomplished, his work concerning man consummated? V.

Christianity fulfills its own prophecies; it proves its divine origin by superhuman victories. Every opposing religion, and every arrogant philosopher, it has overcome in its resistless march, and from them all, one after another, has been heard the expiring cry, wrested, it is said, from the apostate Julian: "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!" It is more than realizing the vision of Cicero, in his "Laws," that "the whole world is to be esteemed one community of gods and men." Through our earth it is diffusing the principle of justice, as it also here first made charity to be the greatest of the virtues. It has ennobled womanhood, sanctified childhood, spiritualized manhood, and opened to all the gates of endless life. It helps us to "strip off our fond and false identity," and "woos and clasps us to the eternal spheres." It has brought the kingdom of God to the very vision and heart of man. It touches our deepest and tenderest feelings, and makes us strong for conflict or submission. It awakens, that it may still, the sense of guilt. It relieves our untold sorrows, and imparts these hidden joys no tongue can tell. Its inmost efficacy is seen in the formation of a holy mind, in the transformation of a sinner into a loving child of God, a marvel which neither science knows, nor art can imitate. And in the race, as in the soul, it creates new and higher wants, and satisfies them. Its promises irradiate the future, as its beneficence has

blessed the past. Human rights and human wants demand its triumphs. The world travails and sighs for redemption, so that perpetual war may issue in perpetual peace; that oppression and caste may be abolished; that labor may be guided by moral law, and not by the soulless rule of supply and demand; that our politics may be patriotic and just; that the terrible inequalities of social life may be eradicated, the hungry fed, the naked clothed; that the physical may be for the moral, and the moral for the spiritual; that our humanity may be one brotherhood, in Christ our elder brother and our King. All this is pledged in the triumph of his kingdom, fore-

shadowed in the promise of its millennial glory. And though some expositors, adhering to the letter, put that glory in a merely sensual and Jewish form, reminding us of Milton's sarcasm, that "what to the Jew is only Jewish is for the Christian Canaanitish," yet, that it is to be a kingdom in which Christ shall reign and redemption be completed, is insured to us by the faithful pledge of him who has promised, and is alone able to effect, that grandest of consummations, that brightest vision of the race, the ushering in of that "sacred, high, eternal noon," in which the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. H. B. S.

Section 382.

REVELATION xii. 1-17; xiii. 1-18; xiv. 1-20.

12 : 1 AND there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the
2 moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child
3 cried, travelling in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder
in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven
4 crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did
cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be
5 delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man
child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto
6 God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place
prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred *and* three-score
7 days. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon;
8 and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any
9 more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and
Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels
10 were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salva-
tion, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the
accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.
11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony;
12 and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, *ye* heavens, and *ye* that
dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come
down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.
13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which
14 brought forth the man *child*. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle,
that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and
15 times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his
mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the
16 flood. And the earth helped the woman; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed
17 up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the
woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the command-
ments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

13 : 1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having
seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name
2 of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as
the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his
3 power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded
to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.
4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped
5 the beast, saying, Who *is* like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And
there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was
6 given unto him to continue forty *and* two months. And he opened his mouth in blas-
phemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in
7 heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them:

8 and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the
 9 Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear.
 10 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity : he that killeth with the sword must
 11 be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. And I beheld
 12 another beast coming up out of the earth ; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake
 13 as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth
 14 the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound
 15 was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven
 16 on the earth in sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of
 17 those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast ; saying to them that
 18 dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by
 19 a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the
 20 image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the
 image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and
 poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads : and that
 no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the num-
 ber of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number
 of the beast : for it is the number of a man : and his number is Six hundred threescore
 and six.

14 : 1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him a hundred forty
 2 and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a
 voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder : and
 3 I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps : and they sung as it were a new
 song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders : and no man could learn
 that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the
 4 earth. These are they which were not defiled with women ; for they are virgins. These
 are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from
 5 among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was
 found no guile ; for they are without fault before the throne of God.

6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to
 preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue,
 7 and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him ; for the hour of his
 judgment is come : and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the
 8 fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen,
 that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her forni-
 9 cation. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship
 10 the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall
 drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup
 of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of
 11 the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb : and the smoke of their torment ascend-
 eth up for ever and ever : and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and
 12 his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the
 13 saints : here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I
 heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the
 Lord from henceforth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and
 their works do follow them.

14 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of
 15 man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another
 angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust
 in thy sickle, and reap : for the time is come for thee to reap : for the harvest of the earth
 16 is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth ; and the earth was
 17 reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a
 18 sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire ; and
 cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle,
 19 and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth ; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the
 angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into
 20 the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the
 city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a
 thousand and six hundred furlongs.

ONLY "they who die in the Lord" are here accounted blessed ; it can not possibly be gain to die till Christ has first been made the life of the soul. Where this becomes our matchless privilege, in the way of faith and penitence, we may expect a state of bliss, not merely after centuries have rolled over our dust, but even from the moment of our departure from this life. "Henceforth," said the Spirit, "the dead in Christ are blessed." And in this rest "their works do follow them," that is to say, from every seed of faith and love, strewed here below with unwearied hands, the harvest is to be expected there. Mark well, it stands not that their works precede them, in any wise to open for them heaven's portals ; but that their works do follow them, where hidden good treads forth at once to view. *Van O.*

We rest on this, "I go to prepare a place for you." A place is prepared for each one of us ; a place fitted to our distinct character, a separate work fitted to develop that character into perfection, and in the doing of which we shall have the continual delight of feeling that we are growing. Our ideals shall become more beautiful, and minister continually to fresh aspiration. Feelings for which we found no food here shall there be satisfied with work, and exercised by action into exquisite perfection. And this shall be in a father's home, where all the dearest dreams of home-life shall find their happy fulfillment ; in a perfect society, where all the charming interchange of thought and giving and receiving of each other's good which makes our best happiness on earth, shall be easier, freer, purer, more intimate, more spiritual, more intellectual ; and binding all together, the omnipresent Spirit of love, goodness, truth, and life, whom we call God, and whom we know in Jesus Christ, shall abide in us, and we in him, "for he is not a God of the dead, but of the living : for all live unto him." S. A. B.

Chs. 12-14. We have seen in the Book of Revelation thus far, and we shall see in it hereafter, not so much one continuous stream of prophecy, starting from the times of John, and carrying down the fortunes of the Church with historical precision till they are finally lost in the great ocean of eternity : but rather a number of parallel streams, each marked by some definite purpose and principle, and each ending only with the end of time, even with that last discomfiture of the opposing powers of evil which shall introduce the universal reign of Christ, and usher in the *new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness*. We shall not be surprised therefore to observe in the section now to be opened a return to a very elementary point in the history of the Church of God. The general subject of the three chapters which form this section is the enemies, the three enemies, of Christ's Church. We shall find that this also is a passage complete in itself, and ending only with the same catastrophe of the powers of evil which we have already observed as the termination of the vision of the seals in the 1st verse of the 8th chapter, and of the vision of the trumpets in the last verse of the 11th. V.

12 : 1-17. And now opens the great prophetic course of visions regarding the Church. Her identification in the eyes of the seer is first rendered unmistakable, by the scene opening with the appearance of the woman and the serpent, the enmity between him and her seed, the birth of the man-child who should rule over the nations—his ascension to heaven and to the throne of God. The flight of the woman into the wilderness, the casting down of Satan from heaven no longer to curse the brethren there, his continued enmity on earth, his persecution of the remnant of the woman's seed, these belong to the introductory features of the great vision which is to follow, and serve to describe the state in which the Church of God is found during the now pending stage of her conflict.

13 : 1-10. What follows carries out the description of the war made by the dragon on the seed of the woman. A wild beast is seen rising out of the deep, uniting in itself the formerly described heads and horns of the dragon, and also the well-known

prophetic symbols of the great empires of the world : representing, in fact, the secular powers antagonistic to the Church of Christ. To this wild beast the dragon gives his might and his throne ; and notwithstanding that one of its heads—the pagan Roman empire—is crushed to death, its deadly wound is healed, and all who are not written in the Lamb's book of life worship it. **11-18.** The further carrying out of the power and influence of the beast is now set before us by the vision of another wild beast, born of the earth, gentle as a lamb in appearance, but dragon-like and cruel in character. This second beast is the ally and servant of the former : makes men to worship its image and receive its mark, as the condition of civil rights and even of life itself. Here, in common with very many of the best interpreters, I can not fail to recognize the sacerdotal persecuting power, leagued with, and the instrument of, the secular : professing to be a lamb, but in reality being a dragon, persecuting the saints of God, the inseparable companion and upholder of despotic and tyrannical power. This in all its forms, pagan, papal, and in so far as the reformed churches have retrograded toward papal sacerdotalism, Protestant also, I believe to be that which is symbolized under the second wild beast.

14 : 1-20. Next, the apocalyptic vision brings before us the Lamb on Mount Zion with the first-fruits of his people, and the heavenly song in which they join—as prefatory to the announcement, by three angels, of the prophecies which are to follow, so full of import to the people and Church of God. These are, first (vs. 6, 7), the proclamation of the everlasting gospel as previous to the final judgments of God ; next, the fall of Babylon (v. 8), as an encouragement for the patience of the saints ; third (vs. 9-11), the final defeat and torment of the Lord's enemies. After these (vs. 11, 12) is heard a voice proclaiming the blessedness of the holy dead. Then follow, in strict accord with these four announcements, 1, the harvest and the vintage of the earth (vs. 14-20), and the seven last plagues, symbolized by the outpouring of the vials (15 : 1 ; 16 : 1-21) ; 2, the ample details of the fall and punishment of Babylon (chs. 17, 18) ; 3, the triumph of the Church

in the last defeat of her Lord's enemies (19 : 11-21); 4, the millennial reign (chs. 20-22); and finally, the eternity of bliss. There is reason to interpret the *harvest* (14 : 15, 16), of the ingathering of the Lord's people: the *vintage* (14 : 18, 19), of the crushing of his enemies; both these being, according to the usage of this book, compendious, and inclusive of the fuller details of both, which are to follow. The vintage is taken up and expanded in detail by the series of the vials (ch. 16); seven in number, as were the seals and the trumpets before. These final judgments, specially belonging to the Church, are introduced by a song of triumph from the saints of both dispensations, and are poured out by angels coming forth from the opened sanctuary of the tabernacle of witness in heaven (15 : 2-8). A.

Ch. 12. One of the prime objects of this entire chapter is manifestly to put the devil in his true light as the chief persecutor, the arch-traitor and rebel against the throne of God—the chieftain who heads all the sin and all the war against God and goodness which appear in the universe. Let all Christians know their enemy; let them know his past history, his present designs, his determined antagonism to the Messiah and to his Church and people; and his certain defeat and shameful fall in the end. H. C.

1-6. Some leading facts in relation to the Saviour's entrance into the world and exit from it are obviously glanced at here. The reader can not avoid calling to mind the birth of Christ, the massacre at Bethlehem by Herod, the character of him who was to "rule over the nations" as disclosed in Psalm 2, the temptation of Christ by Satan, the ascension of the Redeemer to heaven after he had risen from the dead, and finally the persecution of the Church with the protection vouchsafed to it on the part of Heaven. That Satan is here presented as following the ascended Redeemer with the design of annoying him must strike every well-informed mind as a lively symbol of the malignity and bitterness with which the enemy of God and man pursued Jesus and his disciples at all times and on all occasions. M. S.

1. The woman clothed with the sun, and having on her head a crown of twelve stars, is the Church of God; the Church regarded as one whole from the days of Abraham, perhaps we may say from the day of the fall itself, under whatever special dispensation placed—the Patriarchal, the Israelite, or the Christian.

3. The *dragon* represents in various passages of the prophets of the old testament that great Egyptian power which had been the first oppressor of the Church of Israel. And thus with equal fitness it becomes in this Book of Revelation the title of that *prince of this world* whose deep and bitter hostility to God and his Christ prompts all the efforts and frames all the machinations by which the world seeks to undermine the influence of the Saviour and of his people. The dragon is henceforth another name for the devil or Satan.

Seven heads and ten horns. Notice that though there is a unity of persons in the arch-enemy of God, he is yet in his operations a many-headed power; he exercises his influence through many channels; every phase of the ungodly, antichristian world is one of his manifestations; and further, the power which is thus various and thus multiplied is also a strength; it possesses ten horns, the scriptural emblem of vigor and force. We can not despise

the power of evil, though we may forebode its downfall.

5. Caught up unto God. The years of infancy and boyhood, of youth and of manhood, the workshop of Nazareth, the journeyings to Jerusalem, the call of disciples, the labors of teaching and of healing, the *cruel mocking and scourging*, the bitter cross and the quiet grave, all are passed over: he who *declares the end from the beginning* speaks here but of birth and of ascension, and tells us only that, while the dragon stood in readiness to devour the child which should be born, the child was caught up unto God and to his throne.

The woman flees into the wilderness. Like Israel of old fleeing from the wrath of Pharaoh, the Church of God, whose Lord and Master has been taken up from her, finds a dwelling-place in her desolation in the wilderness. There, like Israel of old, she has food provided for her of God. The period of her abode is described in figures now familiar to us. The 1,260 days are the same period during which God's two witnesses prophesy clothed in sackcloth. It is the same period, otherwise described as one of forty and two months, during which the holy city is trodden under foot of the Gentiles (11 : 2, 3). It is the same period, otherwise described as one of three years and a half, of a *time and times and half a time* (v. 14), during which our Lord's own ministry upon earth was protracted, and after which *the spirit of life from God entered into* the two dead witnesses and *they ascended up to heaven in a cloud while their enemies beheld them* (11 : 11, 12). It is, in short, that period, of the three and a half, the half seven, the broken and imperfect as opposed to the complete and sacred whole, which is again and again the designation of the reign of evil, of the humiliation of God's truth and of God's Church, as contrasted with that endless triumph of the cause of holiness and of Christ which shall comfort the sufferings of Zion and redress the wrongs of the saints.

9. That spiritual enemy with whom our struggle and our warfare lies, is (1) *the great dragon; the prince of this world*; the leader and commander of the aggressions of the world upon the Church of Christ, upon the people of God. He is (2) *the ancient serpent*; the very person who in the earliest days of our race, having himself fallen yet earlier from his original uprightness, appeared as the tempter of man, and through his bodily appetite seduced him from his Maker. He is (3) *the slanderer and the adversary, the devil and Satan*; he who, as we read in the opening of the Book of Job, and again, more briefly, in the 8d chapter of Zechariah, calumniates and slanders before God those whom he has first deceived and overthrown below. He is the slanderer, or calumniator, as well as the adversary. He first seduces man, and then tells of him! And thus (4) he is described as the misleader of all the world; *he who leads astray all the world. He was cast out into the earth.* The real thing spoken of is the breaking of Satan's power by the Redemption. The devil is like one who has been thrown from a great height, and falls upon the earth bruised and humbled. He is no longer master. If any one still serves him, it is his own fault.

11. We shall best regard the words as anticipative and prophetic in their tone; as describing the victory which has been won by Christ's servants, one after another, and age after age, under the dispensation of the gospel; and of which the completion of Christ's work by ascension contained not

the promise only, but the power. *They conquered him*, it is written of these, as one by one they have *finished their course and accomplished their warfare*, him the deceiver and the slanderer, him the tempter and the accuser, *owing to the blood of the Lamb*. This was the secret of their strength. They overcame him, too, *through (owing to) the word of their testimony*: that is, the word or message which they attest; of which they are witnesses. *And they loved not their life unto death*. They carried their life's devotion even to the length of death. They overcame the devil by a self-sacrifice which stopped not short of death. The three weapons by which the Christian victory is won, as described for us in the song of triumph in heaven over the downfall of the great enemy of man, are these: the atonement made for all sin in the death of Christ; the word or message of God, to which all true Christians bear in act and in endurance a firm and intelligible testimony; and that spirit of entire self-devotion and self-surrender which perseveres even unto death, and stops not short (if God so require) of the sacrifice of life itself for Christ. V.

In the martyr ages of the Church we behold a vast array of active genius and power, that could not be permitted to spend itself in works of benefaction to the race, but was consecrated of God to the more sacred and more fruitful grace of suffering. The design was, it would seem, to prepare a Christly past, to show whole ages of faith populated with men who were able, coming after their Master and bearing his cross, to suffer with him and add their human testimony to his. And so it has been ordered that the Church of God shall know itself to be the child of suffering patience. The scholars, the preachers, all the great and noted characters, who have served the Church by their labors, pass into shade, we think little of them; but the men of patience, the holy martyrs, these we feel as a sacred fatherhood, charging it, oh, how seriously and filially! upon our souls, to be followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Who that feels the power of these martyr ages descending on him, can ever think, even for a moment, that the passive virtues of the Christian life are sterile virtues, and that action is the only fruitful thing? H. B.

17. The description here given of the true seed is twofold. They *keep the commandments of God*, and they *hold the testimony of Jesus*. Either of these without the other must be, for us at least—we enter not into the question as it may affect past ages, or nations still sitting in darkness—an incomplete, nay, a fallacious test of true membership, of true worship. It is the old combination; faith and works; a *heart sprinkled from an evil conscience*, and a life suitable to one who loves God. That is salvation. That is redemption. Not the liberty to keep the testimony of Jesus without keeping the commandments of God. Not the liberty to use words of love and faith toward Jesus, and go forth in works to deny him. V.

13 : 1-7. Out of the sea, i. e., from the midst of troubled nations, emerged a wild beast before the eyes of the seer; a dreadful monster, having the agile frame of a leopard, the paws of a bear, and mouth of a lion, with seven heads and ten horns. It combined all the bestial forms seen by Daniel; and must be understood as recalling and condensing in one formidable power all the old-world despots that oppressed the Israel of God.

The beast took up the persecution of the saints which the dragon instigated. Therefore it can be nothing else than that Roman imperialism which sent the apostle John himself into exile for his faith, and became throughout all the known world a merciless tyrant to the Christians. All world-tyranny, all use of brute force to repress spiritual life and movement, in whatever age, falls under the same symbol of the wild beast. D. F.

3. The deadly wound indicates some blow struck, with apparently fatal consequences, at the power of the ungodly and antichristian world. Such a blow was the conversion of the Emperor Constantine to the faith of Christ, and the establishment of a nominal Christianity as the religion of the great Roman Empire. It might have seemed as though the trials of the Church, collectively at least, were then for ever ended. But the deadly wound was healed. Not yet had the *kingdoms of the world really become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*; the nominally Christian empire could persecute as well as the openly idolatrous; *he that was born after the flesh* was still the natural enemy of *him that was born after the spirit*; and papal Rome in later ages too often resumed the sword which pagan Rome had dropped. But let it call itself what it may, pagan or Christian, popish or Protestant, the world is still God's enemy; still *hates the light*; still *is not subject to the law of God*; still *is offended in Christ*, first for his humility, and then for his holiness; still looks coldly upon, still casts out, still, if it dares—and it does dare—will persecute those who by act and word testify of it that *its works are evil*! V.

7. *It was given unto him to overcome them*. As of old, so now, those to be persecuted by the beast in various ways have their trials severally appointed them by God's fixed counsel. *Fausset*.—The afflictions, therefore, that the church in the wilderness has met with, these cups of gold, are of more worth than are all the treasures of Egypt; they are needful and profitable, and praiseworthy also, and tend to the augmenting of our glory when the next world shall come. They are also a means by which men are proved to be sound, honest, faithful, and true lovers of God; to be those whose graces are not counterfeited, feigned, or unsound, but true, and such as will be found to praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. And this has been the cause that the men of our church in the wilderness have gloried in tribulation, taking pleasure in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, and in distresses, for Christ's sake. *Bun.*

10. *Here is the patience and the faith of the saints*. In these coming, these predicted, these inevitable sufferings under the power of the second enemy of the Church, a large demand will be made upon the submission and upon the faith of God's saints.

11. *And I saw another wild beast rising out of the earth*. The third enemy—we may gather, I think, from the marks affixed to him—is the ungodly antichristian wisdom, as the second is the ungodly antichristian power, of the world. It is that false philosophy, that *science falsely so called*, that speculative and skeptical opinion, that reason without humility and without God, which, with all its professions of elevation and of independence, has ever been the real ally of the world and the bitterest enemy of revelation and of the Church. This it was which propped up a system of idolatry

in which it had itself no vestige of faith. This it was which united with the coercive power of a heathen state in running down and making havoc of the new religion and the young Church of Christ. *This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.* The brute force of the second enemy were powerless without this intelligence of the third. Sometimes the two may work together in one ruler; the demoniacal acuteness, and the animal cruelty. Sometimes, more often perhaps, they are found disjoined, and the only link of union is a common godlessness. That is the combining and cementing sympathy. That is the one characteristic which the second enemy shares with the third. Both of them look earthward; neither can lift up his eyes to the God above. Therefore they are one in their work, one in their aim, and one in their end.

14 : 1. *And I saw*—the usual opening of a new vision—and behold, the Lamb standing on the mount Zion. Not a Lamb, but the Lamb. By this time the figure of the Lamb is so familiar to the readers of the book in its application to Christ the Saviour and Redeemer that it may be introduced without comment or explanation. Zion, which was properly one of the group of hills forming the metropolis of Israel, became in the language of prophecy the name of that heavenly city which is to be the everlasting abode of the Saviour and of His redeemed. *And I heard a sound out of the heaven*—not a sound from Mount Zion, but from above, out of heaven—as a sound of many waters and as a sound of a great thunder; and the sound which I heard was as of harpers harping on their harps. The combination of fullness, of majesty, and of sweetness, in the sound heard, is expressed by bringing together the three comparisons thus indicated. *And they, the heavenly harpers, sing a new song before (in presence of) the throne and before (in presence of) the four living creatures, representatives of creation, and the elders, representatives of the universal Church; and no one was able to learn the song, except the hundred and forty and four thousands, even they who have been purchased from the earth.* The heavenly song, though sweet and glorious in its general sound to the ear of the prophet who is still in flesh, can be learned only by those who are no longer clogged with mortality, but have already passed through death into incorruption and glory.

4, 5. The character of the redeemed is here set before us under the four heads, of purity, of obedience, of unworldliness, of truthfulness; and their heavenly state, as one of safety, of rest, of happiness, of converse and communion with Christ. V.

They are the redeemed from among men. They are the first fruits unto God and the Lamb. They are the subjects of his regenerating love and grace. They were once creatures of sin and children of wrath. Now they are before the throne of God in his likeness. *Before the throne of God without fault.* Before the throne of God in glory! And therefore, a faultlessness infinitely perfect, a glory and a blessedness unchangeable and everlasting, and boundless as the perfection of God! G. B. C.

6. **The everlasting gospel.** It is called "the gospel of his grace," because it flows from God's free love; "the gospel of the kingdom," as it treats of the kingdom of grace and of glory; "the gospel of Christ," because he is the author and subject of it; "the gospel of peace and salvation," as it promotes our present comfort, and leads to eter-

nal glory; "the glorious gospel," as in it the glorious perfections of Jehovah are displayed; "the everlasting gospel," as it was designed from eternity, is permanent in time, and the effects of it are eternal. Buck.

12. We can not be useless while we are doing and suffering God's will, whatever it may be found to be. And we can always do that. If we are bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit, we are not useless. And we can always do that. If we are increasing in the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, we are not useless. And we can always do that. While we pray we can not be useless. And we can always do that. God will always find us a work to do, a niche to fill, a place to serve, nay, even a soul to save, when it is his will, and not ours, that we desire to do; and if it please him that we sit still for the rest of our lives, doing nothing else but waiting on him, and waiting for him, why should we complain? *Here is the patience of the saints.* A. W. T.

13. *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; blessed from henceforth;* blessed from the moment of their death, blessed yet more as the end of all things draws near. Then shall the condition of repose be exchanged for a condition of glory; the *unclothed* soul for the soul *clothed upon* with that spiritual, that resurrection body, which Paul describes as *its house from heaven*. For action, for those blessed works of unwearying ministration, for which God, we doubt not, destines his saints in the ages of an eternal existence, the soul will need the presence of that body which shall be restored to it at *the resurrection of the just*. For rest, for repose after the storms of life, for thankful reminiscence, adoring praise, and glorious anticipation, the soul divested of the body will suffice: *Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Blessed, from henceforth, are the dead which die in the Lord: Even so, saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labors.*

And their works follow with them. Not one act honestly done for Christ—done in humility, done in sincerity, done in earnestness, done in unselfishness—shall fail or be forgotten when the joyful summons shall be heard at evening, *Call the laborers and give them their hire.* It is not for man to anticipate the reward of his deeds on earth: he knows that the very best of them needs itself to be forgiven, needs to be washed in tears of repentance and sanctified through a more availing blood. This is well. Nevertheless the word of God standeth sure. *They shall rest from their labors: and their works follow with them.* V.

The Condition of Souls between Death and the Resurrection.—That this state will be something other than that which follows the final judgment is evident. The work of redemption will not be complete till death is swallowed up in victory, and the resurrected bodies of the saints rehabilitate their waiting spirits and both are glorified together. Neither will any soul in the future life be fully conscious of the measure of its desert till *the influence which survives us all has borne its fruit in time*; nor the glory of Christ in his mediatorial work be complete till all enemies are put under his feet. Moreover, it is clearly intimated of that glorious array of faithful souls, illustrious patriarchs, martyrs, and men of renown mentioned in the eleventh of Hebrews, that they have not yet attained all that they sought; and that one believing age is not to be per-

fected, except in connection with every other, in that glorious consummation at the end of the world, after which will come the æons in which God will show "the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

It is a fair inference from Scripture, not only that souls are in a state of conscious activity, but that, as Judas, so every other goes to his own place. "Death alters our condition and our surroundings, but most likely affects our essential personality not at all." Says Von Oosterzee, "The to-day of the soul after death is the simple continuation of the course followed on earth, downward or upward, and in which it now inwardly ripens for the portion which will be manifested at the last day, and of which it already experiences a foretaste of the enjoyment or the terror." Absent from the body is to be present with the Lord in some one of the many mansions, or to awake to the consciousness of an abused probation and a rejected opportunity. This intermediate state may also serve an end, as well as actually be a waiting for the consummation of all things. The soul released from all bodily hindrances and infirmities is open to the searching scrutiny of the light of truth as never before; and,

"pervaded with light by the heavenly glancing of God's fire," is becoming adjusted to that life, into which death is a birth, and which invites it to a yet sublimer destiny when rehabilitated by its glorified body, and admitted to its inheritance as an heir of God in the new earth wherein righteousness shall for ever dwell. No adjustment to the absolutely holy life of heavenly society is so essential as a moral one. No place is now found so favorable to it as that which brings us into communion with God. How rapid the progress when the veil is taken away and we see him as he is.

We are, then, to regard the intermediate state between death and the resurrection as one of transition from this state to that which is final, along the lines of choice and habit made our own here and now. "Upon the broad as upon the narrow way falls the impenetrable curtain of death; but the first step after borders immediately upon the last step before the curtain. Advancement and progress are made ever in the same path in which the man was already walking even before his death. A transition from the one to the opposite condition after death is accordingly spoken of as inconceivable by the mouth of truth itself." *Haydn.*

Section 383.

REVELATION xv. 1-8; xvi. 1-21; xvii. 1-18; xviii. 1-24; xix. 1-21.

- 15 : 1 AND I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven
2 last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having
3 the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true
4 are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest. And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: and the seven angels came out of the temple,
5 having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded
6 with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden
7 vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.
- 16 : 1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways,
2 and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men
3 which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man:
4 and every living soul died in the sea. And the third angel poured out his vial upon the
5 rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou
6 hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given
7 them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even
8 so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments. And the fourth angel poured
9 out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power
10 over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory. And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they
11 gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains
12 and their sores, and repented not of their deeds. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the
13 kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the

- 14 false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God
- 15 Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called
- 17 in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is
- 18 done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and so*
- 19 great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine
- 20 of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not
- 21 found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, *every stone* about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.
- 17: 1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore
- 2 that sitteth upon many waters: with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit
- 3 upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten
- 4 horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and
- 5 filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF
- 6 THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.
- 7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.
- 8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast
- 9 that was, and is not, and yet is. And here *is* the mind which hath wisdom. The seven
- 10 heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, *and* the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of
- 12 the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the
- 13 beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.
- 14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him *are* called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are
- 16 peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and
- 17 shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be
- 18 fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.
- 18: 1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and
- 3 the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through
- 4 the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her
- 5 plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works:
- 6 in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit
- 8 a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for
- 9 strong *is* the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they
- 10 shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come.
- 11 And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their

12 merchandise any more. The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and
 18 marble, and cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls
 14 of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more
 15 at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off
 16 for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious
 17 stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar
 18 off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this
 19 great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of
 20 her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. Rejoice over her, *thou* heaven, and
 21 *ye* holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast *it* into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall
 22 that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft *he be*, shall be found any more in thee; and
 23 the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for
 24 by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

19: 1 And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alle-
 2 lua; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous *are* his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the
 8 earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And
 4 again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye
 6 that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia:
 7 for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to
 8 him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine
 9 linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the
 10 true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See *thou do it* not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of
 11 Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and
 12 True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he
 13 himself. And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called the
 14 Word of God. And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that
 15 with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he
 16 treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper
 18 of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of
 19 all *men*, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the
 20 horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the

mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

THE Bible is a self-evidenced miracle; and the miracle consists in this, that a book the composition of which occupied more than fifteen centuries of time, prepared by different hands and minds, with no possibility of collusion, and differing each from the other so much as Moses and John, Samuel and Peter, Solomon and Paul, Ezekiel and Luke, David and James, each preparing and shaping his appropriate work and that work of each as distinct from every other as the book of Genesis and the Apocalypse, the Psalms and the acts of the Apostles, the book of Ruth and the argument in the Epistle to the Romans, the prophecies of Isaiah and the letters of the disciple whom Jesus loved; that, in all this vast variety of material, history, ritual, description, genealogy, law, proverb, prophecy, ode, apothegm, precept, fact, doctrine, apology, reasoning, there should be as complete a unity of subject, the whole compacted and framed together into one book, and that having but one theme, as if it had been composed in the lifetime of one man, and by his own many-sided and varied faculties. And that which alone gives unity to this far-stretching and varied material is Jesus Christ and his salvation. Deep answers to deep across intervening ages, and there is but one voice, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy"; all times and all events converge in one truth, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." He who does not comprehend this structure of the Book of God in the unity of Jesus Christ his Son, will never reach himself the compactness and strength of a perfect Christian man, the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. W. A.

Chs. 15-19. The last passage of the 14th chapter brought down the inspired disclosure to the very end of all things. After the vision of the harvest and the vintage there can be no later transaction upon the defiled and desecrated earth. The next revelation in order of time must be that of the *new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness*. But there are parts of the picture still to be completed before we are prepared for the descent of the holy city from heaven to earth, and the final establishment among men of the tabernacle of God. In particular, we have yet to learn in fuller detail the fate of the three enemies described in the last section. We have heard in the 14th chapter in general terms that their overthrow is destined and certain. But the particulars of the overthrow have not yet been disclosed. V.

15 : 1-4. Here, also, preceding the seven vials of wrath, is a scene of heavenly triumph. Victors stand over the crystal sea mingled with fire, as on a shore of safety, singing "the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." We are, of course, reminded of the song of Moses and his triumphant host on the shore of the Red Sea. In that ancient ode of victory they sang, "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" In this they sing, "Great and marvelous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty! just and true are thy ways, thou King of nations. Who should not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name, for thou only art holy?"

5-8. This prepares for judgment on oppressors. Seven angels come out of the temple, and to them one of the "four living ones" delivers seven golden vials or goblets full of the anger of the ever-living God. The action of the living creature is significant, because the plagues or blows are about to fall on the various regions of creation—the earth, the sea, the fresh waters, and the sun.

16 : 1-21. As the vials are successively poured out by the angels, the seven last blows or plagues fall upon men, and recall several of the plagues in-

ficted on Egypt. The parallel between these and the judgments under the trumpets is very remarkable.

TRUMPETS.	VIALS.
1. Fire and blood on the earth.	Grievous sore on the earth.
2. Fire and blood on the sea.	Blood in the sea.
3. Wormwood on rivers and fountains of water.	Blood in rivers and fountains of water.
4. Darkness of sun, moon, and stars.	Scorching heat from the sun.
5. A fallen star—the opening of the abyss—darkness—locusts.	Darkness on the throne of the beast, and in his kingdom.
6. Loosing of four angels in the Euphrates, and issuing of a great host to hurt and destroy.	Drying up of Euphrates—appearance of three unclean frog-like spirits—gathering of kings to war.
7. Consummation, with announcement of divine judgment; voices, thunders, lightnings, and hail.	Consummation, with announcement of divine judgment; voices, thunders, lightnings, and hail.

Is it not plain that these do not describe consecutive periods of history? They have such a coincidence as plainly indicates that they set forth, by line upon line, and in the old Hebrew style of repetition with expansion, the same principles of divine judgment. D. F.

The course of these judgments is in some particulars the same as that of the trumpets. The earth, the sea, the rivers, the lights of heaven, these are the objects of the first four; but ever with reference to those who worship the beast and have his mark on them. At the fifth, as in each case before, there is a change from general to special; the throne and kingdom of the beast, the river Euphrates, these are now the objects; and the seventh passes off, as in each former case, to the consummation of all things. Meantime, as so often before, anticipating hints have been given of new details belonging to the other angelic announcements. At the sixth vial (vs. 12-16) we have the sounds of the gathering of an approaching battle of God's enemies against him, and the very battle-field pointed out. After the seventh and its closing formula (vs. 17-21), Babylon comes into remembrance before

God, to give her the cup of his vengeance. Thus, then, we pass to the second of the angelic announcements—the fall of Babylon (ch. 17). A.

1-11. The special object of the judgments now to commence is the second of the three enemies of Christ and his Church, *the wild beast from the sea*, which unites in itself the attributes of the worldly power in every form and phase. These judgments have been executed in a greater or less degree throughout all time. But the terms of this prophecy, no less than the position which it occupies in the Book of Revelation, prepare us to expect a more intense and concentrated manifestation of God's judgment upon an opposing and blaspheming world as the last end of all things shall draw on. The judgments of which we here read are described as *the seven last plagues*, in which *is filled up the wrath of God*.

12. At the sounding of the sixth trumpet there is a similar introduction of the river Euphrates. *Loose the four angels bound at the river Euphrates*. The Euphrates, speaking roughly, was the boundary between Israel and Israel's invaders. It was the eastern barrier (with the desert between) of the holy land and of the chosen people. The river Euphrates, the ancient barrier between Israel and the enemies of Israel—the typical barrier between the Church, which is *the Israel of God*, and the enemies of the Church—is to be dried up, to prepare the way of the kings from the east. The typical home of the Church in the language of all prophecy is Palestine and Jerusalem; and therefore the typical home of the foes of the Church is in the region to which Palestine and Jerusalem ever looked as the quarter of danger, as the source of attack. The enemies of Christ are gathering for one last and decisive onslaught upon his servants and upon his throne: God foresees this; God permits this; yea, God would have it so: and therefore one of his latest vials of judgment is poured upon the Euphrates, that the hostile powers may march undisturbed against Jerusalem, and meet their great discomfiture in a struggle the deadliest and the last of all.

13. There is an agency of God, and there is an agency too of man. God dries the Euphrates; the enemy emits the spirits, the unclean and lying spirits, which are to draw the nations across it. Thus it is in all time; man can ill distinguish between the agency of permission and the agency of causation; between that power which stands aside and makes room, and that power which solicits, which inspires, and which directs. That which God hinders not he in some sort does. Often does his word speak of him as acting where a cautious and timid theology might rather speak of him as allowing. This we know, and thus far, at all events, we are safe in affirming constantly, that all good is of God, and that all evil is of God's enemy. It is of good that the conflict of truth and falsehood, of light and darkness, should at last receive its decision: it is of evil that any one soul is induced to cast in its lot in that struggle with the hosts of anti-christ. God dries the Euphrates; but the unclean spirits fill the invading ranks.

God prepares the way. But the influence by which the hosts of evil are mustered is not of God. *I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet*. Each of the three great enemies of Christ's truth and of Christ's Church contributes a special influ-

ence toward this result, this gathering of the powers of evil to combat and to ruin. There comes out of the mouth of the *dragon* that spirit of *unbelief*, of doubting, mistrusting, at last denying, God's express word, whether of revelation, of command, or of promise, by which in Eden itself the serpent tempted, and by listening to which woman first and then man fell. The evil spirit from the mouth of the *beast* which is the world bids us think the things that are seen more real and more valuable than the things which are not seen; bids us deem nothing so desirable, nothing so necessary to us, as the good opinion of *a man that shall die*; bids us live for esteem, or live for praise, or live for power, or live for pleasure, or live for wealth, and not live for God, and not live for eternity. And what shall we say of the unclean spirit of the third enemy, of the false prophet, the creature and abettor of the second? Surely the wisdom of this world, no less than the power of this world, has in this generation a real and an oppressive influence.

15. *Behold, I come as a thief*. The thief comes at night; comes without notice; comes *while men sleep*; comes suddenly and by surprise upon a house barred against his approach. I beseech you to remember that the second coming of Christ, that coming which will set the seal of permanence upon what is, and make your then state before God your state for ever, will have this special peculiarity, it will be a surprise. And everything in you which says *peace and safety*; every feeling of your heart which breathes tranquillity in the present; every calculation based upon *to-morrow being as this day*; every confident look at the bright cheerfulness of your fireside, or at the healthy and happy countenance of wife or child; still more every prayerless morning and every thankless night, when you rise as to a life all your own, or close your eyes in sleep as upon a world which will as certainly be yours to-morrow—is a sign, not of the distance, but of the nearness of Christ's advent. The peculiarity of Christ's coming is that everything which seems to defer really brings it near; everything which seems to make it improbable is an argument of its certainty and of its approach. *Behold, I come as a thief*. What shall we say then, but that the inspired word is reasonable which adds, *Blessed is he that watcheth*? Against an event so sure in its fact but so doubtful in its time, what can we do but watch always? To be wakeful, in the Christian sense of that word, is not to be sleeping in indifference, not to be sleeping in self-indulgence, not to be sleeping in godlessness, not to be sleeping in sin. It is to be men of prayer, men of self-command, men of activity; I say it again, men of prayer. It is to have the communication ever open between the soul and its God. It is to have the aspect ever upward and ever onward. It is to have Christ ever real to us, the Holy Spirit ever present. It is to observe with a serious steadfastness the signs of the times: to compare the features of our generation with the marks given in Scripture of the latter days, of the times of the end. It is to rejoice with a sincere and a thankful joy in every victory won for Christ in the world or in a soul. It is to *use this world as not abusing it*; to use it as a trust, not as a possession. It is to have the affection set on things above, not on things on the earth; to have our conversation, our citizenship, already in heaven; to have our very life, the life that is most dear and most real and most precious to us, *hidden even now with Christ in*

God. So when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. V.

16. In Judges 5 : 19 we read : "The kings came and fought, then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo." There the Israelites gained a signal victory over the Canaanitish kings. Here, it is said, "he gathered them together into a place called Armageddon." Now, if it was meant that the people of God should be victorious over the combined forces of their enemies, could it be better represented than by saying that the battle of Megiddo should be fought again? On this assumption the battle of Armageddon is simply a conflict between the Lord's servants and his allied foes, in which the former should gain a signal victory. That it will be a struggle involving bloodshed, and the other circumstances of human warfare, appears to be entirely an assumption. The conflict may be moral. The weapons of warfare may be spiritual. This view is more in harmony with the general character of the Revelation than that which would make one human battle with carnal weapons the symbolic representation of another human battle of the same kind. *J. Hall.*

17-21. Since the hailstones come by weight and the wrath comes by measure—for so a talent and a cup import—it follows that the Almighty God, even in the midst of the heat of all this anger, will keep to the rules of justice and judgment while he is dealing with this enemy; he has not passions to carry him beyond rules of judgment, nor weakness to cause him to fall short of doing justice; therefore he has his judgments for her by weight, and his indignation by measure. But yet this weight and measure are disposed according to the measure and nature of her iniquity, and come to sweep her as with the besom of destruction, until she is swept off from the face of all the earth. *Bun.*

Ch. 7. It is there told, almost without figure, what is the seat, and what the name, and what the place in history, and what the singular, the unprecedented end, of that power which in John's time was the rider upon the wild beast. Her seat was the city of the seven hills. Her name, that of the great empire then reigning over the kings of the earth. Her place in history, the sixth and last but one of those mighty empires which have successively towered above the thrones of the earth. She comes after Egypt, after Assyria, after Babylon, after Persia, after Greece. Strange to tell, she does not come before any one similar embodiment of the giant strength of that beast which is the world. She is to be followed by a seventh head; but that seventh head is a mere cluster of ten horns. The head exists but for the purpose of carrying those ten horns. The power which is to replace imperial Rome is a divided, not a concentrated, force. Marvelous prediction! audacious, were it not divine! but not more marvelous in its peculiarity, not more bold in its positiveness, than true in its fulfillment, in the history of the past and in the circumstances of the present! *V.*

14. In the Gospel of John we read the life of Christ on earth; a man conversing with men, humble, poor, weak, and suffering, we behold a sacrifice ready to be offered, and a man appointed to sorrows and death; but in the Revelation of John, we have the gospel of Christ now raised from the dead. He speaks and acts as having conquered the grave, and triumphed over death and hell, as entered into the

place of his glory; angels, principalities, and powers being made subject unto him, and exercising the supreme universal power: he has received from the Father over all things in heaven and earth, as our Saviour, for the protection of his Church, and for the sure happiness of his faithful servants in the end. *Boswell.*

17. We live under the most peculiar of all the phases of the world's power, and we are taught in prophecy that it is the last of all. Since John wrote, one phase has passed and another has come in; he wrote under the sixth; we are living under the seventh; and there is no eighth. With what earnestness ought we to read and to ponder the brief saying of the text, *until the words of God shall be fulfilled!* God has fulfilled some of them, yea, many, since the time that John *fell on sleep*. He has caused the curtain to fall upon one act of the drama, and he has raised it by his providence upon another, upon the last of all. Who can tell us how long it shall yet continue, ere the incidents be quite exhausted and the catastrophe be fully come? At all events we know this; that for each one of us *the end of all things is at hand*: if the Saviour's advent come not soon to us, we shall surely go to it. Meanwhile let us at least know that there is an end; and let us be waiting for it, and watching!

Ch. 18. This chapter is a graphic picture of the fall of Rome. It is drawn from an earlier likeness, and painted in colors not new but old. Earlier prophecies, denouncing judgment upon preceding empires, furnish the main features of this. Those things which Isaiah and Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Nahum, saw and recorded concerning Tyre and Nineveh and Babylon of old, are here gathered together, and written of a later tyrant; of an oppressor not of Israel, but of the Church of Christ and of the gospel. In the very fact of that application, of that transfer, of that repetition, we see a sign of the wisdom and of the grace of God. What could be so encouraging, so reassuring, to a prostrate, exiled, persecuted people, as to be reminded, from their own Scriptures, of oppressions and sufferings endured of old time by God's servants, and of the retribution by which those ancient wrongs had been recompensed and redressed? What could be a surer warrant for the hope that a Babylon of the present, powerful as she appeared, and deeply rooted, and securely fenced and guarded, might yet in the mysterious working of God's providence be brought to desolation and to nothingness, than the declaration that one sits in the seat of an earlier Babylon, whose *houses are now full of doleful creatures, wild beasts crying in her desolate houses, and dragons in her pleasant palaces!* To call Rome Babylon was of itself a pledge of its demolition. The policy of that great empire, and the philosophy of that great empire; its principle, and its want of principle; its belief in human power, and its indifference to divine power; its skepticism as to all truth, and its toleration of all religions which would themselves tolerate; all had conspired together to make the empire of Rome the foe of Christianity. Sometimes by the caprices of her rulers, and sometimes in spite of their injunctions, Rome had proved herself in fact not a neutral but a persecuting power. In her, when she came to be judged, whether by history or by prophecy, *was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all that were slain upon the earth.* And at last judgment fell; a judgment of disruption

and of dissolution; a judgment full of justice, and a judgment full of admonition. To the severity of that judgment the city itself bears an infallible testimony. So early as the beginning of the fifteenth century this was the language of a reflecting observer: "The hill of the Capitol, on which we sit, was formerly the head of the Roman empire, the citadel of the earth, the terror of kings; illustrated by the footsteps of so many triumphs, enriched with the spoils and tributes of so many nations. This spectacle of the world, how is it fallen! how changed! how defaced! the path of victory is obliterated by vines, and the benches of the senators are concealed by a dunghill. Cast your eyes on the Palatine hill, and seek among the shapeless and enormous fragments the marble theatre, the obelisks, the colossal statues, the porticoes of Nero's palace: survey the other hills of the city, the vacant space is interrupted only by ruins and gardens. The forum of the Roman people, where they assembled to enact their laws and elect their magistrates, is now enclosed for the cultivation of pot-herbs, or thrown open for the reception of swine and buffaloes. The public and private edifices, that were founded for eternity, lie prostrate, naked, and broken, like the limbs of a mighty giant; and the ruin is the more visible, from the stupendous relics that have survived the injuries of time and fortune" (Gibbon, ch. 71).

But is it then with walls and buildings that the righteous anger of God wages its warfare? Is it any impeachment of the truth of his prediction, if another city rises in its turn upon the ruins of Babylon, or another power diverse from the former plants its throne upon the ruins of imperial Rome? Not so. It may be noticeable, as a permanent index of judgment, if wild beasts of the desert still lie where Babylon the glory of kingdoms once spread wide her habitations; if dragons still cry in those pleasant palaces where kings once reigned, vassals of a yet mightier throne. But not less really, if less visibly, are God's denunciations against a second Babylon verified, if after the fall of imperial Rome papal Rome rose and flourished for her season, built herself churches with the stones of temples, and reigned in turn over subject consciences as her predecessor had reigned over prostrate nationalities. *There have been times*, it has been well said, *when the papacy looked very like the beast of the Revelation*: at such times, in the same degree, God's judgments upon Babylon were applicable and appropriate to the papacy. And that which was not explained nor meant to be explained to John, time has revealed to us; namely, that the fall of the Babylon that then was was not destined to be the immediate precursor of the end of all things. Even John was instructed to write, *There are seven kings: five are fallen; and one is; and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space* (17:10). That short space has been expanded by the event into a period of several centuries. Other Babylons, on a smaller scale, and with features less precisely marked, have come and gone since John's prophecy against Rome was fulfilled. The beast still is, and still develops himself from time to time in new forms. Wherever he develops himself, there arises another Babylon; and of the ruin of that other Babylon the ruin of the first Babylon and of the second is an infallible and ever-growing proof. V.

19 : 1-10. The time now draws near for the final termination of the conflict. The irrevocable

doom has been pronounced. But before the final condemnation, the episode (so usual in this book) of praise, thanksgiving, and anticipated completion of victory, comes in with a delay of the main action. The episode (as usual) has three parts: 1. All the inhabitants of the heavenly world are represented as uniting in a song of triumph and of thanksgiving on account of the righteous judgments of God which are about to be inflicted (vs. 1-4). 2. A voice from the throne in heaven speaks, and requires of all his servants everywhere renewed praise, which accordingly is shouted (vs. 5-8). 3. The glorious prospect for suffering martyrs is disclosed. They will be guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb. The Church is indeed the Lamb's bride, and the exaltation of the Messiah is vividly sketched in the declaration of the angel interpreter, at whose feet John, in a state of astonishment, falls. Jesus, the angel declares, is the object of worship by him; and therefore he (the angel) can not claim the worship of his fellow-servants, who, like him, are merely instruments in making known the prophecies respecting the triumph of redeeming grace (vs. 9, 10). M.S.

10. Jesus. The lines of both Testaments meet in him as in one common center. In the testimonies of the Bible concerning the glory, grace, and work of Christ, the Old Testament confirms the New, and the New Testament illustrates the Old. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy"; that is, the essence, the substance, the aim and end of all prophecy. Without the preëminence of Christ they become like other writings; but admit this, and then there is but one gospel under all dispensations—but one Saviour for all sinners. And whoever are the speakers or writers, whether patriarchs, or prophets, or kings, or angels, or poets, or apostles, or disciples, each vies with the other to give Christ the preëminence. The glories of heaven and the wonders of the earth, the honors of offices or the happiness of relations, the attractions of beauty or the authority of dignity, are chosen as metaphors to set forth the preëminent excellence of Christ. Sherman.

11-16. The wisest of living Britons has said, "Infinite pity, yet infinite rigor of law. It is so that the world is made." It is so the world must be made, because it is made by Jesus Christ our Lord, and its laws are the likeness of his character; pitiful, because Christ is pitiful; and rigorous, because he is rigorous. So pitiful is Christ that he did not hesitate to be slain for men, that mankind through him might be saved. But so rigorous is Christ that he does not hesitate to slay men, if needful, that mankind thereby may be saved. War and bloodshed, pestilence and famine, earthquake and tempest—all of them, as sure as there is a God, are the servants of God, doing his awful but necessary

work for the final benefit of the whole human race. C. K.—It is “the faithful and true who in righteousness doth judge and make war.” He is represented as Head of the Church, sitting on “a white horse”; while, as Head over all things to the Church, he is described as “having on his head many crowns, as clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, as smiting the nations with a sharp sword, ruling them with a rod of iron, treading the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, and having on his vesture and on his thigh the name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.” W. S.

17-21. A great contest ensues, to which the hosts are gathered under the sixth bowl of wrath (16 : 14). But the actual conflict does not occur till after the fall of Babylon, which is under the seventh bowl or vial. This battle is symbolical, not literal. We are never to think of the Lord Jesus Christ as asserting his rightful power on the earth by onsets of cavalry, or the slaughter of wild beasts, princes, and soldiers, amid the screaming of vultures assembled for a ghastly feast. The only sword wielded by the King of kings is the sword of his mouth, and no weapons are seen in the armies from heaven that follow him. His sharp mouth-sword or word suffices to slay the opposing kings and armies—i. e., to subdue and extinguish national opposition to Christ. But that mouth-sword had no effect on the beast and the false prophet; it is not even applied to them. They are cast alive into a “pool which burns with fire and brimstone.” Thus these formidable symbols of evil activity are committed to an element which wholly consumes. In other words, the influences which they represent and impersonate come to such an end that they can never rise or reappear among the sons of men. D. F.

God will have things go on thus in the world till his word shall be fulfilled; the deceived and the deceiver are his. Things therefore must have their course in the church in the wilderness till the mystery of God shall be fulfilled. God will get to himself great glory by permitting the boar, the man of sin and the dragon, to revel in the church of God; for they by setting up and contending for their darkness, and calling it the light, and by setting it against that light which is light in very deed, do not only prove the power of truth where it is, but illustrate it so much the more; for as black sets off white, and darkness light, so error sets off truth. The Church will not give place, for she knows she has the truth; the dragon and his angels, they will not give place, but as beaten back by the power of truth. Therefore there will, there must, there can not but be, a spiritual warfare here, and that until one of the two is destroyed, and its body given to the burning flame. *Bun.*

We are living, not in the time of the sixth, but in the time of the seventh head of the wild beast; that head which is known by its ten horns; that power which is designated by division, not by concentration; by a plurality, not by a unity, of crowns and thrones on earth. And here we read of the closing scene of the period of that seventh supremacy. It is the last of the empires: there is none to follow it. It is to terminate in that great outbreak of evil which under many different figures appears both in Old Testament and in New Testament prophecy as the sure token of the last end of all. And then upon this last concourse of the powers of evil bursts the full blaze of the divine glory in the person of Jesus Christ, unto conviction, consternation, and final ruin. V.

Section 384.

REVELATION XX. 1-15.

- 1 AND I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a
- 2 great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the
- 3 Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit,
- and shut him up, and set a seal upon him that he should deceive the nations no more, till
- the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.
- 4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I
- saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of
- God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his
- mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a
- 5 thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were
- 6 finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first
- resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God
- 7 and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years

- 8 are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to
 9 battle: the number of whom *is* as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire
 10 came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet
are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.
- 11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and
 12 the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written
 13 in the books, according to their works. And the sea^{gave} up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every
 14 man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is
 15 the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

In the very being—the rational and moral being—that God has given us, he has inwoven the future judgment; he has constructed our nature so that it demands this award as its necessary completion. Our daily life is one long prophecy of that day. In the gloomy recollections of age, in the man of crime who struggles in vain to crush a rebuking conscience, in the youth who weeps the bitter fruits of passion, in the very child who runs to hide his conscious fault—in all alike is foreshadowed the terrible decree of universal judgment. For judgment we are born, for judgment we flourish, grow old, and die. Nature herself dares not deny the certainty of retribution; the gospel but confirms her conviction; for, even in regions where the gospel has never sounded, her voice, speaking in all nations, languages, and times, has proclaimed from pole to pole that God shall judge his creature. But revelation alone could tell the circumstances and accessories of this great event; and revelation has abundantly done so. The Judge himself has undrawn the curtain of eternity; he has shown us his own everlasting throne, and the procedures of his court, and the test he shall demand, and the verdict he shall deliver. It is a strange thing thus to read the story of our own hereafter; to hear delivered, with all the minuteness of some history of past events, a scene in which each of us individually must perform his own special part, and that part the most awful and decisive in all eternity. Strange to see one single point in the clouded future thus flashing out amid the impenetrable obscurity of all the rest; and that one the point on which all the rest is ultimately to depend. Strange, indeed; yet stranger still, that it can be contemplated with so little emotion; that men can live admitting its certainty, yet never remembering its approach; that, when once granted to be true, it should not be found to occupy every thought, and to make the great directive principle of existence. W. A. B.

1-3. The doom of the dragon.—He has been cast out of heaven into the earth (12 : 9). Let that be the first stage of his discomfiture. The second will be when he is bound with a chain and cast into the abyss, there to be confined for a thousand years. Though sin will not be wholly expunged from the earth during that period, the active power of the tempter will be restrained, and the saints will be free from his wiles as well as his fiery darts. **7, 8.** But the dragon is to be let loose again, and wickedness will have a brief revival on the earth. Satan will come out of prison incorrigible and incurable as he entered it—the inveterate impersonation of malice and deceit. Terrible fiend! The sight of Eve's innocence stirred in him no pity. The manifestation of the Son of God brought him to no repentance. A thousand years of restraint in the abyss teach him no submission. He is no

sooner at large again than he resumes his old employment of deceiving the nations and assailing the saints. **9, 10.** But the cup of his iniquity is full; and he reaches the third and final stage of his discomfiture. The confederacy which he leads against the holy city is scattered by devouring fire from heaven, and then he himself is overtaken by his doom. It is not, as the mediæval notion was (not yet extinct among us), that the devil is to be a king in hell, tormenting at his pleasure lost souls of men, but that he himself is tormented; as hitherto the most active of sinners, hereafter the most helpless; as more wicked than others, so in the end more miserable.

There is a serious difficulty about the second coming of Christ. Many passages in both Testaments connect his advent with the establishment of his kingdom on the earth; and it is taught in the

nineteenth chapter of this book that he will be revealed from heaven with attendant saints before the millennium; that he will then subdue his enemies, and introduce a reign of righteousness and peace. There are, however, many other passages, of equal authority, which describe our Lord as coming with flaming fire to judge the world; and the last judgment is certainly after the millennium (vs. 11-15). On this interpreters have broken into parties; and then, as is not uncommon in controversy, each party, occupying itself with the parts of Scripture which favor its distinctive theory, becomes more and more confident in its own opinion. It is not within the power of man to tell us now what may or may not be inclosed within the truth and fact of the Lord's second coming. Only the future can determine. The prophecy regarding Messiah in the Old Testament seemed to intimate only one advent for all purposes; but we now perceive that it covered a double advent, a coming in weakness, and a coming in power, a coming to suffer, and a coming to reign. There is no reason why the prophecy in the New Testament regarding the second advent may not unfold a double import; the more so that the language touching the resurrection of the dead, though often seeming to point to one event, unfolds a double import, a resurrection of the just, and a subsequent uprising of the unjust.

It is clear that Christ will come to quell his adversaries, reward his servants, and bring in millennial peace; but it is not clear whether or not that appearing will be visible to the world at large. Enough that it will be quite appreciable by his saints. He will interpose in such a way that they who follow him in the great battle of God Almighty will know right well who it is by whom they are led, and to whom the victory is due; and they who reign in life upon or over the earth will know well who it is with whom they reign as kings and priests to God. But this does not exhaust the prophecy of his appearing. At the last day he will come in his glory, seen by every eye, to judge the quick and the dead. Let us endeavor to keep all this truth honestly in mind.

4. *The Millennial blessedness.*—Whether or no one thousand ordinary solar years are intended, a definite period is fixed, during which the meek shall "inherit the earth," and the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be "given to the people of the saints of the Most High." D. F.

Dr. Hodge thus summarizes the generally received views of the future of time: "It is clearly revealed, both in the Old and the New Testaments, that the gospel is to exercise an influence over all branches of the human family, immeasurably more extensive and more thoroughly transforming than any it has ever realized in time past. This end is

to be gradually attained through the spiritual presence of Christ in the ordinary dispensations of Providence and ministrations of his Church. The period of this general prevalence of the Gospel will continue a thousand years. Either at the commencement, or during the continuance of this period, the Jews are to be converted to Christianity. At the end, there will be a comparatively short season of apostasy and violent conflict between the kingdoms of light and darkness. Then will follow—Christ's advent, the general resurrection and judgment: these will be simultaneous; and they will be succeeded by the burning of the old and the revelation of the new earth and heavens."

Of the Millennium so far as revealed by John, the description is very limited, making only three leading points, viz., the binding of Satan; the duration of this restraint; and the joy of the martyrs with Christ over the glorious event. If we ask for the agencies which are to introduce and produce this millennial age, these visions give no answer beyond what is comprehended in the one fact—*Satan bound*. If we ask what John has taught us respecting the state of the world during this Millennium, we are left to infer it from these two facts—the withdrawing of Satan's influence, and the joy of the martyrs and of Jesus over the victory of his cause, the triumph of his reign. We may however turn back to Old Testament prophecy and there find many of the most important questions fully answered. If we ask for the political, moral, and religious state of the world, we learn that wars will cease; crime disappear; that hate will die out of human bosoms and love reign in its stead; the idols will utterly perish; one God only shall be worshiped and obeyed from the rising to the setting sun. If we ask, What agencies are to work this wondrous change? we are promptly answered—"For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord [Jesus] as the waters cover the sea." Satan deceives no longer; the truth of God in his gospel leads men in the paths of righteousness and peace. These long ages form the grand theatre for manifesting the transforming power of the gospel of salvation—redemption by the cross of Jesus. It is the consummation of the gospel age, in which the inherent power of God's spirit with his truth, borne in the willing hands and loving hearts of his people, will have free course and be glorified. H. C.

4-6. Nearly all through the Christian centuries there has existed an opinion, gaining at times a wide prevalence, that there is to be a pre-millennial resurrection of the righteous, who shall reign with Christ for a thousand years, while the rest of the dead still slumber on in their graves. In support of this opinion, appeal is made to the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse. But a closer inspection of

the chapter might have disclosed the fact that the resurrection here spoken of as preceding the thousand years, is a resurrection not of all the saints, but only of the martyred saints. It would be disingenuous to deny, or try to blink, the difficulties which beset not this passage alone, but the entire book of the Apocalypse. Till the Champollion appears, who shall decipher this mysterious hieroglyph, we can do no better than interpret the passage in question figuratively. Perhaps the meaning of it is, that before the Millennium is ushered in—that “mellow Indian summer of the church on earth”—the spirit of the martyrs must be reproduced throughout the ranks of the redeemed. The martyrs may thus be said to issue from their graves in advance of the general resurrection, to sit regnant with Christ. But whatever may be done with this passage, it will not answer for us to disregard the many other passages which speak of only one resurrection at the end of the world. The New Testament holds up clearly before us one great day, for which all other days are made; the day of final judgment, the day of God, when the Son of Man shall be seen coming in the clouds with the retinue of all his disembodied saints, when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and all the dead shall live again embodied, in order to the completeness of their being and the fullness of their retribution. R. D. H.

As to the notion of a *descent to the earth* by Christ and the martyrs and their *visible* reign here, there is not a word in the text nor even an implication. What a conception it would be, to mingle *celestial* and *terrestrial* beings in one common mass? The glorified Saviour and the glorified martyrs, mingling with material and punishable beings, and becoming subject again to the laws of matter? If it be said that the earth is to be changed entirely, at the beginning of the millennium, and to be fitted by this change for the abode of such glorious beings raised from the dead, where then are Gog and Magog to live during this period—and other men—are they still *mortal* beings or not? Besides all this, John has not yet said a word respecting the *renovation* of the earth. It is only at or after the period of the general judgment that this renovation takes place, Rev. 21 : 1. M. S.

6. On such the second death has no power. The Scriptures set before us “death” as manifested in two forms; and Christ as the destroyer of one, the ruler and restrictor of the other. These are mysteriously entitled “the first” and “the second” death; both, as we may infer from the sameness of the name, successive developments, first on a less, afterward on a vaster and more terrible scale, of that common principle, whatever it be, of death, which is the original and stated

“wages of sin.” The first form of death results on the sin of nature, and is therefore universal as *it* is; the second form, which perhaps is naturally the sequel or maturity of the former, is, by the mercy of God, restricted to unpardoned guilt. To both, Christ, “who is our life,” is the appointed adversary, and over both he triumphs, though in different ways; over the *first* by raising all mankind, over the *second* by conducting his faithful to glory. W. A. B.

9. Gog and Magog. John borrows his imagery from Ezek. 37, 38, and 39. That the names of these enemies will be literally *Gog and Magog*, and that they are literally to come from the four corners of the earth, and besiege the literal Jerusalem, no one versed in the language of prophecy will contend. Enough that the names of old enemies are employed to designate new ones, as yet without a name. Enough that they come from the bosom of unconverted heathens, and that they oppose and persecute Christians wherever they meet them. These are the *things* signified; all the rest is costume.

11-15. The opposition of all enemies being thus effectually put down, it follows, of course, that the Church will afterward enjoy undisturbed tranquillity and prosperity. But on this the writer does not dwell. Still the fact that he does not makes nothing against the supposition of a long intervening period between the destruction of Gog and Magog and the general judgment. It should be remembered that one leading topic of the book is the *subjugation of the enemies of the Church*; and that topic is now completed. The writer passes on immediately, therefore, to the final and glorious reward of the righteous, when the probation of all the redeemed is to be completed, and the august drama is brought to its final close. But before the final reward can be distributed, a general judgment is to be instituted, at which all that have been concerned in the Redeemer's kingdom, either as friends or enemies, are to be present, and to receive their final sentence. The remainder of the chapter is occupied in describing this scene. M. S.

The opening proclamation of the Lord's coming (1 : 7) notifies also its effect on the world: “Every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” And these sounds continue. Things do not melt quietly into the peace of the kingdom of God. There is a crash of ruin, and a winepress of the wrath of Almighty God, and a lake that burns with fire and brimstone. And this judgment falls, not only on principles and powers of evil, but on nations of men; and not only on nations, but on separate persons, even on “every one who is not found written in the book of life.” He who does not accept the reality of the world's rebellion and ruin,

and of the wrath and judgment which it brings, must certainly reject this whole book from the canon; and, with it, must tear away large and living portions of every preceding book of Scripture. T. D. B.

It was a visionary representation only of this august scene that the apostle beheld: we shall behold the scene itself, the great reality. And we shall be more than spectators of it, we shall be parties in it. With some things that are written in this mysterious book we may have little or nothing to do; they concern others, but not us: with what is written here we have everything to do. C. B.—Mix ourselves up as we may, let the gradations in the appearances and outer details of character be what they will, the line runs out straight from the great white throne, and you and I and all souls are on the right hand of it, or on the left. F. D. H.

12. The dead, small and great, stand before God. Of a multitude like this we can not conceive. But here are all the millions of men who have lived and died in all the earth since the earth began, all uprising in one and the same awakening moment, and all brought, by some secret, irresistible impulse, to one and the same spot; gathering together, some willingly, some reluctantly; some joyfully, some despairingly; but yet gathering together all in one vast assembly, before one and the same throne. What a spectacle! a being in the human form calling up, and compelling to stand before him, every one of the human race who has ever breathed; without difficulty, without effort, placing them all passive and powerless at his bar! Well may he say, "Ye shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power." C. B.

Nations and men have acted freely, and their very caprice and willfulness have been worked, by an overmastering wisdom, into that web whose woof no hand of man has held, and whose web and woof together have made up one grand, consecutive, advancing history. The scroll of time has been slowly unrolled; each nation, each man, has written upon it, as he thought he would, his own brief record, and then it was rolled up, and others came and wrote; and when it is all unrolled and read, we find thereon one epic, the connected history of God and man. H. B. S.

The books opened. By what means soever made known, it is *the truth* that will come out. None shall be wearied by the tediousness of the trial; leisure enough shall be granted to carry it through. A man's deeds, in due succession, shall be recounted: and the most succinct and satisfactory method, perhaps, will be for himself to recount them. He may well be trusted to do so; for he feels at every pore that the atmosphere of truth is about him. I. T.

Every man is now, whether he wills it or not, unconsciously writing his own biography; his whole life forming a work of more importance, to himself at least, than any other in the universe—each volume a year, each chapter a month, each day or hour a page. At judgment memory will read the whole, and be compelled to feel that every word is true. It is strange, too, how rapid—reasoning from analogy—such a review may be, without diminishing from its distinctness; states of being, or successive acts which occupied long periods of time, may rapidly be recalled in all their minute features. In moments of sudden peril, when death seemed approaching, how frequently have men told us that they beheld, in a twinkling of an eye, the great features of their whole life, like a panorama, passing before their mind's eye! And thus at judgment, clear, yet rapid—intensely real and vivid, yet sudden as light—may the life of the boy, and the man, and the patriarch, from the first to the last moment of conscious and responsible existence upon earth, be presented to the mind with a self-evidencing power of truth, which can not, which dare not, be denied or resisted.

The Book of Providence shall be opened. In this book has been recorded, and from its pages can be shown, by Jesus Christ, everything which has been done to us by himself since the hour of our birth till that of our death. Every temporal mercy or spiritual blessing, every advice given by ministers, relations or friends, every Sabbath which dawned upon us, every visitation of sickness or domestic affliction, every item, in short, of that immense sum of things which, in his providence, or by his grace, was given us each successive hour of our life, and which was intended to mold our characters according to the will of God; all shall be revealed at judgment, that the universe may know what Jesus Christ, the King, has really done for each one of his subjects, and what each subject has been, and done, in relation to him.

"Another book will be opened, which is *the Book of Life*." In that book are inscribed the characters of all God's people, and the evidence of the reality of their faith in Christ and obedience to him. Their works, which are the evidence, results, and rewards of faith, are recorded by that same Spirit through whose power alone the soul has lived, believed, and been enabled to bring forth such fruit to the praise of the glory of God by Jesus Christ. In the book of life will be found recorded by the omniscient Holy Spirit of Truth, that secret life of every saint which was "hid with Christ in God." Then shall be revealed the reality of their repentance and inward renewal of soul; the sincerity of their love to God and his people; their secret prayers, thanksgivings, confessions, intercessions,

and holy communion with God; their plans, longings, and sacrifices for the spread of the gospel, and the glory of God upon earth; their deeds of charity for Christ—every prison they entered, every naked one they clothed, the hungry they fed, or the offenses forgiven by them from love to him who forgave them; that whole *character*, in short, which is the result of union with Christ, will be evidenced to the universe from what is recorded of it in the Lamb's Book of Life. N. M.

14. The second death. The true death—the real death—is the death of the soul. It is when the soul is severed from its God, and from hope, and peace, and joy; when it lives without life; survives only to suffer; is cut off from its high destiny, and driven away from him who is the RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE. Religion is life, and heaven is life, and hell is existence without life, continued being, where the soul is held in existence only to continue to die. THIS IS DEATH. Hear him speak who saw it all, and who knew it all: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." There, according to him, the sufferer shall lift up the eyes, "being in torment," and ask in vain for a single "drop of water" to cool the tongue; there "the worm dieth not, and the fire shall not be quenched"; there shall be "everlasting punishment"; there shall be "outer darkness"; there shall be the execution of the sentence, "Depart, accursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." These are the words of the meek and mild and benevolent Redeemer—the most tender and kind and merciful of all who have dwelt on the earth; who used such expressions as these, "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?" as if they became no other lips but his. In that dread sphere no spirit strives to reclaim the lost. On no zephyr there is the message of mercy borne, whispering peace. No God meets the desponding there with promises and hopes; and from no eye there is the tear of sorrow ever wiped away. There is no such friend as Jesus, no voice of mercy, no day-star of hope, no father, mother, daughter, pastor, angel, to sympathize; no one to breathe for the lost the prayer for pardon; no great Intercessor to bear the cry for mercy up to the throne of God. It is death—lingering, long, interminable death—the dying sorrow prolonged from age to age; outward, onward toward eternity—ever lingering, never ending. A. B.

THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

THE word of prophecy foretold the coming of Messiah to set up a kingdom of saving mercy, accord-

ing to which he did come. By the same word are we assured of his return as Judge of quick and dead. The fact, not the method; not the details, but the grand outlines of this conclusion of history in time are given us. This much only is necessary to its full moral effect upon us. Inquiries, therefore, in the direction of detail, serve rather to belittle than to exalt and define to our view this "spiritual mountain-land" unto which we are come, led by the word of Revelation. The Scriptures affirm that:

1. God hath appointed a *day* in the which he will judge the world. This *day* is not to be conceived of as a period of twenty-four hours, but rather as one of the days of creation, or as a prophetic day; a period of time long enough for the full and proper consummation of the trial of every man, the bringing of every secret thing into judgment, and the awarding according to righteousness.

2. This day follows immediately upon the general resurrection of all the dead. No words can better set forth this solemn judgment scene than those of our Lord in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." In anticipation of this hour, at the voice of the Son of man, the graves and the sea give up the dead which are in them.

3. Not only will all who have lived upon the earth, without exception, be numbered in that vast assemblage, but also "the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." So that this judgment scene must be regarded as having relation to the two rival kingdoms in this world now contending for mastery, and yet to grapple in more deadly conflict as the day approaches; the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan.

4. The Judge will be none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. It is most fitting that he, "by whom, and for whom, and to whom are all things," should judge the world. By his omniscient wisdom and unimpeachable righteousness, by his two-fold nature as divine yet human, by his providence over the race from the beginning, and his headship to his Church, by his matchless love for the world and his redeeming power over it, he is qualified to judge the world in righteousness, according to the deserts and qualifying conditions of every man's life and character.

5. At that tribunal will every man be impartially tried and judged. Every work will be brought into judgment with every secret thing, the little as well as the great. The great springs from the little, is

made up of littles, hinges on littles. Nothing is unimportant as determining character and desert. The possibility of such a minute disclosure is set forth in the fact that men are to be judged out of the Books. The expression implies, beyond question, that the waves of time have swept nothing into utter oblivion—that it is possible to call up the secret and public life of every man from Adam to the latest born of time, and every moment of it. That which is hid shall yet be made known, that which is covered shall yet be revealed. And this is so searchingly and universally true, that it matters not how successfully guilt has been covered, how long men have ceased to wonder over some deed of wrong, or how many years have been throwing their ever-accumulating events upon it, it shall yet be trumpeted abroad, and the light shall reveal it, when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ.

Though personal desert is closed at death, no man is then ready for final award in respect to the outcome of time. Though he has passed off the stage of life, and character has taken its final shape, he is still a factor in the forces of this world. The evil and the good men do, live after them; and what is seen to flow from their lives after death may far exceed all for which they were held responsible before death. In life they were just able to set the ball of influence in motion, and nothing has been able to arrest its progress. When will such a man as Paul be ready for the judgment? He is only more widely potential now than ever before, and the last trump will break upon his undiminished influence for good. So of all marked men and women, Christian and infidel, who in life throw the weight of their character for or against the Lord and his truth, and possibly commit to the stream of time a book which will live after them, a name which posterity will reverence or detest, and deeds which will be celebrated and have their influence upon coming generations.

Obviously, there is well-nigh no limit to the illustration of a fact which bears in upon us with an

awful solemnity, and assures us that a hundred or a thousand years away our influence may be found incarnated in some noble or some vagabond life. We are not done with our influence till the story is all told, and its bearings upon the present economy are all registered in the Books, and the opening tells the story of our desert, and fixes our final place.

A general judgment has, also, a deep significance as the conclusion of an economy; the grand *finale* of a dispensation. Time was, and time shall be no longer, and what is the outcome of God's government over men? For scores of centuries men have been swarming upon this earth. It has been the scene of the rise and fall of nations; of warring armies and bitter feuds; of religious faiths clashing at every point; of sweeping visitations of judgment and glorious dispensations of mercy! Clouds murky with the blackness of unbelief, and bright above the brightness of the sun with the radiance of a martyr-faith, have swept over it. And it is a fit and an august conclusion of a world-economy like this, that God should make apparent before all kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, the excellency and righteousness of his ways.

As the centuries shall pass in review, each life, each deed, exposed before all, to the searching light of that day, setting them in fairest view and in hidden springs, with all qualifying circumstances; the ways of providence no longer obscure; no sophistry any more allowed to dim the escutcheon of truth; no love of sin or blinding selfishness warping the judgment—as on and on the scroll of time unrolls, the antediluvian world, the patriarchal age, Israel's kingly period, the new dispensation of gospel light, and the final act of history is reached, bringing out, as it certainly will, the unsullied glory of the government of God over men, angels, and devils—one can almost hear, from the depths of that future, the acclaim, in which even the condemned must acquiesce, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!" *Haydn.*

Section 385.

REVELATION xxi. 1-27; xxii. 1-5.

21:1 AND I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 8 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto
 6 me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am
 Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the
 7 fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will
 8 be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable,
 and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have
 their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the
 seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the
 10 Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and
 11 shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, hav-
 ing the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper
 12 stone, clear as crystal; and had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the
 gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes
 of the children of Israel:

13 On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the
 14 west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names
 15 of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to mea-
 16 sure the city, and the gates thereof, and the walls thereof. And the city lieth foursquare,
 and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve
 17 thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he
 measured the wall thereof, a hundred *and* forty *and* four cubits, *according to* the measure
 18 of a man, that is, of the angels. And the building of the wall of it *was* of jasper: and
 19 the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city
were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper; the
 20 second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx;
 the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth,
 a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

21 And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the
 22 street of the city *was* pure gold, as it *were* transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein:
 23 for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need
 of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the
 24 Lamb *is* the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the
 25 light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the
 26 gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they
 27 shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter
 into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie:
 but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

22:1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of
 2 the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side
 of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her
 3 fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. And
 there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and
 4 his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their
 5 foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of
 the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

THE Lamb who on earth was declared to be "the light of the world," is in heaven equally declared to be "the light thereof." In the infinite progression of holiness that belongs to an infinite existence of glory, we shall be but drawing more and more freely from an infinite source; the Holy One that "inhabith eternity" is inexhaustible as the eternity he inhabits. Christ is as necessary to the heavenliness of heaven as he is to the holiness of earth. The abiding sanctity of his nature is the condition of ours. In the eternal laws of the divine reason it is decreed that Christ shall be the authorized dispenser of spiritual blessedness to his redeemed; that every grace shall flow through his channel, or cease to flow, and to this law, universal in the world of time and sense, eternity can bring no termination, heaven present no exception. W. A. B.—God designs that we shall expect and desire the heaven he has prepared,

not because we know what is there, but because we trust him, and believe that it is a world where the law of Christ has unobstructed and perfect sway. To kindle and sustain in us that faith, his word represents heaven under images which, in their natural sense, are quite incompatible with each other. It is a city of gems and gold, it is an open country with trees and running water, it is a world with no more sea, and it is a sea of glass, it is a house, and it is an innumerable multitude of worshipers on a mountain top before the throne. These are the helps applied to our feeble spiritual sense through the imagination. But underneath the uncertainties of imagination there is a fixed and solid substance of revealed truth. To this truth every separate image points, exhibiting some one or another of its attractive faces. The truth itself is, that of that society of redeemed souls, glad in their infinite joy, Jesus Christ is the center, the light, and the life. There is no discord or division there, because he is love, and there—as it is not here—every spirit and the whole place take their law and temper from him. Nothing that is defiled or that maketh a lie enters there, because he is pure and true. If the memory of the miseries of this life remains at all, such recollections will not be painful; the knotted problems will all be loosened and dissolved in the celestial chemistry of some strange, new light; for he has pledged himself that there shall be no pain there: no sick-beds; no broken friendships; no lost love; no aching heart; they shall hunger no more. There will be no wretchedness of unfulfilled desire, of failure to do right, of unanswered affection, of baffled aspiration and poor performance, because, having chosen him before all, and got clear of all the earthly competitions and shortcomings, we shall have enough in having him, and shall be satisfied with his likeness. F. D. H.

We have seen that the events of a thousand years—the invasion by Gog and Magog, with their defeat; the ultimate confinement and punishment of Satan; and, lastly, the general judgment—are all crowded into the space of *twelve* verses (20: 4-15). This shows that the very distant future is designed to be merely glanced at by the writer. So it is with our Hebrew prophets. But here there is special reason for brevity. The main object of writing the book is already accomplished in substance. Christians have been consoled by assurances that all the enemies with whom the Church was in conflict would surely be overthrown. That the writer should enlarge so much as he has done in the last two chapters, in the description of the new Jerusalem and the final and glorified state of the Church, falls entirely within his general plan. He set out to cheer desponding Christians, and animate them in the great contest that was going on to fidelity, fortitude, and perseverance, by assurances of certain victory here and of eternal crowns of glory hereafter. Often, in the course of the work, he opens heaven to the eye of faith, and makes it to see the glories there enjoyed. Often he repeats the most solemn assurances of *future* happiness. Why should he not close with a description of this which would cause every heart to beat high with hope and joy, and make the faithful followers of Christ regardless of persecution and distress? M. S.

The coming of the Lord is not the last thing which we know. After that event has closed the present age, after the victory has been won and the judgment has dealt with things that are past, the final results appear and the true life of man begins. The doctrine of the book is ultimately and pre-eminently one of *restoration*. The drama of the world must be finished and its dispensation closed.

The Lord must have come, the dead have been raised, the judgment have sat, the heavens and the earth which are now have passed away, and the new creation have appeared, before the chosen people shall see the city of their habitation. Here, at the last step, we have a definite and satisfactory completion of the former doctrine of the future. There is to be a perfect humanity; not only perfect individually, but perfect in society. There is to be a city of God. "The Holy City!"—there is the realization of the true tendencies of man. "New Jerusalem!"—there is the fulfillment of the ancient promises of God. Dwell for a moment on the word "city," under the remembrance of what it was to those in whose language the book is written. The city is a constitution of society complete in its own local habitation, the visible collection of buildings being a symbol of the organized life within. It is the most perfect realization and the most convenient representation of *society in its maturity*, in which the various relations of men are so combined as to promote the welfare of the several members and secure the unity of a common life to the whole. "It is" (as has been said) "the perfecting of the self-provisions of Nature, and the condition of the highest well-being of man."

The Bible is one long account of the preparation of the city of God. We are accustomed in the present day to read it too exclusively from the individual point of view, as the record for each man of that will of God and that way of salvation with which he is personally concerned. This it is, but it is more than this. It places before us the restoration, not only of the personal, but of the social life; the creation, not only of the man of God, but of the city of God; and it presents the society or city, not as a mere name for the congregation of individuals,

but as having a being and life of its own, in which the Lord finds his satisfaction and man his perfection. The "Jerusalem which is above" is, in relation to the Lord, "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife," and, in relation to man, it is "the Mother of us all." In its appearance the revealed course of redemption culminates, and the history of man is closed; and thus the last chapters of the Bible declare the unity of the whole book, by completing the design which has been developed in its pages, and disclosing the result to which all preceding steps have tended. Take from the Bible the final vision of the heavenly Jerusalem, and what will have been lost? Not merely a single passage, a sublime description, an important revelation; but a conclusion by which all that went before is interpreted and justified. We should have an unfinished plan, in which human capacities have not found their full realization, or divine preparations their adequate result. To the mind that looks beyond individual life, or that understands what is needful to the perfection of individual life, a Bible that did not end by building for us a city of God would appear to leave much in man unprovided for, and much in itself unaccounted for. But, as it is, neither of these deficiencies arises. Revelation decrees not only the individual happiness, but the corporate perfection of man; and closes the book of its prophecy by assuring the children of the living God that he hath prepared for them a city. T. D. B.

The vision of holy Jerusalem recalls a similar one in the Book of Ezekiel. When that prophet was in exile, and the city of Jerusalem was desolate, he was "brought in the visions of God into the land of Israel," and set upon "a very high mountain by which was the frame of a city on the south." He proceeds to describe that ideal city and its temple. Now was John in exile, and Jerusalem lay desolate; and he was taken "in the spirit," or in the visions of God, "to a great and high mountain," where he saw Jerusalem in splendor "descending out of heaven from God" (v. 2). The city described has within it the glory of God; a brightness as of jasper, or rather of what we call the diamond, clear as crystal. A city gate in the East was the seat and symbol of justice and power. This city has twelve magnificent gates, each one "a several pearl." The gate-keepers are holy angels. The names inscribed on the gates are those of the twelve tribes of Israel, God's covenant people, in contrast with the "names of blasphemy" seen on the mystic Babylon (vs. 11, 12). The foundations of the walls are twelve precious stones; and on them are inscribed "the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." This indeed is noble fame. Where are the names of those who treated the apostles with contumely as the offscouring of all things? The high priests and elders who

imprisoned them, the emperors and governors who sat in judgment on them, where will their names be found? In oblivion or in infamy. But the very foundations of the city of God must crumble away, before the names of the twelve apostles can be lost (v. 14). The wall is great and high: and the city itself a cube of unparalleled size. That which Ezekiel saw was very vast, as measured by an angel. But we are not to literalize the measurements in one case or the other. In Hebrew symbolism, all consideration of symmetrical form is subordinated to that of religious significance. And it is as absurd to materialize the holy Jerusalem as it is to literalize the cherubic figures (v. 16). The city is of pure gold, a symbol of entire sacredness. In Scripture, silver is the metal of commerce; gold of royal dignity and of sacred value. It is especially mentioned that "the street" is of pure gold; not the streets, but the Broadway or place of civic concourse. It is implied that daily intercourse, public opinion, and social life will all be pure and holy to the Lord (v. 18). Externalism in divine worship is superseded. No more need of temples made with hands, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of the holy city. Nay, the very sun and moon shall be needless in the blaze of divine glory, shining on the city of the saints (vs. 22, 23). There are kings and nations, not dwelling in the city, who bring offerings and homage to its gates. This, too, is in contrast with what has been said of great Babylon, which weakened the kings of the earth who supported it, and hurt the prosperity of nations (v. 24). The crowning glory of Jerusalem in this vision is its purity. The earth itself will not be purged of all impurity, till it is renewed by fire; the nations, even in millennial times, shall not be free of plagues, for they require "healing"; but the city, symbolic of the Church, will admit no unclean persons, idolaters, or liars, but those only "who are written in the Lamb's book of life" (v. 27). O blessed *Civitas Dei*! The ransomed shall see it with still greater joy than filled the way-worn and war-worn crusaders, when at last they looked on the city which had drawn them from afar, and shouted Jerusalem! Jerusalem! The vision is prolonged (22 : 1-5) so as to show us Paradise restored. The waters of Eden and the tree of life reappear. The former flow in one shining river from the throne of God and the Lamb which is within the city. [This also is a reproduction of the river which Ezekiel saw issuing from the sanctuary and giving life whithersoever it flowed, ch 47.] The tree of life stands "in midst of the street," or chief place of concourse, open to all the citizens; and such trees line both banks of the river, yielding fresh fruit every month. The curse which fell on man for disobedience in Eden is now removed. It is a paradise of obedience. The

servants of God openly honor and serve him; therefore they shine in his light, and reign for ever and ever. D. F.

Every beautiful and precious object on earth is a type and a shadow of heaven. The whole visible universe, with its manifold works of divine wisdom and power, is but a volume of illustrations, leading us by easy steps to the knowledge of that world of infinite love above and beyond the stars. The Spirit of all truth has interpreted these pictures with exquisite clearness and grace. The Book of Revelation, especially in its closing chapters, is illuminated with a wealth of imagery beside which all the poet's dreams of the golden age and all man's uninspired aspirations of the good time coming are poor and mean. Here is the perfection of all beauty, a light ineffable, to which the sun can add no brightness; a celestial paradise, infinitely surpassing the garden which the Creator's own hand planted eastward in Eden; an eternal city, of which God is the builder, the temple, and the light. And the inhabitants of the heavenly world are in harmony with their dwelling-place, for "the nations of them that are saved walk in the light of it." From the feet that tread those golden streets, or wander in the sweet fields of everlasting spring, all defilement is removed and all weariness has departed; from the eyes that behold those heaven-built walls and fountains of living water God has wiped all tears away; and the voices that flow together in the anthems of celestial rapture know no note of sadness for evermore. O blessed vision of unfading glory! O sweet, seraphic vision of perfect purity and peace, of eternal rest, of joy unspeakable! V. D.

1. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth"—the same, yet not the same, because gloriously renewed in symmetry and beauty by the Almighty power, and adapted to the residence of beings of a higher physical, intellectual, and moral order than the children of Adam—viz., the children of the resurrection; a world as far superior to this as this excels the dismal earth that existed before the Creator fitted up Adam's dwelling-place, a scene of vast thickets and marshy flats, where, through the gloom, huge saurians sought their prey, and "dragons tare each other in the slime." In the arrangement of heaven and earth described in Genesis, the sea has prominent mention: but in the new home of the blessed, John saw "no more sea"; no separating waste of briny waters; sweet fountains and rivers of pleasures, but no cruel, restless, stormy sea. D. F. —Life is a voyage over a turbulent sea; changing circumstances come rolling after each other, like the undistinguishable billows of the great ocean. Tempests and storms rise. There is wearisome sailing, no peace, but "ever climbing up the climbing wave." *That is life!* But for all that, there is an end to it

some day; and it is worth while for us to think about our "island home, far, far beyond the sea." Surely some of us have learned the weariness of the work and voyage of this world. Surely some of us are longing to find anchorage while the storm lasts, and a haven at the end. There is one, if only you will believe it, and set yourselves toward it. On the shore stands the Christ; and there is rest *there*. *There is no more sea, but unbroken rest, unchanging blessedness, perpetual stability of joy, and love in the Father's house. Are we going there? Are we living for Christ?* Then, "he brings us to the desired haven." A. M.

2. This grand conception—a vast city let down from the highest heaven—should be thought of as a thing of symbol rather than of reality. Jerusalem—a name dear above all other names to the ancient saints—dear because it was the city where God dwelt with his people and where all the hallowed associations of his presence and worship clustered together—became the fitting symbol for the new heavenly state. Remarkably it appears here in forms of perfect beauty; even as the bride adorned for her husband in the holy scenes of marriage. This comparison appears again (vs. 9, 10)—the city in its virgin attire, arrayed for that one hour most eventful of her life, where taste, adornment, and beauty are more in place than ever elsewhere. The reader will notice that this conception is essentially the same which we have in the Song of Solomon and which appears in various forms throughout the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament writers—the Church washed from her sins, clothed in white, her loving heart given in virgin simplicity and purity to her glorious husband, her Jesus—at once both lover, lord, and king. This symbol fitly gives us the grand consummation of the heavenly state. H. C.

3. **With men . . . his people.** Personality is the crowning fact of history. It thrills the life of to-day; it will make the society of heaven resplendent. What would be the significance of heavenly fellowships if Abraham is not to be recognized as the man who was called from Ur of the Chaldees to be the father of the faithful! What if David is not to be recognized as the shepherd king, author of a psalmody that will never grow old; a great sinner profoundly penitent, washing his hands in innocence and humbly trusting in the mercy of God! What if Paul, "the greatest purely human power in history," is not to be known as the man whose writings we have read, loved, and cherished, and whose flaming life kindled our souls in the warfare we were called to wage! In this fact of personality, never to be weakened, making life, here and for ever, a continuous chain without a missing link, lies the possibility of a social, intellectual, loving, serving, worshipful existence in the eternal

home of the redeemed, such as we but faintly imagine. Heaven will be a commonwealth of living personalities, numberless, peerless, sinless; gathered out of every people, and tongue, and kindred, and nation of the earth; coming up from the moral battle-fields of this world to the Mount of God; the powers that made them shine, that made them useful and beloved, that made them immortal upon earth, only enhanced in brilliancy; and their deeds only set in bolder relief, as justifying the honor put upon them by the righteous judge. *Haydn.*

God himself with them. The best intercourse of the most favored men with their Maker, in the transfigurations of devotion, is imperfect. It is unsatisfactory, and provokes hungerings and thirstings after some manifestation of God more direct and sensible. Meanwhile this process of spiritual reconciliation and recovery is going on, and the promise of redemption is that man again shall see the face of his God. Now, partially restored, man sees through a glass darkly, but ultimately his intercourse with his Maker shall be immediate, uninterrupted, direct, and joyful. Through the mighty power of him who assumed our nature, we shall be as truly reconciled to God, harmonized with him, and associated with him, as if the shadow of sin, and fear, and repulsion, had never passed upon the soul. *W. A.*

4. Could language well be more exhaustive of the ills of life which are thus for ever excluded from the paradise of God? Death, pain, sorrow, crying, tears, all manner of curse! Each word tells a tale which every human life has helped to make tragic and awful. They have all displayed their worst as the fruit of sin and been made the instruments of discipline against sin, and now, with it left out, their mission is ended. God be praised! We shall see the last of these. A single glance through this open window reveals a consummation of the kingdom of life and glory which fitly concludes and sublimely crowns the history of this world's conflicts and trials. *Haydn.*—We are not told what heaven is, nor of what its joys consist; but nothing that has here caused evil or suffering shall be there. The apostle pictures before him all the woe of this world; and he takes his pencil, dipped in the incandescent light of heaven, and draws it across the scene, and every vestige of sorrow vanishes, and the golden city of God fills the whole vision. This wondrous blessedness shall be given to every one who trusts lovingly in Christ. *J. P. T.*—None too soon can we give up expecting to have our weary questionings answered here, and begin to look for the bright appearing of our Lord and Saviour to clear away all the clouds and turn our night into day. It is to be accepted with a sublime faith in the power and faithfulness of God, that this is a sphere of broken

households, of wedlocks and partings, of hopes and disappointments, of welcomes and adieus, and nothing else is to be expected till he who is the resurrection and the life makes all things new, and the gathering together of his people is into a kingdom which death shall not invade. *Haydn.*

The former things are passed away. How all that is loftiest in human conception—its learning, its philosophy, and its poetry—pale before one glance at such a scene! Sorrow passed away, and the unclouded dawn begun! All that humanity groans for, all that man asks of nature and that nature can not give, all that love (the essential spirit of the universe) outpoured upon its chosen objects could bestow, all seen to be the bright lot of these blessed ones, and all for eternity! The love of knowledge satisfied in the perpetual contemplation of the substantial truth; the love of beauty in the unveiled source of all that is beautiful; the love of happiness in the enjoyment of secure and perpetual bliss; the love of the fellow-creatures in the society of holy and responding brother-spirits: and this to be for ever! *W. A. B.*—This life, so full of conscious power, so bright with immortal love, so divine in its glorious fellowships, so grand with tuneful harmonies and holy blessedness of inward rapture and perfect knowledge, is *æonian*. It is life eternal. Heaven will never cease to be a holy temple. The tabernacle of God will never be withdrawn from men. The Song of Moses and the Lamb will never die away into forgetful silence. Darkness will never shroud the glory of God in awful eclipse. Sin will never enter; the unclean thing will never defile the city of God, the inheritance of those who bear his —“Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” It is life *æonian*—life eternal! *Haydn.*

6. In this shadowy state of mortal life, unbelief is for ever crowding redemption into a corner—conceiving it to be the faith of a few people, the concern of Sabbath days, the mere comfort of the sick and dying; but in the illumination of eternity, redemption will be seen as the great end and unity of all things human, the key of history, the harmony of events, the beginning and the ending of this world's life. Then shall we attach new meaning to the august titles of our Lord—the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the King of kings and Lord of lords—for of him, and through him, and to him, are all things, to whom be glory for ever! *W. A.*

8. The “lake of fire and brimstone, the blackness of darkness for ever,” are words of a terrible signification. But no words can fully express the terrible ingredients of their misery; the punishment will be in proportion to the glory of God's majesty that is provoked, and the extent of his

power. And as the soul was the principal, and the body but an accessory, in the works of sin, so its capacious faculties shall be far more tormented than the limited faculties of the outward senses. *Bates.*

We do not expect to find the New Jerusalem a city whose walls are four hundred and fifty leagues in length, breadth, and height. The figure is that of a perfect cube, like the holy of holies in the temple, and indicates its perfectness, as the dwelling-place of God. We are not actually looking for a city of gold, "as it were transparent glass," the foundations of whose walls are garnished with all manner of precious stones, and whose twelve gates are as many resplendent pearls. Ideas of its perfectness and its glory must be given us, if at all, through some sort of imagery. And how better than by putting for commonest uses, such as walls, gates, and streets, the rarest, costliest, most coveted things of earth; by making the glory of God like a jasper stone, clear as crystal, the light of a city which is being let down from heaven, and all so holy, so divine, as to be one grand and solemn temple! We do not empty this imagery of its content; we seize it as embodying an unspeakable fact which language, under the breath of the Divine Spirit, labors to express. We are bound to do the same thing by the "bottomless pit," "the lake of fire and brimstone," "the smoke of torpent," "the Gehenna of fire." These, like the others, are material symbols of solemn and awful facts in the life beyond death. We have no right to empty them of their content any more than we have to insist upon their literal interpretation. The one symbolizes the abode of holiness and righteousness, which may well be glorious as language can paint it; its river, water of life, straight from the throne of God; its tree, a tree of life yielding perennial fruit. The other symbolizes the place where "the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars," shall congregate. There is a place there that corresponds to their true character. It is described under the awful imagery of a "lake of fire," and the torment of a guilty conscience is a "worm that never dies," and a "fire that is never quenched." We are not at liberty to make the Christian heaven a Mohammedan paradise of sensual delights. We are no more at liberty to make the Gehenna of lost men a mediæval hell of physical torments. *Haydn.*

14. Names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The builders of cities are celebrated in history, but here are men whose names are associated with the very foundations of that heavenly city, the "new Jerusalem," "which is above all." They had the Saviour's constant instructions. They enjoyed his daily care and love. They received the

Holy Ghost and the gift of tongues. They spread the knowledge of his name to the ends of the earth. Their names are symbolically represented to us as inscribed in the foundation stones of heaven, because they were honored with the work of building up the kingdom of Christ from its foundations; and all who are saved are said to be built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. *N. A.*

22, 23. That no temple is there shows that it rises high above the earthly Jerusalem in which the temple was the preëminent glory. That it needs not the sun or the moon for its light testifies in like manner that its glory far transcends the glory of earth. It is everything to that world that God and the Lamb are there! are there in such revelations of their glory and in such relations to their redeemed sons and daughters as language and symbols strive in vain to set forth. *H. C.*—God is the source of the light and the Lamb is the medium through which it shines. He is "the image of the invisible God"—"the Word" by which the whole mind of God is expressed. By the works of creation produced "*by him and for him*"; by his providence which develops God's designs (for the Lamb was appointed to open all the seals); by his great mediatorial work; by the instructions which he has imparted in person and through his prophets and apostles; and by the Spirit which acts under him; he has brought forth all the light which has been shed on the character, government, and designs of God. Add to this, that the splendor surrounding his human body, and which he will impart to the bodies of his saints as the royal robes in which the sons of God are to be set forth, will pour immortal day upon the senses. *Griffin.*—Then we shall behold him, who is the sun from whom our light comes, the King from whom our royalty comes, the Priest who gives us our priesthood, the Lamb who has bought us our salvation; and the more we gaze the more we shall love. *A. W. T.*

The light thereof. There are two ideas generally connected with the word "light" in Scripture, when used in a spiritual sense—one primary idea, knowledge, because light shows us things as they are; and then a secondary idea, joy, because a right knowledge of spiritual things imparts joy. When, therefore, we are told that there is light in heaven, that God dwells in light there, that the inheritance of the saints there is an inheritance in light, we are to understand that heaven is a world of knowledge, and such knowledge as gives rise to pleasure and joy; that we shall not lose our character as intellectual beings there; that our minds and understandings will go with us to heaven, and be called into exercise in heaven, and have everything brought before them, that can expand, and elevate, and de-

light them. C. B.—Unto God eternal light was ever: created light was for the creation, not himself, and as he saw before the sun, may still also see without it. In the city of the new Jerusalem there is neither sun nor moon; where glorified eyes must see by the archetypal sun, or the light of God, able to illuminate intellectual eyes, and make unknown visions. Intuitive perceptions in spiritual beings may perhaps hold some analogy unto vision; but yet how they see us, or one another, what eye, what light, or what perception is required unto their intuition, is yet dark unto our apprehension; and even how they see God, or how unto our glorified eyes the beatifical vision will be celebrated, another world must tell us, when perceptions will be new and we may hope to behold invisibles. *Broune.*

26. Vast, and beyond all comprehension, is the temple of eternity; but it is still growing. All they who, before Christ, confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off—all these are in the kingdom and temple of Christ. All the redeemed, the fruit of all the centuries since the Lord was received up into heaven, are in his kingdom. Imagine the mighty gathering! Imagine one God, one Christ, one Spirit, and one temple! Imagine the number of glorified human forms which will compose that living temple! Imagine every heart full of the vehemence of love, and every tongue burdened with praise! *Pulsford.*

24. Walk in the light of it. It has been observed by Cudworth that divine wisdom hath so ordered the frame of the whole universe that everything should have its own appropriate receptacle, to which it shall be drawn by all the mighty force of an irresistible affinity; and, as all heavenly bodies press toward the common center of gravity, so is all sin, by a kind of strong sympathy and magnetic influence, drawn toward hell; while, on the other hand, all holiness is continually drawn upward to heaven, to embosom itself in glory. Heaven is not merely a thing to come; it is in one sense a present possession; for "he that believeth in the Son *hath* everlasting life." It is rather a state than a place—a state within us, rather than a thing without us; it is the likeness, and the enjoyment, and the service of God; that which every true Christian carries in his bosom now, and to which he will fully enter hereafter, when he shall be made perfect in love. To this state all true religion is ever tending; the spirit of love is the motion and progress of the soul toward its eternal rest in the presence of God. No man can be prepared for the celestial felicity while his heart is destitute of this; and whosoever has most of it knows most of the unseen and ineffable joys of the righteous. He lives in the vestibule of

the heavenly temple, and is ready, whenever its doors shall be opened, to enter into the dwelling-place of God. The image of God is upon him, and the *likeness* of Deity is always attended with something of the *happiness* of the Deity. Oh, the bliss of that state, where the faculties of the mind, inconceivably expanded, shall let in the full streams of the divine beneficence, and open themselves to the uttermost to comprehend the breadth and length, the depth and height, of that love which passeth knowledge; where divine goodness will so act directly upon the soul as to raise it to a state of holy enjoyment surpassing all our present imaginations. J. A. J.

27. There is no figure of speech to be evaded or explained away in the words which affirm that "there shall in nowise enter into it anything that defileth, neither worketh abomination, nor maketh a lie." Were it otherwise, what would the story of redemption mean? What empty rhetoric the invitations and warnings of Jesus become! But *now*, from a world that sin has cursed, from hells on earth where the worm *now* gnaws and the fire is *already* kindled; from eyes bleared with sin, and hearts livid with blackness; from far-off, strange lands of prodigal wanderings; from haunts lurid with evil thinking, evil speaking, evil doing, and ghastly with near proximity to the pit; from heights where pride looks coldly down in self-righteousness—men are bidden to look away to the Mount of God; to flee from the wrath to come; to lay hold of eternal life; and in their impotence, uncleanness, their pride, their madness, their despair, to look to him, who in love and might comes forth to save that which is lost, and bring the wanderer home! Laying hold of him, following him, the defiling thing is left behind; the defiling haunts are forsaken; the true and upright life is entered upon; the righteous character is in process of formation. Think not to enter heaven but through Christ, the door. *Haydn.*

22:1. Since this river of water of life proceeds from the throne, it intimates that in grace and mercy there is great majesty; for grace, as it proceeds, has a voice from the throne. And indeed there is nothing in heaven or earth that has such majesty and commanding greatness in and upon the hearts of the sons of men, as has the grace of God. There is nothing overmastereth the heart like grace, and so obligeth to sincere and unfeigned obedience as that. *Bun.*—However profound the knowledge to which they have attained, however pure the white robes in which they are arrayed, however exquisite the felicity which they enjoy, however boundless and magnificent the prospects that are stretched out before them—they are indebted for them all solely and exclusively to the

sovereign grace of God, manifested through Jesus Christ his Son. Every stream, every spring, every drop of the water of life proceedeth from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and the glory, the stability, the security, the everlasting blessedness of every saint or angel that belongs to the glorified hosts is resting upon that fact. And as it is just as impossible for that river to be dried up, or despoiled of its virtues, or diverted from its course, as it is for God's throne to be demolished, or the regal crown torn from the great Redeemer's head, we conclude that there shall be the bursting forth everlastingly, and through all the ages of an interminable eternity, of the river of the water of life, of which the saints drink, and which maketh glad the city of our God, and that, therefore, the glory of the saints shall be contemporaneous with the throne of Jehovah, and durable as the government of eternity. J. A. W.

2. The harmonious unity of Scripture is herein exhibited. The fathers compared it to a ring, an unbroken circle, returning into itself. Between the events of Genesis and those at the close of the Apocalypse, at least six thousand or seven thousand years intervene; and between Moses the first writer, and John the last, about fifteen hundred years. How striking it is that, as in the beginning we found Adam and Eve, his bride, in innocence in Paradise, then tempted by the serpent, and driven from the tree of life, and from the pleasant waters of Eden, yet not without a promise of a Redeemer who should crush the serpent, so at the close, the old serpent cast out for ever by the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, who appears with his bride, the Church, in a better Paradise, and amid better waters (v. 1); the tree of life also is there with all its *healing* properties, not guarded with a flaming sword, but open to all who overcome (2 : 7), and there is no more curse. *Fausset*.—While in this New Jerusalem there is no more "sea"—that being a symbol of whatever is agitating, uncertain, tempestuous; there is a *river*, a precious oriental symbol of blessings, for ever flowing, naturally insuring perennial verdure, trees and shade unfailing, and exemption from thirst and barrenness—the sore evils of oriental tropical regions. This tree of life and its various fruits come also from Ezek. 47 (see v. 12), where obviously we have the plural, "trees." So also here, there must be trees. The meaning seems to be that these trees lined either bank of the river between it and the streets which also ran parallel on each side—a scene of superlative beauty. H. C.

In that he saith this city hath a tree of life in it, he alludes to the garden of Eden, the pleasant paradise that God began the world withal; whereby he signifies, that as the world began with a paradise, so also it shall end with a paradise, when sin

and Satan have done their worst. This new Jerusalem shall be the wind-up of the world; and in it shall stand the tree of life, as there stood one in the goodly garden which was the beginning thereof. Now, this tree of life being in the midst of this city, it signifies that the inhabitants of it shall be sweetly shadowed, refreshed, and defended with its coolness, and also sweetly nourished and comforted with its dainties. *Bun*.

3. *Shall serve him*. It is perfectly clear that heaven is a state of vigorous employment. The worlds which God has made are the theatre where labor is to be performed, where the designs of Jehovah are to be accomplished by human and by angelic agency. Those new heavens and that new earth will be filled with means and instruments for diffusing happiness, for doing good. They shall follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. They shall *serve* God day and night in his temple. They shall *rest* only from sin and from its effects, from calamity, pain, sickness, pollution, and death. B. B. E.—Next to the removal of every curse, the perfection of body, soul, and spirit, and the actual vision of God, is the *joyful activity of man's renovated nature*. Occupation was the pleasure of innocence. Man was made for action, as streams are made to flow. He was God's image and likeness, and God is life and action, motion and power. Sin entered, and retribution changed *work* into *labor*. The curse doomed man to earn and eat his bread by the sweat of his brow. Christianity has immensely modified and changed man's condition already; the curse has been mitigated and lightened; and we have only to anticipate the promised time when there shall be *no more curse*, to satisfy ourselves what enjoyment will spring from the unwearied exercise of our immortal powers. What forms of service await restored humanity—what occupations shall furnish occasion for its renovated activity—to what labor of love, what ministrations of mercy, what vigorous work, or sweet grace, the redeemed shall be invited—we may not conjecture; but surely he who gives us so much to do on earth, and so much pleasure in doing it, will not fail, amid the relations of all worlds and all beings, in furnishing to man restored to his loyalty abundant occupation. W. A.—Sleepless, unfatigued, needing neither food nor rest, subject to no wants, weaknesses, or wearinesses, how may the redeemed be ever plying the glad and busy task of acting out the impulses of their own spiritual nature, and doing the pleasure of the Lord that bought them! And when all is spiritual, and all immortal, what an opening is there for the spiritual and immortal soul—possessed of a kindred body, and ushered into a congenial world; to express itself in communion with all holy intelligence, unembarrassed and unclogged by any

perishable claims ; to receive pure light from the light that shines all around in "the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" ; and to go forth, with strength proportioned to its own untiring aspirations, on the errands of God's holy righteousness and love over all the realms of creation. *Candlish.*

5. No night there. In the eternal summer there is nothing that is doomed to die. All things live unfadingly that breathe in unbroken communion the breath of life ; and now for these immortal ones, as to the Lord himself, a thousand years are as one day, but a day to which there comes no night. The whole history of the kingdom of nature, of humanity, of the kingdom of God, is an eternal alternation of light and shade. The earthly Jerusalem, moreover, expired in clouds and darkness ; but behold, the heavenly city bathes itself in eternal sunbeams, and never does the approach of evening dim the joy of its inhabitants. *Van O.*

What need now for the lighting up of the golden candlesticks, or for the radiance of the stars which Christ now holds in his right hand, when the darkness of the night is past, and the Sun of Righteousness himself is shining ? What need now for temples, for ministrations, or for intercessions, for the lessons of sages or prophets, for the sweet psalms first struck on David's lyre, or for the magnificent visions of men who spoke even as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ? What need of these when Christ himself is there, the end of the law, the sum of the gospel, the desire of saints, the glory of

heaven, whom all the hosts of the ~~unfallen~~ and the redeemed everlastingly worship and adore ? I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it ; and where these are there is the shining of an everlasting light, and the spreading of a perennial feast ; there the green pastures that never wither and the quiet waters that never fail ; and there the strains of golden harps blending with glad voices in the melodies of the new and everlasting song. J. A. W.

Oh, the safety, oh, the comfort, oh, the repose and the satisfaction of being for ever with the Lord, in whose blood we have already washed our robes ! Then to be fed by him, then to be led by him, will be indeed the consummation of the joy of heaven. To be with him, as one cared for upon earth, sought out, rescued, emancipated, sanctified ; as one carried safely through life's dangers, soothed under life's sorrows, supported through life's trying and painful end ; to be with him at last, as never before, *face to face*, and yet without ceasing to be with him heart to heart and spirit to spirit ; to be always with him, and for ever ; to do everything, not only for him, but in his presence, under his eye, and beneath his smile ; this will be beyond mere safety, beyond mere comfort, beyond mere service, however constant and perfect ; this will be a relation into which no human love ever is admitted ; this will be a community of life and soul beyond the nearest and dearest of earth's friendships ; this will be the ideal to which human sympathy pointed, this the goal of which human love was but the starting-point. V.

Section 386.

REVELATION xxii. 6-21.

6 And he said unto me, These sayings *are* faithful and true : and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.
7 Behold, I come quickly : blessed *is* he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this
8 book. And I John saw these things, and heard *them*. And when I had heard and seen, I
9 fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then
saith he unto me, See *thou do it* not : for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the
10 prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book : worship God. And he saith
11 unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book : for the time is at hand. He
that is unjust, let him be unjust still : and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still : and he
12 that is righteous, let him be righteous still : and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And,
behold, I come quickly ; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his
13 work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.
14 Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life,
15 and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and
16 whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I
Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root
17 and the offspring of David, *and* the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride

say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And
 18 whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that
 heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things,
 19 God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book : and if any man shall take
 away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the
 book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.
 20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly : Amen. Even so, come, Lord
 21 Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

The Spirit and the bride say, Come. This remarkable gospel of invitation has a peculiar significance as a message of Jesus back to the sinners of earth, for whom "he endured the cross, despising the shame." It comes from the throne of all power to which sixty years before he had ascended, carrying the humanity with him, and after his finished sacrifice and completed scheme of redemption had been proclaimed by his inspired apostles to the utmost limits of the known world. In full view of the scheme completed by the offering of the sacrifice once for all, of the outpouring of his Spirit, of the complete opening of the new and last era of redemption, of the dispensation of the Spirit, of the historic faith, now substituting facts *actual* for the types and symbols of prophecy, and of the Church of one nation, under the old covenant with Abraham, become the Church of all nations under the new covenant, he utters this last gospel as the climax of all the gospels which God had revealed through the prophets, through his Incarnate Son, and through the apostles. This, then, is the gospel according to Jesus ascended. It is the peculiar type of that gospel which, without symbol or altar or limit of nation, is to be preached till his second coming. So, also, it is significant as the last paragraph of the last chapter of the last book of God's revealed word. For immediately upon its utterance and record, that great seal—written all over with curses against him who shall by a single word add to or subtract from the revelation here finished—closes up finally the communications from heaven. But Jesus has one more last word to say. In every conceivable form of assurance and invitation he had called sinners through all the divers manner of his revelations before, yet still his love seems to stay the hand that is putting on the seal, that it may first insert one more invitation and assurance, lest some poor, dark-minded sinner should still despond and despair. "Stay," the ascended Jesus seems to say : "Put not on the cursing seal, till there first be put in one more gospel assurance and invitation. And make it wide as human thought can possibly conceive of it ; plain as human language can possibly utter it ; and cordial as the heart of God alone can give it. Assure them from me, David's Creator, and yet, as the offspring of David, their brother, partaker of flesh and blood ; assure them from me, the Day-star of all their longings, now risen and enthroned in the heaven, that the fountain of life is now thrown wide open, and its streams are gushing forth in all their infinite fullness, with every barrier of approach to it absolutely taken away. Tell them that not only have they *leave to come*, but every loving voice in heaven and earth pleads and urges them to come. My spirit whispers to the depths of their spirits, saying, 'Come.' My bride, the Church, in all her divinely appointed ordinances cries, 'Come !' 'Come.' Nay, more, lest it be in highways and hedges where there should be no Church ordinances to reach any one, every sinner that heareth my voice himself is authorized to say to any other sinner, 'Come.' Nay, more, lest there should be no such sinner to invite him, tell any soul that feels the thirst not to stand on ceremony, but, self-invited, 'Come.' Nay, more still, lest now some poor, sin-darkened soul should stumble at the word 'athirst,' and doubt if his thirst is real or great enough, say absolutely, 'Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.' I will be the Saviour of any that will have me for a Saviour. Only let him cry in his despair, 'O Lamb of God I come—just as I am.' " S. R.

6-21. This epilogue to the book corresponds to its brief prologue. It enforces the authority of the book, and emphasizes the hope of the Lord's coming. The order of speech in it seems to be this :

The angel, v. 6. The Lord, v. 7. The seer, v. 8
 " vs. 9-11. " vs. 12-20. " vs. 20, 21.

The angel of chapter 1 : 1 dwells on the faithfulness and truth of the revelation. The Lord says, "Behold I come quickly," and pronounces a bless-

ing on him who keeps the sayings of this book. The seer adds his testimony, "It was I, John, who heard and saw these things." Again the angel announces the imminence of the things revealed, and draws a deep line between the righteous and the wicked. The Lord repeats the intimation of his coming ; proclaims himself the first and the last ; defines who they are that will be admitted into the holy city, and who will be shut out ; warns

against all tampering with "the words of the book of this prophecy"; and then, for the third time, declares, "Yes, I come quickly." The seer replies with the grand and simple prayer, "Amen. Yes, come, Lord Jesus!"

This chapter is a noble conclusion of the book, and the book a noble conclusion of the Bible. The last sweet note of a piece of music dwells in the listener's ear. Even though in a lengthened piece there may have been many varieties of musical expression, and, among these, wild piercing strains and pealing tumults of sound, the composer and performer take care to produce the last notes round and soft, to fill, soothe, and satisfy the sense. And may not this book of prophecy be likened to a mighty oratorio in which there is one all-prevailing, oft-recurring air, "Behold! the Lord cometh"? There is a splendid burst of sound, then a sustained, difficult passage, then a gentle or a pensive melody; now a solemn recitative and then a high strain and grand chorus of sublimity, in which, from the open heavens, myriads of voices join. But, as this magnificent composition draws to a close, the notes are loving, simple, and sweet. After ecstasies that move every power of the imagination and every feeling of the heart, all is ended in a prayer that Christ would come, and a kindly benediction of all saints. So terminates, not this book only, but the Bible, the complete book of God, and therefore the book of love. The words fall with soothing cadence, and linger with us when more brilliant passages are lost: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with the saints." D. F.

7. The prophet *Malachi* closes the canon of the *Old Testament* by a solemn appeal "to the law of Moses, and to the statutes and judgments:" "Remember them" (Mal. 4 : 4). *John* closes the *four Gospels* with a similar reference (John 20 : 31). *Paul* closes his *Epistles* with a testimony to the sufficiency and inspiration of Holy Scripture (2 Tim. 3 : 14-17). *Peter* in like manner closes his *Epistles* with similar exhortation, and with a warning against perversion of Scripture. *Jude* also closes the *Catholic Epistles* with a memento to his readers: "Remember ye the words spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 17). Lastly, *John* closes the *Apocalypse* with a promise of blessing to those who keep its sayings, and a curse on those who take from it or add to it. W.

We must all feel that the piety of our day incloses itself too much within the limits of individual life. That *I* should be pardoned, saved, and sanctified; that *I* should serve before God and be accepted in my service; that *I* should die in peace and rest in Christ; that *I* should have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming—these are worthy desires for an immortal being, and for these the

gospel provides. But it provides for more than these; making me the member of a kingdom of Christ, and the citizen of a city of God. There ought surely to be a consciousness within me corresponding to that position; there ought to be affections which will associate me in spirit with that larger history, in which my own is included, and which will make me long that the kingdom of Christ should come and the city of God be manifested. The blessedness ascribed to him that reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy can belong only to those who read it and hear it thus. These are soberly truthful words, whose thought is far too often overlooked. T. D. B.—We ought to receive and to ponder God's whole revelation; not its gentler and softer parts only, but those which are sadder and sterner too; not those verses or chapters only which tell of unconditional forgiveness and illimitable mercy, but those also which ring the knell of sin and disclose to an incredulous world the future punishment of the wicked. It is not because it is a joyful message, but because it is God's message, that the revelation is *sweeter than honey and the honeycomb* to him who loves God. It is the being spoken to at all by him which is the joy and the glory. It is the being in communication at all with the source of light, with the fountain-head of truth; it is the being fed out of the heavenly store, and dealt with as one cared for by him who is life and love; it is this which the faithful servant, it is this which the reverent son regards as above price, and accepts in every part with adoring gratitude. V.

11. It is not that there are not many mansions in heaven; it is not that men or angels prevent their entrance; it is not that the election or reprobation of God bars the door against them; it is not that means, many and great, are not employed to introduce them into the presence of the Lord; but it is because men are unholy that they do not enter in. The unholy are, in the eternal state, *unholy still*; and hence they never see the Lord. They continue to sin, and they reap the wages of sin, which is death. R. T.—"He that believeth not," saith Christ, "is *condemned already*, and the wrath of God abideth on him." On the other hand, "He that believeth *hath* everlasting life"; the estate of heaven is already begun in his soul. Every man carries within him here the germs of his heaven or hell. The grace of God nurtures the one, keeping it alive to the day of deliverance; the mercy of God restrains the other from bursting forth until the day of doom. The gospel theory leaves really no place for the cavils against the injustice of punishing a man eternally for the sin of a few days on earth. For, according to this theory, the sinner, remaining unchanged by the grace of God, and without the

new life, goes on into eternity just as he is, to sin on, and therefore to suffer on for ever. S. R.—The general impression of the Bible, as a whole, is that of two classes of people—the godly and the wicked; of a God, boundless in his love, mercy, and patience toward all; offering pardon to all, without respect of persons or conditions; treating with tender fatherliness all who accept his overtures, and with righteous retribution all who finally reject them; of two destinations corresponding to each sort of character, popularly known as heaven and hell—it is a matter of indifference by what names these localities are known, for character is the essential thing—that these two states are conscious states of being; the wicked know themselves as punished and miserable for *cause*—the righteous know themselves as blessed for *cause*; and that these states are then final and eternal. With this general impression that the Bible leaves correspond the last chapters of Revelation and the finality which sounds out with dreadful emphasis: “The time is at hand. He that is unjust let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous let him be righteous still; and he that is holy let him be holy still.” With this aspect of finality harmonizes the intense earnestness of the Saviour and the apostles in pressing upon men the claims of God, and urging their acceptance this day, this hour, as if it were *now or never*. Also the clearly revealed fact that, after the judgment, the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom sinful men have access to God, will give up his mediatorial office—an emphatic intimation that the work of redemption is finished. *Haydn*.

13. The one solemn proclamation begins in the first and ends in the last chapter, as though it were the key-note of the entire: “I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last!” marking the sameness of *his* eternal being and agency through the long succession of revolutions the book records, and, in this brief expression of the divine omnipotence of the Messiah, drawing, as it were, the moral of it all. W. A. B.

17. The tone of this verse, considered in view of its place amid the scenes of this book, is wonderfully rich and impressive. Think of the real author's standpoint and of the grand objects that lie within his range and ours. The “river of the water of life” is flowing before the eye; the joys of the redeemed have come down in their voices of song and alleluias of praise and triumph. Over against these there have been visions of the lost, the smoke of their torment arising for ever and ever; and, not least, we have the grand issue of the great moral conflict of earth—victory for Zion and magnificent success to the gospel in subduing the world to Jesus—all significant of the grand truth that “the seed

of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head,” and Satan be not only foiled but infinitely cursed for his antagonism to God and goodness, and all his followers with him. And now, all these sublime realities standing embodied before us in speaking symbols, the voice from heaven is heard, “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely!” Provided for all; offered to all; welcome to all; none shall fail but those who dash the brimming cup from their own lips; none but those who hate Jesus and love death! H. C.

THE RIVER OF LIFE WILL ROLL ON FOR EVER. Its pure waters, clear as crystal, shall for ever gladden and refresh the inhabitants of heaven. But on the banks of that river you may never recline. Far away from that pure stream—far away from all the bliss of heaven—far away from the redeemed and happy throng assembled there, may be your eternal abode, where never again shall you hear the invitation, “Whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely.” To-day, all the universe invites you. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit say, “Come.” The Church on earth and the Church redeemed say, “Come.” The friend that has gone to the skies and the friend on earth say, “Come.” The tender father; the affectionate mother; the pastor; the brother; the sister—all say, “Come.” Your own nature; your conviction of the truth; your sense of sin; your dread of death; your inextinguishable desire of immortality; your conviction that “this world can never give the bliss for which you sigh”—all say, “Come.” To-morrow, how changed may be the scene! Death's cold fingers may have felt after the strings of life, and chilled them, and your soul may be beyond hope and heaven. Not a voice from all the universe will *EVER* say to you again, “Come, take the water of life freely.” A. B.—The next word which we shall hear from the world's Redeemer will decide and divulge what treatment we have bestowed on his great salvation. Which shall it be, *COME*, or *DEPART*? What an epitaph that would be for a ruined soul for which Christ died, “*Ye would not come unto me, that you might have life!*” W. A.

The wide commission of Christ at the very close of Revelation, “Let him that heareth say, Come!” was successfully carried out in the earliest days of Christianity. All who learned the story of the cross felt and obeyed the impulse to tell it. And this great lay commission abides in full force to-day. It is addressed to every disciple. B.—Man, the moment he is made a Christian, becomes a missionary; the unction of the saint is thus expended in the duties and sacrifices of the servant. And it is the feature, the grand, ennobling feature, of the gospel, that he who drinks deepest of its living water thirsts most to diffuse it. *Cumming*.

18, 19. The Bible as an inspired record is an infallible, and it is the final, authority for faith and life. Its inspiration involves its infallibility. Interpreted, as all works must be, by its real spirit, it gives us truth without error. Light and life come from the ministry of the word. Its hallowed sayings are our stay, when all other support fails; our rock amid the billows; the songs of our pilgrimage; the pledge of our final rest. Such implicit faith may be stigmatized as bibliolatry; but where else can we go to find the words of eternal life? Bibliolatry clings to the letter; spirituality in the letter finds the spirit, and dares not disown the letter which guided to the spirit. For the enduring wants of the soul, for the problems of sin, salvation and eternity, we here find an unwavering authority, and rest in faith and joy upon the last assurance of the highest testimony, Thus saith the Lord. And, as it is an infallible, so is it a final authority. No man may add unto, or take away from, the words of this book. "Here is the judge that ends the strife." Like its divine author, it has full oft been called before human tribunals, been reviled, spit upon, yea buried, that it might rise again with new power and bless even its persecutors. Of controversy, as history testifies, it has ever been the arbiter; of opposing systems, the invariable conqueror: every scheme of men has become wan and shriveled at its touch. Beyond its revelations and its prophecies thought can not reach; it contains as well the oldest of records as the most living of prophecies. New assailants in the flush of self-consciousness call it antiquated, and its antiquity is as that of God himself; it is older than the stars and the earth, and awaits their dissolution, that all its revelations may be fulfilled. But it is also ever new, as well as ever old, the most progressive as it is the most conservative of influences, the counterpart of the wisdom of God: all literature has drawn deep and precious draughts from this unfailing fountain; its orient pearls are scattered through all lands; philosophy has there found the test of its errors and the lordliest of its truths; for four thousand years its words

have been inspiration and life, comforting the downcast, and breaking the oppressor's rod; pledging peace to the penitent, and opening to all the very gates of endless life; subduing with imperial might all other words, speaking in such tones of authority as you read in no other books; and in the very name of the Lord proclaiming a kingdom, which has been ever advancing yet never subdued; and thus like a living power has it been doing a living and abiding work among the children of men, in every clime, in every language, and now wider than ever before are its words rehearsed—its lines have gone out through all the earth and its words to the end of the world. H. B. S.

20. That disciple who had been favored in a peculiar degree with the gift of intuition and profound contemplation; who was admitted to the special confidence of the Head of the Church; and who, as the patriarch of the apostolic Church, experienced most of its conflicts and sufferings, its victories and hopes—that disciple was best fitted of all the apostles to be the organ of these revelations of the future and the final completion of the Church, and to seal her sacred records. The mystic John was by his sanctified natural gifts, as well as by his position and experience, predestinated, so to speak, to unveil the deep foundations of the Church's life and the ultimate issue of her history; so that in the Apocalypse the apostle simply placed the majestic dome upon the wonderful structure of his gospel, with the golden inscription of holy longing: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" P. S.

"Come, Lord Jesus," is the epitome of all the prayers that the believer is called upon to offer. It is a prayer for the overthrow of Satan's kingdom; for the extinction of sorrows, the cessation of pain, the wiping away of tears; for the descent of the New Jerusalem; for the sanctification and perfection of saints; for the creating anew of all things; in a word, for the new heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Let this prayer never die on our lips while we have breath: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." G. B.

SUMMARIZED TOPICS.

Section 387.

Christ the Center of Christian Theology

THE central idea of Christianity, as a distinct system, can only be found in him of whom prophets did testify, evangelists write, and apostles preach; whose life was the crowning glory of humanity, as his death was its redemption; and from whose death and from whose life influences and blessings have streamed forth, constant and inestimable; in him, whose nature, more wonderful than any other, unites the extremes of humanity and divinity; whose work, more glorious and needed than any other, reconciles heaven to earth and earth to heaven; and whose dominion is as intimate in its efficiency as it is eminent in its claims and beneficent in its results. He is the center of God's revelation and of man's redemption; of Christian doctrine and of Christian history, of conflicting sects, and of each believer's faith, yea, of the very history of this our earth, Jesus Christ is the full, the radiant, the only center—fitted to be such because he is the God-man and the Redeemer; Christ—Christ, he is the center of the Christian system, and the doctrine respecting Christ is the heart of Christian theology.

And with that glorious Person all the other truths of our faith are inherently connected. The distinct personality of Christ is the starting point from which to infer the reality of the distinctions in the Godhead; atonement and justification center in him; our very spiritual life is hid with Christ in God; if we believe in him we are born of God; we are to be changed into the image of Christ; the sacraments of the Church testify of him until he come. And a theology which finds its center

in such a being, can not be a barren, abstract system; but it gives us a direct and personal object for our faith and love. Thus, and thus only, does Christian theology express the Christian faith in its perfect form.

Let us come to have a deeper sense of the grand realities of our faith. To come to these is our safety, our defense. To see and feel and know what Christianity really is in its inward and distinctive character; to study those central truths which lie at its foundation; here is our strength. Let us come unto Jesus. When Christ is to us more than a doctrine, and the atonement more than a plan; when the Incarnation assumes as high a place in revealed, as creation does in natural theology; when the Trinity is viewed not as a formula, but as a vital truth, underlying and interwoven with the whole Christian system; when from this foundation the whole edifice rises up majestically, grand in its proportions, sublime in its aims, filled with God in all its parts; when we feel its inherent force streaming out from its living centers; then, then are we saved from those extreme tendencies which are the most significant and alarming sign of our times; then, then are we elevated above those lesser controversies which have narrowed our minds and divided our hearts. Here also we have a real inward experience as well as an objective reality; for the best and fullest inward experience is that which centers in Christ; and the center of the experience is then identical with the center of the divine revelation.

Never are we so far from having any abstract ethical or metaphysical principles exer-

cise an undue influence; never are we so far from a too fond reliance on self and never is self so full and satisfied; never are we in a better position for judging all our controversies with a righteous judgment, or nearer to the highest Christian union; never do the divine decrees shine in so mild a luster, so benignant with grace, so solemn and severe in justice; never can we be more wisely delivered from the material attractions of an outward rite, or from the ideal seductions of a pantheistic system; never is doctrine so full of life, and life so richly expressed in doctrine; never does systematic theology so perfectly present the full substance of the Christian faith in a truly scientific form; and never are philosophy and faith so joined in hymeneal bonds, where they may "exult in over-measure," as when Christ is set forth as the living center of all faith and of all theology, in whom the whole body is fitly joined together, compacted by that which every joint supplieth.

For, to Christ, as Mediator, all parts of theology equally refer. He is both God and man, and also the Redeemer. The logical antecedents of his mediation are, therefore, the doctrine respecting God, the doctrine respecting man, the fall and consequent need of redemption, as also that triune constitution of the Godhead, which alone, so far as we can conceive, makes redemption by an Incarnation to be possible. Thus we have the first division of the theological system, the antecedents of redemption, which is also first in both the logical and historical order. Its second and central portion can only be found in the person and work of Christ, his one Person uniting humanity with divinity, in the integrity of

both natures, adapting him to his one super-human work, as our prophet, priest, and king, making such satisfaction for sin that God can be just and justify every one that believeth; and this second division of the system follows the first in both the logical and historical order, giving the peculiar office of the second person of the Godhead, the purchase of redemption, the Christology of theology. And in like manner the same mediatorial idea passes over into the third and last division of the system which treats, in proper logical and historical order, of the application of the redemption that is in Christ, to the individual, to the Church, and to the history and final supremacy of the kingdom of God both in time and eternity. Union with Christ through the Holy Spirit is here the dominant fact; his union with the individual, whence justification, regeneration, and sanctification, for our life is hid with Christ in God; his union with the Church, which is his body, here, as Gerhard says, "like Christ subjected to the cross that it may in the future life with him be glorified."

And this scheme of divine realities, and not of mere abstract doctrine, is ultimately to be referred to the counsel of him, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things. It gives us the true end of God in creation, which can only be, in any profound philosophical, not to say theological aspect, the making the essential glory of the triune God to be ex-ant and manifest in space and time, in a system which subordinates happiness to holiness and man to God.

In redemption prepared, purchased, and applied, we have the whole of Christian theology. *H. B. Smith.*

Section 388.

The Priesthood of Christ.

WHILE the Scriptures insist with peculiar emphasis upon the mediation of Christ, and represent the functions which are discharged in it as essential to salvation, it is not sufficiently considered that these functions themselves are not necessarily sacerdotal—that they might have been discharged by one who was not a priest in the common acceptation of the term. All that seems to be indispensable

to salvation is the obedience of a substitute voluntarily assuming our guilt and able to endure the curse of the law. The Epistle to the Romans discusses the principles of the gospel in their general relations to the moral government of God, and demonstrates, as well as asserts upon authority, the absolute necessity of legal substitution in order to life. But if the disclosures of revelation stopped here,

we might look upon the death of the Redeemer as the result simply of the operation of justice—a death inflicted by the law, exclusively penal in its nature and relations, exacted of him in the same sense in which it would otherwise have been exacted of the sinner. We might regard pardon as resulting from faith in that death as a satisfaction to justice, and access to God as immediate and direct in consequence of this historical fact as a past reality. The principles here discussed would resolve the security of our state into the covenant faithfulness of God without the least insight into the manner in which it is actually made available to the saints. All that we could say would be that our debt has been paid, that justice no longer demands our lives, that God has promised in consequence of the Redeemer's death to receive us into favor, and upon the ground of that death we might approach him ourselves and sue for mercy. This is all that could be certainly collected from the general discussion of this Epistle. But when we turn to the Epistle to the Hebrews we find indeed a substitute, and the substitute demanded by the Epistle to the Romans, but that substitute is embodied in a priest; we find a death, a penal death, a death which is commensurate with the curse of the law, but it is a death which is also a sacrifice—at once the result of the operation of justice and of a free-will offering to God. We find justification and pardon resolved ultimately into the obedience and death of Christ as past historical facts, but immediately due to relations sustained to him as a living person and Redeemer; and access to God ascribed, not so much to faith in his past achievements as to his present appearance for us in the holiest of all; and the covenant faithfulness of God is seen to be maintained through the agency of him who ever liveth to make intercessions for us.

The Epistle to the Hebrews may be regarded as a detailed account of the method in which the great law of substitution has been actually applied in the redemption of our race. While that to the Romans shows what must needs be done in order to our salvation, the Epistle to the Hebrews shows how it has been done; and where the arrangements have gone beyond the strict requisitions of necessity, they are demonstrated to be the dictates at once of mercy and wisdom. Priesthood is the perfection of mediation. There is not a single circum-

stance which distinguishes a priest from a general substitute which is not significant, a proof of goodness, a fresh illustration of the adaptation of redemption to the condition of its objects; not a single circumstance which distinguishes a sacrifice from the ordinary forms of death that does not enhance the preciousness of the Saviour's work. The full effect of this truth is lost upon most Christian minds through inattention to the distinctions in question. They admire the goodness and adore the wisdom of God in providing a substitute for the guilty, able to reconcile the conflicting claims of justice and of grace; but apart from the adaptation of his person to the mighty work they see nothing upon which they are accustomed to dwell as peculiarly indicative of the divine goodness. They overlook the adaptation of his office; they forget that the manner in which he has accomplished the work is as glorious as the matter—the *how* as sublime as the *what*. The work as done, the person by whom, exhaust their topics of admiration and of praise, and they fail to enter into those other motives of faith, devotion and thanksgiving, which are derived from the contemplation of the office in its essential and distinguishing features. They use the terms Priest and High Priest, and have a habitual reference to the appearance of the Saviour in the presence of God; but their High Priest is, after all, but little more than an all-sufficient sponsor, and his intercessions are regarded rather as acts of royalty than sacerdotal pleas. It is amazing how little and seldom we enter into those views of the death of the Redeemer which spring from the consideration of it as a real and proper sacrifice—how little we discriminate betwixt a legal representative and a consecrated priest, betwixt Christ glorious in his kingdom and equally glorious in the holiest of all, betwixt even his triumphant ascension as a King and his passage as intercessor, not without blood, into the presence of God. As these distinctions are evidently important, and the benefits of that peculiar form of mediation to which the Saviour was appointed are clearly explained by the apostle, it may be well to show how much we have gained and how pre-eminently God is glorified by this whole arrangement.

A priest is a solemn minister of religion—the channel through which all worship is conducted—the organ of all communications be-

twixt God and the people. This august agency none can assume without the authority of God. So awful and momentous is this office, which really collects the prayers and praises and thanksgivings of a world into a single person, which centers the hopes of mankind upon the conduct of a single individual throughout all ages—so tremendous is this responsibility and so sublime this honor, that it would be the climax of presumption on the part of any one to propose that it should be conceded to him. It belongs to God, and to God alone, to designate a priest. The idea of a mediatorial worship conducted by a permanent and glorious minister, and so conducted as to strengthen the ties of personal obligation, is an idea which could only originate in the mind of the Deity; and there was an evident fitness and propriety in the solemnity and grandeur attached to the appointment of Jesus to this office when he was consecrated not without an oath. A scheme which contemplates an arrangement of this sort bears stamped upon it the strongest impress of grace. It sprang from the bosom of God; it was mercy, which conceived the purpose of salvation; mercy, which accepted the substitute; and mercy upon mercy, the exuberance of grace, which made that substitute a priest.

The very nature of the priesthood demands that the spirit of sublime devotion to God and heroic self-sacrifice to man, which first secured his consent to the enterprise, should animate him at every step in his history, and sanctify every function of his office. He is not to be the passive recipient of ill. As a priest he must *act*—there are things to be done even in the endurance of the curse—and his whole heart must burn with piety and compassion while he bears the sins of the world in his own body on the tree. The lofty and godlike motives which induced the Redeemer, in the counsels of eternity, before the morning stars had yet sung together or the sons of God shouted for joy, to become the Lamb to be slain, must have continued to operate with undiminished intensity, or the prerogatives and glory of his office had been forfeited. The priestly spirit must have continued to dwell and to reign in his heart, or the priestly robes would have been taken from his shoulders. He must have been as free, as cordial, as delighted, when he uttered the cry of lamentation and woe upon the

cross, which shook the earth and startled the dead, as when at the glorious suggestion of the scheme he uttered the language, *Lo, I come*. As the work of a priest, it is stamped upon the whole process of redemption that the substitute gave his consent; that his self-devotion was spontaneous and free—the execution of a settled purpose to which he was impelled by no constraining influence of the divine will, by no transitory fervors of enthusiasm, no martyr impulse of the moment; that he delighted in the work—it was his meat and drink; he felt it to be an honor and not a hardship, its successful achievement a crown of glory, and not a triumph over cruelty. This single consideration, that it displays so conspicuously the freeness of the Saviour's mediation, is itself a sufficient vindication of the wisdom and fitness of a priesthood. It shows that our felicity has not been purchased at the expense of the rights of another; and, though there was an immense cost of suffering and of blood, it was never for a moment begrudged. The joy of the Mediator in the work, therefore, and the vindication of God from all suspicion of cruelty, injustice, or severity, is complete and triumphant when the Saviour's death is made a sacrifice—a free-will offering to God.

Furthermore, when Jesus is seen to be a priest, and his death a sacrifice, the whole transaction becomes an august and glorious act of worship. And there is something, to our minds, inexpressibly sublime when we contemplate the scheme of redemption as accomplished by an act of worship—when we look upon Jesus not as a passive recipient of woes, the unresisting victim of law, but as a minister of religion, conducting its services in the presence of angels and men, upon an emergency which seemed to cover the earth with darkness. Our world becomes the outer court of the sanctuary, where a sacrifice is to be offered in which the Priest and the Victim are alike the wonder of the universe—in which the worship which is rendered leaves it doubtful whether the Deity is more glorious in his justice or his grace. In this aspect the satisfaction of Jesus is not merely the ground upon which others are at liberty to approach and adore the divine perfections; it is itself a prayer uttered by the lips of one whose deeds were words—a hymn of praise chanted by him whose songs were the inspiration of holiness and truth. Every

proud imagination is rebuked, every insinuation against the character of God is felt to be a shame to us, every disposition to cavil or condemn is consigned to infamy, when we remember that the whole work of Jesus was a solemn service of religion, as well that by which he descended into the grave as that by which he passed through the heavens into the holiest of all. He was a priest in his death, a priest in his resurrection, a priest in his ascension. He worshiped God in laying his life upon the altar, he worshiped him in taking it again, and it was an act of worship by which he entered with his blood into the very presence of the highest to intercede for the saints. It was religion in Jesus to die, to rise, to reign, as it is religion in us to believe in these great events of his history.

Here, then, is an incalculable advantage of priesthood. While it makes the passion of the Redeemer a full and perfect satisfaction of divine justice, and so lays an adequate foundation of pardon, it vindicates the divine glory in every step of the proceeding by making every step an act of adoration and praise. It makes the Saviour adore the Father in his death, makes that very death an offering of praise, redemption itself a mighty prayer, and throws the sanctities and solemnities of worship—and worship on the part of one who knew what was the proper ground of worship—around all the stages in the development of the economy of grace. This seems to us to be the very climax of wisdom. It was glorious to have provided a substitute who should be able to bear our sins in his own body upon the tree, to have devised a scheme by which the conflicting claims of mercy and justice should be adjusted and harmonized—by which God could be just and at the same time the justifier of those who believe in Jesus; but it was the very perfection of wisdom to have executed this scheme so that the intensest sufferings should have produced only a deeper impression of the divine glory and of the excellence and value of the divine law. Surely in this arrangement the law is magnified and made honorable.

Another immense advantage of a priesthood is that it quickens and stimulates the devotion of the Church by the assurance it inspires that all true worship, however imperfect or inadequate, shall infallibly be accepted and rewarded. There must be a mediator of prayer and praise,

of all the exercises of religious worship, as well as a mediator to purchase our pardon. This is accomplished by a priesthood. There is no direct and immediate approach to God. We come before him only in the name of our priest, who attracts us by community of nature, and who presents all our worship for us before the eternal throne. Our prayers are not heard and received as *ours*, but as the prayers of Jesus; our praises are not accepted as *ours*, but as the praises of Jesus. The imperfection which attaches to our performances, our pollution and weakness and unbelief, stop with the High Priest; his intercession and atonement cover all defects, and we are faultless and complete in him. The prayer which reaches the ear of the Almighty is from him, and not from us, and must be as prevalent as his worth. Here is our confidence, not only that Jesus died, but that Jesus lives—that he is our intercessor in the heavenly sanctuary, and there presents, enforces, and sanctifies the religious worship of earth; here is our confidence that in the whole process of salvation God regards the Redeemer and not us, and deals out blessings according to his estimate of Christ; here is our confidence that if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. What an encouragement to prayer and praise! And what thanks shall we render unto God for adapting the marvelous scheme of his grace with such consummate wisdom to the wants and weaknesses of men!

It deserves, finally, to be added that a mediation of priesthood is the form in which consolation is most effectually administered to the children of men. It is necessary to any substitute that he should be a kinsman of our race, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. But besides the possession of our nature free from the stain and impurities of sin, nothing more is required for the purposes of vicarious righteousness and penal expiation than the consent of the substitute to undertake the task. If he *can* die the death to which we are doomed, and is willing to suffer in our stead, he is a competent redeemer. But though this is all which is absolutely essential to a legal substitution, it is not all which the state and condition of men evince to be desirable. We want a redeemer with a brother's heart as well as a brother's nature. Though not indispensable to our safety, it is indispensable to our comfort that our substitute should be touched with

a feeling of our infirmities, that he should be able to bear our sorrows and carry our griefs. Now this exquisite sympathy, which is one of the most powerful incentives to faith and love, is essential to a priest. Every high priest ordained for men must not only be a participant of their nature, but must have compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way. He must enter with sympathetic tenderness into all their temptations and calamities, their fears and apprehensions, their cares and sorrows. He must be prepared to pity and encourage the weak, to comfort the weeper in the house of mourning, to wipe the widow's tears, to hear the orphan's cries, to lie down with the beggar upon his pallet of straw, and to watch with those to whom wearisome nights are appointed. He must be a friend in all those emergencies in which friendship is our richest boon. This qualification is found pre-eminently in Jesus. And those who have felt his presence in their trials can appreciate the priceless value of his sympathy. He has gone before us through every path of sorrow, and we can not utter a groan nor heave a sigh which does not go to his heart. His pity for the guilty is as tender as his sympathy with the saints. No language can express the intensity of his compassion for those who in ignorance and folly disregard the day of their

merciful visitation, and are heaping up wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. He has no pleasure in their death. The sublimest example of compassion which the world has ever beheld was furnished by the Saviour in that memorable prayer in which—when “the clouds of wrath from heaven and from earth, pregnant with materials which nothing but a divine hand could have collected, were about to discharge themselves on him in a deluge of agony and blood,” when insulted by men, abandoned by his friends, mocked by his enemies, jeered by devils and deserted by God, he was about to expire in solitude and darkness—he could still, for a moment in the plenitude of his pity forgetting these unspeakable calamities, sue for the forgiveness of the remorseless agents of his death. This was compassion like a God. And what an exquisite spectacle of tenderness was that when Jesus, on the cross, just before the consummation of the last event that should fulfill the predictions of ancient prophecy, consigned his mother to the care of the beloved disciple! Surely such a High Priest became us. In our waywardness and folly, in our sins and temptations, in our murmurs and impatience, we should alienate any other friend but him that sticketh closer than a brother. *J. H. Thornwell.*

Section 389.

Christ the Center and Solution of Human History.

AN old Jewish proverb runs that “The secret of man is the secret of the Messiah.” Man knows what he is, and is to be, only as he knows the Son of God. In him the enigma of human destiny is resolved. And this is the testimony of history, as well as the pledge of revelation. For eighteen hundred years millions of living and believing hearts have hailed Jesus of Nazareth as the Head and Redeemer of the race, the incarnation of divinity. Ancient history converged to his cross; modern history has received from him its organizing law. In him human thought, too, has found the solution of the problem of human life, the disclosure of the divine theodicy, the reconciliation between God and man, the center of the whole drama of history, even to its consummation in a king-

dom which shall know no sin, and have no end. The facts of Christ's life, testimony, death, resurrection, ascension and regal dominion, are the substance of the faith of the Church; without them Christianity itself has no vital power or independent being.

This historic supremacy of Jesus is incontrovertible. It is as real as religious life and faith. Christ can no more be expelled from the course of history than the sun from the circle of the sky. Skepticism about Christ is also skepticism about history itself; unbelief in him is unbelief in the controlling ideas by which men have been inspired, and in the chief objects for which men have hitherto lived. And such is the mysterious fascination which still issues from his transcendent person, that

even the incredulous are drawn to him against their very will. He has power over them. To take the veil from his form is dimly felt to be like taking the veil from the master of our fate, and reading the profoundest meaning of our earthly life. Here is the urn of destiny, and that urn holds no dead ashes. His power over men is still the power of a living personality. To every thoughtful mind, believing or unbelieving, he is the ideal of humanity, the Son of man, and, as no other, the very Son of God. The vehemence with which his claims are denied implies a covert apprehension that they may still be real. When faith is lost reverence is cherished. Not to bow before his matchless worth is to be faithless to humanity if not to divinity itself. His influence is the marvel of history. This, to say the least, is a wonderful spectacle, and puzzling to the skeptic. All the logic, the criticism, and the philosophy of naturalism, and of pantheism, can not suppress this spontaneous homage to the unrivaled spiritual excellence of him who is supernaturalism itself in the midst of human history. And the problem infidelity has to solve is this: How can the recorded facts, attesting his character and work, be explained, or explained away, and still leave room for reverence? Not in the miracles alone, but in the whole life of Jesus, supernaturalism has its stronghold. Here, and here alone, all is to be won, or all lost. If Christ's whole life can be interpreted on the basis of naturalism, and he still remain the hero of humanity; if such faith in him can be retained while prophecy and miracle are annulled, then the battle of infidelity is substantially gained.

Naturalism must find Christ inexplicable and paradoxical. It can neither explain his

nature, nor his acts, nor his words, nor his historic position and influence. But in the faith of the Church, the ideal and real are blended, the earlier and later words of Jesus are harmonized, his profoundest teachings made luminous, his mysterious death seems to be necessary to his divine office, while his resurrection and ascension complete his work and explain his historic triumphs. The universe is no longer, as in the theory of Renan, on its dark side, an "abyss," and on its side of light the phantom life of transient human beings; but the infinite One and the finite world are united and reconciled in one complete system, whose center is found in the person and work of an incarnate Deity. Nothing in all literature and all philosophy equals this sublime and radiant idea, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord. It is written in the open page of the divine oracles, it is impressed upon the soul of the believer, it is drawn out in the theologies of the Church, it is hymned in penitential and jubilant psalms, in its substantial lineaments it is omnipresent in the history of the world, it unites time with eternity, and it explains the controlling power of the Son of God in the annals of our race, whose highest destiny is to be found in coming to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

The Jesus of the Gospels, the Epistles, and of the Church, is human and divine, is king and priest in an eternal kingdom, is the Saviour of the world, is the lord of life. And this is the essence of supernaturalism. And naturalism must expel Christ from the heart and the Church, from the conscience and the life, before it can expel supernaturalism from human history. *H. B. Smith.*

Section 390.

Christianity—as History, as Truth, and as Life.

1. AS HISTORY.—*Christianity begins as history*, the history of the most extraordinary man, by common consent, in character, career, and influence, who ever lived upon the earth, or influenced the course of human affairs. He appears at first as a teacher and reformer. He gathers disciples, impressing himself by some

uncommon fascination, wherever he goes, upon one and another whom he attaches to his person and his cause, in spite of the severity of the service and the frankness with which he explains it. He speaks to the public doctrines that are strange for their searching character, and almost revolutionary for their boldness,

but always with the air of authority, as one divinely commissioned to proclaim the truth and exact obedience. His deeds attract attention and enforce awe at the mysterious power which lay in his hand and his voice. He uttered mysterious words respecting his person, his origin, his future destiny, and the triumph of his kingdom—words which, as they grew more explicit, were more and more perplexing for their marvelous import and their astounding audacity—words at which his most confiding followers were more and more amazed, though they believed he could not deceive them; while his bitterest enemies were more exasperated, though they could not satisfy even themselves that “he had a devil, or was mad.” Once or twice, extraordinary manifestations were made to a select number of his most trusted friends of something as yet unexplained in his person, which overwhelmed them with amazement and exalted them with reverent delight.

As we follow this new historic force to the death of its Author, it is all gathered within the person and the life of this one Being. All its energy and capacity to endure are in him; all its power to gain or hold the convictions or the confidence of others is his personal force. He dies in shame and agony: he is buried; and in his tomb are buried with him the hopes of those who had looked for his coming and kingdom. But he lives again: he remains alive some forty days, and is then removed for ever from the earth. But first he bequeaths to his followers the simple duty of proclaiming the history of his life. And at the first recorded assembly of those who received this trust, they show that they are mindful of it by taking measures to give it effect.

Christianity thenceforward was propagated as history. At the bold proclamation of this completed life, the cause, that was apparently lost, gains as it never had gained before. In the story of the dead Christ who had risen, there was power to shake the nations. A new adherent also appears among the boldest advocates of the cause which he had persecuted—not convinced, indeed, by the testimony of the other witnesses, but by the direct manifestation of the Master himself, from whom he received, not only his commission to teach, but the matter of the gospel which he was to proclaim. But Paul, like the rest, propagated Christianity as a history, telling the one story

of the facts of Christ's life, superadding and emphasizing Christ's appearance and communications to himself. In his writings, largely doctrinal as they are, the well-known history is repeatedly assumed and affirmed to be true.

The history proclaimed and accepted was, very largely, *a history of supernatural events.* The very kernel and interest of this history, as well as its attractiveness and force, lay in what was believed to have been wrought by divine power, and to have been incapable of being effected by any inferior agent or agency, whether of knowledge or skill. This was what Paul believed; this was what Paul's disciples were taught in Thessalonica and Corinth, in the provinces of Galatia, and in Rome—all within some sixteen or twenty years after the Christian story was complete.

The Christian history is still believed to be a true history by the great mass of men over whom Christianity is a controlling power. The majority of those who call themselves Christian worshipers, every time they assemble renew the profession of their faith in the leading facts which this history records. And no examples of human duty and perfection have ever yet been furnished which are at once so instructive and so moving as those which this history records. No stories of human duty and self-sacrifice are more instructive and more animating than the stories which Christ taught in parable and precept, and himself enacted in this life.

Every man who lives in Christendom can not but live in a temple where the history of Christ and the Christ of history are felt in ten thousand influences. The earth to him is far more green and beautiful, the heavens are more benign, the spring more full of hope, the summer more joyful, the autumn more sage, the winter more serene, man is more interesting, life is more sacred, death is more significant, the universe is more full of moral import, because Christ is believed to have visited the earth, and to have dwelt among men, and to have gone before to prepare a place for them in better dwellings.

2. CHRISTIANITY AS TRUTH OR DOCTRINE.—Christianity is more than a history: it is also a system of truths. Every event which its history records either is a truth, or suggests a truth, or expresses a truth, which man needs to assent to or to put into practice. Wherever we begin—with the person of Christ, the work

of Christ, or the promises of Christ—we find some truth suggested, confirmed, or enforced. If we begin with his person, we are led into authorized inferences or unauthorized speculations concerning God, and Christ's relation to God before, during, and after his appearance upon the earth. If we consider his work—whether in his life or death, or both—we are beset by inquiries, which we are forced to attempt to answer, concerning man's need; and these open the Christian truth concerning sin, and man's deliverance; and this unfolds to us the truth concerning redemption. If we reflect on the promises of Christ, the doctrines of the purifying Spirit, of perfected holiness, and of eternal life, claim our attention.

Christianity is a series of truths upon which its power and dignity depend—truths which it implies, enforces, or reveals. It implies the being and holiness of a personal God; it manifests and impresses him as a forgiving Father, who sympathizes with and seeks to reclaim his wandering children; it implies and enforces the fact and the evil of personal guilt, which, if persisted in, must separate the guilty creature from the equitable and guiltless Creator; it manifests Christ as the Saviour from sin with all its evils. Among these evils, none is more prominent than its self-propagating and progressive power, involving discouragement and despair. Against this it provides the promised aid and help of a divine agency that encourages and assists the human spirit to confidence and victory. It enforces and reveals all these truths by the constant manifestation of the supernatural as an agency above the laws and above the forces of mere Nature, but which neither disturbs nor interrupts the harmony or order of a universe in which a personal God and impersonal law can never be in conflict. And its truths are taught and enacted for practical effect alone. If God is revealed as a Spirit, it is that we may worship him in spirit and in truth; not that the speculations of mere curiosity respecting the possibility of an Infinite Spirit, and of his relations to the finite, may be excited or put to rest. If men are convinced of guilt and danger, it is not that they may speculate about either, but that they may repent, and be reformed. If Christ is set forth to them as a Deliverer, it is not that they may perfect a science respecting his person or his work, but that they may believe and obey him.

Christianity, then, as truth, proves Chris-

tianity to be superhuman: first, because the truths themselves are, some of them, such as man could not, and others of them are such as he would not, attain of himself; secondly, because the most important and peculiar of them, though wide-reaching and general, and capable of being expanded into a science that is profound and recondite, are presented to the race, not as doctrines, but as facts—not in the forms of science, but simply as history; and, last of all, because they are such in their nature and adaptations as to justify the acceptance of a supernatural history itself as probable and true, which would otherwise be improbable and incredible. Thus Christianity as history declares and enforces Christianity as doctrine; and Christianity as doctrine makes credible Christianity as a history. Thus whatever independent and separate claims Christianity may assert as a history are made doubly strong by the separate claims of Christianity as doctrine. The union of the two more than doubles the strength of either; the mutual dependence of the two gives to their union an organic power.

3. CHRISTIANITY IS A LIFE.—Its history is not enacted as a mysterious or attractive spectacle; its truth is not enforced in order to satisfy human curiosity, or to enlarge human knowledge in respect to the infinite and the unseen: but both history and truth look forward to the life which they will awaken and perfect in the soul of man and in every human relation. Christianity, both as history and doctrine, is given to mould the character and to serve the ends of life. The ideal of a perfect human life and a perfect human being, proposed by Christianity, is more comprehensive, more elevated, and more symmetrical than any that was distinctly conceived by man before. And every truth which Christianity declares is also a motive to the performance of some duty. What God is, and what God wills; what God is now doing, and what he will do in the future state of being; what man is in his needs and guilt, and what God has done, and how he feels in respect to his help and his pardon—are every one of them powerful reasons why man should seek after ethical perfection. Yet further, Christianity does not simply give wise and ample directions of what we are to do; but it furnishes us the moving power. It does not merely command and forbid; but it enkindles inspiration. Hence it is that Christianity is a life.

Christianity is not only life to the individual, but it gives life to human society. It refines its manners; it perfects its civilization; it renders its laws more just, and their administration more perfect; it fosters and popularizes education; it furnishes inspiration to art, and taste to its admirers. Its ethics are broad enough to meet every exigency, and minute enough to let none escape. They are progressive enough to keep pace with any advance of culture or civilization, and tolerant enough to be charitable to every offense that comes of ignorance or barbarism. Its comprehensive, final aim is the moral and spiritual perfection of the race, and all that such perfection involves in the reformation of human society and the refinement of human culture. To this,

as its sole and controlling end, its history and its truth are completely subjected; from this they derive all their importance and their interest.

Christianity claims to be a supernatural product; and it enforces its claims by its superhuman excellence as a history, a doctrine, and a life. Each one of these features, considered alone, substantiates this claim; the union of these three features in the same system makes the argument stronger; the inter-dependence of the three, each giving and receiving strength from the other, unites them in an organic union, which makes the argument invincible and complete. It is indeed a threefold cord, which is not quickly broken. *Noah Porter.*

Section 391.

The Three Distinctive Features of Christianity.

1. THE INCARNATION OF GOD IN CHRIST.—If anything is clear from history, it is clear that human nature can not endure a bald spiritual theism. Man has two thoughts of God, equally normal and necessary. He thinks of God as One Infinite Spirit, wholly separated from matter, without form, or voice, or changeable affections, transcending the limitations of time and space, wise, just, and awful in his holiness. Hence the pure monotheism now recognized as lying in the background of all the better pagan mythologies. Hence, in part, the triumphs of Mohammed, whose wild voice out of the Arabian peninsula went pealing over three continents: "Your God is One God." That there are more gods than one, or that this One God is anything else than pure Spirit, human reason in its best estate has always steadily refused to believe. The divine unity and spirituality were affirmed by Plato, looking the Greek polytheism boldly in the face, and were reaffirmed by the Neo-Platonists as essential parts of their eclectic creed. But human weakness and human sinfulness necessitate another conception of God. Across the great gulf between the finite and the infinite, between sin and holiness, the voice of man is afraid to speak. The human heart sinks discouraged and shudders with affright. A being so feeble and so defiled must have

God nearer to him. Hence the patriarchal and Hebrew theophanies, in which the ineffable Jehovah is seen wearing the human form, and is heard speaking in human tones. Hence, likewise, the pagan deification of nature and man, and all the inferior divinities of the pagan Pantheon, bridging, as best they might, the bottomless abyss which yawns betwixt the finite and the infinite, the sinful and the sinless. The idea of incarnation is thus seen to be congenial to our nature. And yet in none of the instances referred to was this idea realized. The patriarchal and Hebrew theophanies were only transient manifestations of God in the human form, a temporary expedient of merely provisional economies. They only abated a hunger which they could not feed. Still, they served what appears to have been their providential purpose: they prevented at once the worship of nature, and the multiplication of inferior divinities. Accordingly, for centuries, down even to the time of the Deluge, when wicked men shrank away from the awfulness of God, they took refuge not in polytheism, but in atheism. After the Deluge mankind, no longer able to be atheists, betook themselves to the worship of innumerable divinities. Nature in all her range was deified, from the starry hosts on high down to the mountains, the rivers, and the trees. At first,

these natural objects were revered only as symbols of the Divine presence and power. At first, the carved or molten image was only a symbol; but in process of time the symbols themselves were worshiped. Even the Hebrews, in spite of their theophanies, were, till after the exile in Babylon, constantly lapsing into these idolatries. Outside of Judaism the declension was monstrous. The Creator was sunk and lost sight of in his creation. In the great hunger of the human heart for an incarnate God, polytheism became the faith of the masses, and pantheism the speculation of the schools. Human reason pronounces for unity in its conception of the Godhead; but the human heart, yearning for sympathy in its weakness, and stricken with terror in its de-filement, cries out for an incarnate God.

This importunate demand of our finite and sinful nature is for the first time met, and fully met, by the incarnation of God in Christ. The theophanies were transient and provisional. They merely adumbrated the coming reality. The incarnations of the pagan world were all of a pantheistic type, involving no proper personal union between the divine and the human. In the pagan philosophies, God could enter humanity no otherwise than he entered nature. The tree and the man fared alike. But in Christ the two natures, each complete and perfect in itself, were united in a real, perfect personality. He was a man, born of the Virgin Mary, with a real human body, and a real human soul; as human, in every proper sense of the word, as any one of us. He was also God; not God the Father, but God the Word, the second person in the Trinity, whom angels worship, and who made the worlds. In one breath we may say of him that he was born and died. In the next breath we may say of him, Before Abraham began to be, he eternally and unchangeably is. And for three and thirty years this mysterious being lived and walked in Palestine. Now he sailed upon the lake, and now he smoothed its angry billows by a word. Now he was a genial guest at a marriage feast, and now he turned the water into wine. Now he wept before a sepulchre, and now he waked the dead. Now he died himself, and now, having risen from the dead, he ascended up where he was before. Such is the Christ of the New Testament. Such was the Christ of Christendom for three hundred years before the Nicene Creed echoed the spec-

ulations of Athanasius. And such has been the Christ of Christendom, by a vast preponderance of numbers, in every succeeding century. Such, too, must continue to be the Christ of Christendom, by an equally vast preponderance of numbers, through all coming time. Here at last our nature rests; here at last is the great hunger of the heart appeased. We need no less, as we can ask no more. God manifest in the flesh is the end of all our desires, the solace of all our sorrows, the conquest of all our fears. And what is more, even philosophy is now ranging herself on the side of faith. From pantheistic speculations there is no legitimate escape but in the doctrine of the word made flesh. Here, then, the sage and the savage meet, bowing together at the feet of an incarnate God. The conception of such a divine humanity is equally above them both; but, as an accomplished fact, it satisfies and renovates and saves them both.

2. THE ATONEMENT.—If, as a Roman poet has said, it be human to err, equally human is it to undergo the pangs of remorse and the fear of punishment. Dualism may, indeed, affirm an eternal independent principle of evil, and pantheism may seek to resolve all evil into good, but the conscience of the race refuses thus to be relieved of its crushing burden of guilt. In man's own unperverted and honest judgment of himself, he is an offender, not merely against the moral order of the universe, but an offender against the moral ruler of the universe, against whom personally he has rebelled, and whose inmost moral nature has been aroused to the vindication of its righteous claims. Punishment is, of course, the instinctive apprehension of the soul that has sinned. Nature, it is observed, always punishes, never pardons, an offender. Human governments seldom pardon. Human society would lose its coherence, and human life itself become a hideous riot, were not punishment the rule for evil doers, and pardon the rare exception. How, then, can impunity for sinners be looked for under the moral government of God? But the abyss thus opened is frightful; for every human being misery, and that misery eternal. Hence a wild cry everywhere for relief. Is there no escape? Is the law to have its course? In this sphere of spirit, as in the sphere of sense, must fire always burn, and water always drown? Verily they must, says reason; there is no such

thing as forgiveness. Altars and sacrifices are of no avail. From the topmost heights of the Greek philosophy, more than two thousand years ago, the verdict came that "the gods are not easily propitiated." Sorrow, O sinner! is bootless; by penance you must yourself atone for the mischief you have wrought. I will not say that human beings in their distress would never dare to dream that God might somehow succor such misery. But I must say, what no sound thinker will venture to question, that there is no safety in reasoning from mere goodness to mercy. The rude peasant, with low, confused notions of what is due to justice and law, might have imagined that somehow pardon was attainable; but philosophy would have rebuked his presumption. And yet, in spite of philosophy, men everywhere have had their altars and victims. Whence these altars and victims? Of blind, human instinct, say some, making thus the strongest possible confession of ill-desert, in the hope of averting a retribution seen to be justly impending. Of gross conceptions, say others, as though God might be wrought upon and moved to favor by such offerings. But penitent confession, how bitter soever it may be, is no atonement, says philosophy. Nor is God so coarse and savage a monster as to delight in the scent of burning flesh. Let, then, these altars and victims be swept away; they are an offense to reason. And yet the altars stand, dotting every continent, and with their huge volumes of smoke blackening the whole firmament. Whatsoever it may be that builds them, and lights their fires, these altars are evidently indestructible. Philosophy may frown, but still they smoke. And their meaning is that sin, in order to be remitted, must first be atoned for. The necessity of expiation is what they preach with their tongues of flame. But there is no real expiation in the blood of beasts and of birds. Such victims take away no sin. The whole system of bloody sacrifices is therefore vain; a dismal cheat, if it promises atonement; and pitiful at best if it be only a confession that atonement is needed. Such is the dilemma of philosophy. Here, on the one side, is the admitted universality of sacrifice, proving its connection with something imperishable within us; and, on the other side, the demonstration of its impotency.

From this dilemma Christianity offers the only possible escape. In the sufferings and

death of Christ it sets before us a real atonement actually accomplished in history; an atonement eternally prepared, of course, since God himself, its author, is eternal; an atonement which began its saving work by the very cradle of our apostate race. It was no mere show of condescension and of sympathy enacted for moral effect, but a real thing. Christ actually suffered for us in his Divine humanity, enduring mysterious and immeasurable agonies, that there might be a real satisfaction to the awful justice of God. Not God's honor only, but God's own nature required it. This sublime work of atonement was to him, as well as of him, penetrating the very depths of his being, and answering a holy demand, which otherwise could have been answered only by the punishment of the guilty. It was not merely that he might safely pardon, but that he might pardon at all. Pardon required some other basis than that of penitence in the offender; it required a basis of satisfied justice in God's own nature. And that basis was furnished by the sufferings and death of Christ. As for man, there was nothing for him to do, indeed there was nothing he could do, but simply accept the atonement thus accomplished for him. He had only to confess his sin, and receive forgiveness on the ground of what had been done for him by another. In this way was Adam saved, if saved at all. It mattered not that thousands of years were to roll away before the Son of man should go as it was purposed for him. The Lamb that taketh away sin was already slain, slain from before the foundation of the world, and faith had only to await the historic consummation of an eternal act. But the goal was distant, and the way was rough. And so the altar was built, and the victim brought, not of human impulse or invention, but by divine appointment; not for the taking away of sin, but only to typify the real sacrifice. That this was too crude a ritualism, beneath the dignity of its alleged original, let no one say who has ever heard of the holy walk of Enoch, who has ever heard of the tithes paid to Melchisedek as the representative of an economy older and wider than that of Abraham. We who have never used, nor had need to use, these types, must be careful how we sit in judgment upon the pious men of the elder ages, whose faith embraced not an ascended but only a coming Saviour. To them these types were eloquent. The gleaming knife

which slew the shrinking victim pierced their own hearts. The flame which leaped from the altar pointed its red finger toward the throne at once of justice and of grace. And so these men were saved, as all men might have been. The system had certainly its limitations and its perils. There was always danger that type would usurp the place of antitype. There was always danger that atonement would be sought for in the sign, rather than in the thing signified. When thus emptied of its great meaning, the whole sacrificial system of course miscarried. No wonder the Greek philosophy made such havoc of the Greek religion. No wonder the time arrived when the masses thought all religions equally true, and philosophers thought them all equally false. Even among the Hebrews, faith withered into formalism. Indignant prophets accordingly denounced their temple service as an abomination. The lamb of the priest had ceased to be suggestive of the Lamb of God. But the world has now a temple, an altar, and an offering not liable to such abuse. The sensuous types are all withdrawn. The real victim has been slain. The atonement has become an historic fact. And so faith marches out from among the shadows, to lay hold upon the substance. Philosophy, which derided the former, cannot deride the latter. Human nature remains unchanged in its corruption, unchanged in its fears, unchanged in its craving for atonement; and there is no solid peace for the troubled conscience but in the blood of Christ.

8. REGENERATION.—As already intimated, confession of sin is not confined to Christendom, and is no new thing in history. Universal sacrifice, of which we have just spoken, is itself a universal confession of sin. It stands confessed likewise in all literatures; even in that of China, the coldest and poorest of all. In the better literatures, as of Greece and Rome, this confession strikes down deep, pronouncing the very nature of man depraved. "It is clear," says Aristotle in his "*Nicomachean Ethics*," "that not one of the moral virtues springs up in us by nature." "We all have sinned," says Seneca; "some more, others less." Accordingly, when Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, says of all men that they are "by nature the children of wrath," he says no more than philosophy had said before.

In regard, however, to the genesis of this confessed depravity, the ancient philosophers

were greatly at fault. Assuming a better original state of man, they explained his present character by supposing a gradual degeneracy. As Coleridge has justly observed, they "had no notion of a *fall* of man." Only this they knew, that the golden age of the race had been followed by the ages of silver, of brass, and of iron. Of course they knew of no adequate remedy. And yet near the conclusion of Plato's dialogue "*Respecting Virtue*," there is the remarkable assertion, that virtue is neither natural nor acquirable by study, but comes, if it come at all, by a Divine fate, without any purpose of our own. Here at length is a finger pointing in the right direction; from the helplessness of man, to the mighty power of God.

Christianity begins its curative work by a better diagnosis of the disease. It sets in a clear light the original rectitude of man, reveals the Tempter, and reports the Fall. As by one man sin is said to have entered into the world, and that one man was the first man, and father of all men, it is seen that the poison is in our very blood. And it follows, of course, that a damage so radical can be repaired only by the hand that fashioned us. These two points had doubtless been emphasized in the very morning of history, along with the promise of redemption and the appointment of sacrifice. If Adam and Eve repented of their sin, we may be sure that their repentance was born of faith, and that their faith was begotten of God. But in process of time these points became obscured. The disease ran on, but its origin was forgotten, and the only infallible prescription for it lost. Hence the mistaken and fruitless attempts of heathen moralists to retrieve by culture a loss which could be retrieved only by regeneration.

But although Christianity, in its essence, is thus as old as the promise in the garden, the coming of Christ in the flesh inaugurated a new economy of the Spirit. From the day of Pentecost there dates a more pungent conviction of sin, with a far greater energy of renovating grace. From that time onward, wherever the Gospel went, it darted a new light down into the depths of sin, and offered man the very intervention of which Plato had only vaguely dreamed. It sounded a new call to repentance, rendered more urgent by what was disclosed of the origin and malignity of the evil; and accompanied this new call to repent-

ance with the offer of certain deliverance. Christ himself touched the very heart of the matter, when he told Nicodemus that he must be born again.

But the new birth is not merely a doctrine of Christianity; it is a work of the Spirit, pledged to attend the faithful proclamation of the gospel in every age and in every land. Persuasion to virtue was the task and function of the pagan moralist. The offer of God's renewing grace is the task and function of the Christian evangelist. And there is that in man which can be satisfied with nothing less than what is thus offered in the gospel. He knows that he has sinned. He knows that his nature is depraved. And he knows that he has no power to restore himself to the image and favor of God. It only remains for him to be told that the hand which first framed now offers to renew him. This, and this only, meets his case. Made as we are, deliverance from the consequences merely of sin is not enough for us; we must be delivered also from the sin itself. It matters not what difference there may be of race, of language, of rank, of culture, of outward morality; it is enough that we all are human. The first Adam is for ever repeating himself in his offspring. And the one

imperative necessity of every child of Adam is to be born again.

Such is Christianity in its grand distinctive features of Incarnation, Atonement, and Regeneration. These three features are all in the line of human reason, as is seen by reference to pagan philosophies and false religions; and yet are infinitely beyond and above human reason, as is proved by the fact, so palpable to every candid inquirer, that no pagan philosophy or religion was ever able to grasp them. Christianity thus stands absolutely and sublimely alone, transcending every other religion by all the difference there is between a line which reaches only to the clouds, and a line which reaches to the very throne and bosom of the King eternal, immortal, and invisible. And not only so, but it fully meets every want of our finite and fallen nature. Precisely those things which are peculiar to it as a system are precisely the things we need. The conclusion is irresistible, that a system at once so unique and so essential must be of God. And if it be of God, then, as Gamaliel told the Sanhedrim, it can not be overthrown. So long as man is man, and God is God, so long must this religion stand, working its miracles of grace. *R. D. Hitchcock.*

Section 392.

Christianity a Religion of Facts.

WE use the term in its plain historic sense. Christianity touches the affections, and binds the consciences of men, on no other plea than that of its being a declaration of facts; and these, either long past, or now passing, or certainly anticipated as yet impending. The facts of Christianity are in themselves of boundless range, and our personal concernment with them is of incalculable moment. When admitted as true, they are of a kind to excite, and to maintain in activity, the warmest and the most profound emotions of which men are susceptible, according to the individual constitution of their minds. Yet is Christianity a religion of sobriety and reason. And it is so because its seat is in the moral faculties, which are never profoundly moved but when they are moved tranquilly. The characteristic of

the *affections* is depth, not visible agitation. It is on this very ground that Christianity triumphs, as compared with every other religious system, ancient or modern, which has powerfully affected the human mind. These systems, so far as they have been powerful at all, have been religions of agitation. Christianity, on the contrary, so far as it is effectual for its own purposes, is a religion of affection and habit, not of passionate commotion. Every powerful religion, Christianity excepted, has been either wild or sullen: and the same is true of every corruption of Christianity itself, in all the wide circuit of delusions, commencing with the ascetic frenzy, and ending in the base superstition of the middle ages. If asceticism be tranquil, it is tranquil by apathy: if superstition be tranquil, it is tranquil by the

constraint of dread ; but Christianity is at once tranquil and happy. It is a religion of sobriety, and a religion of self-control, because it is a religion of LOVE, intense and deep. *I. Taylor.*

Christianity is not founded in creeds or dogmas. To a certain extent Hume's sarcasm is true: "That Christianity is not founded in argument." The facts of our faith antedate its dogmas; the dogmas do not make, but express the facts. All the human creeds that were ever framed are but partial, fragmentary expressions of the great original—reflected and broken lights of that one light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The living reality is in historic facts which have shaped every syllable of the records and every formula of Christian doctrine.

Christianity—would that we could see and grasp this vital point!—Christianity is not a creed, not a dogma, not a system of theology, but it is essentially historic fact—a sublime, incarnated spiritual reality—the most real historic power, which, for centuries (in its element from the very beginning), has controlled

the grandest evolution upon the earth—the historic development of the human race. It is as unrivaled and unique in human history, as is the sacred Person of its head and center; it is, as the faith of the Church declares, the living presence of that Person in history itself. The living Person stands first and central, and then his apostles, and then the Church, and then the simple creed, and then the canon, and then the conflicts, and then the dogmas, and then the systems of theology, and so on through the centuries; and in and through all, a living, spiritual power, comparable only to the light of nature. And this Christianity, so sublime as an objective fact, becomes subjectively a renovating power—the life of God in the soul of man—the mysterious consciousness of an unearthly presence in the soul—God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself—the highest form of spiritual life. Vast material forces, guided by divine power and wisdom, control the development of the earth; equally vast spiritual forces guide and guard the course of history and the destiny of Christianity.

H. B. Smith.

Section 393.

Three Opponents of Primitive Christianity and their Overthrow.

1. JUDAISM.—Into collision and controversy with Judaism, Christianity came at the very beginning; since the more essentially harmonious it was with the ancient religion truly interpreted, the more positive and vehement was the contest urged against it by that arrogant system which now clothed itself in the robes and occupied the place of Moses and the prophets—a system not content to be recognized and honored as divine in its sphere, yet introductory to a higher, but claiming for itself to be final and universal. Unconscious of imperfection, and intolerant of change, this bred a temper domineering and defiant in those who adhered to it toward all other faiths, but most of all toward the faith which adored a crucified Nazarene. It is one of the most significant illustrations of the drift of human nature—this character of Judaism in the day of the Apostle Paul, and the position it assumed toward the doctrines he proclaimed. Ennobled

and vitalized as it had been at the beginning by the supreme truth of the being of God, eternal and holy, almighty and wise, the creator, moral governor, and judge of the universe; receiving a yet mightier practical impressiveness from the discoveries which it made of his presence and providence and of his perfect law; becoming pervaded through and through with a divine glory, as it showed to men something of his heavenly empire, rehearsed the history of his dealings with mankind, and even unfolded, through prophecy and psalm, the scope and splendor of his purposes of love; bringing all these manifold elements of power into contact with men through a mechanism of worship unequalled in its majesty and its fitness to its end: the religion of the Hebrews was intrinsically adapted, not only above all other religions, but to the highest degree then possible, to educate the mind, to stimulate the conscience, to implant and develop the holiest

affections, and to make the nation which had its oracles for their constant possession the purest, noblest, and most devout on the earth. No other result of it could have been anticipated by those who should have assumed as an axiom the moral integrity or the moral indifference of the nature of man. And doubtless such effects, through the grace of the Spirit, were realized in many whose faces now glow in the vision of Christ.

Yet from this religion the nation had early and persistently swung away into grossest idolatries, reproducing in gold the Egyptian Apis beneath the very pavement of sapphire on which the feet of God were treading above the mount; in their subsequent history polluting the hills which looked out upon Jerusalem with the fury and lust of sacrilegious observances. And when they had at length been driven out of these by the stern words of preachers and the sterner strokes of providential visitation—when Assyrian oppressions, fulfilling God's plans, had forced them to a new recognition of him, and made them loathe at last the idolatries whose cruel craft had so torn and despoiled them—they only turned their religion to an occasion of pride, and nurtured beneath it the very arrogance and ambition which it was especially designed to subdue. Its mystic, high, and moving truths, the venerable associations it derived from antiquity, the precious and kindling memories of the fathers by whom it was consecrated, the wonderful interventions of God in providence by which so often it had been vindicated or rescued, the unique impressiveness of the ceremonies and offices by which it had been conveyed through the ages, the resplendent array of miracles which it wore as the breast-plate of gems and the golden mitre on the front of its records, the very endurance and faith of the martyrs who had died beneath the hands of rulers or people in allegiance to it—all were together perverted by the Jews to minister more abundantly to their national pride, and to make them less willing to receive the Messiah whom from the beginning their religion had foreshadowed, unless he should come as a conquering Prince, reigning visibly at Jerusalem, and carrying his ensigns with squadrons and navies to the ends of the earth.

This influence had now for many generations been working in the nation; and, as we know, it had reached its climax when Paul

was proclaiming Christianity in the world. The very political calamities of the Jews, stinging and irritating their unsubmissive minds, had only intensified their fanatical expectation of victory through their ritual and law; had only exasperated their scorn of a Messiah who should seek to rule by the truth and by love. The partial successes which they had realized—in establishing synagogues in many of the cities to which their restless enterprise had impelled them, in gaining numerous proselytes from the heathen, in compelling the admiration of some of the higher philosophical minds for the grand simplicity in which their faith contrasted the mythologies, in adapting through the Alexandrian school their doctrines and rules to the language, and even in some degree to the spirit, of the Greeks—these had still further invigorated the tendency. And so they stood, divided among themselves in many particulars, yet unanimous in a fierce hostility to the Gospel: the Sadducees denying angels and the resurrection, and almost it would seem the existence of the soul, as independent of the body, while still holding among them the office of high priest, and some posts of chief influence in the national council; the Pharisees superadding their traditions to the law, and austere-ly exacting the most rigorous and literal observance of both, in disregard, often, of the obvious principles of equity and of charity; the Essenes delighting in pietistic seclusion and remote meditations; the Herodians affecting foreign manners and maintaining the supreme authority of the civil ruler in matters of religion—yet all agreed and unitedly zealous in expecting the propagation, by conquest of arms, of their ancient faith, and all contemning the religion of Jesus. It was to them not only a radical heresy and schism in their national church; it involved what seemed to them a national suicide, the final extinction of hopes they had cherished until they had come to be part of their life.

So Judaism confronted Paul; a perverted system, whose ancient glory now only gave energy to its ambitious plans, and its hatred and defiance of the Gospel he preached. Error and verity were so intermingled in its practical frame, piety and pride were so combined beneath its influence, the lust of conquest had blended so intimately with religious veneration, that resistance to Christ seemed now to the Jew a matter of conscience, and his fiercest pas-

sions had the sanction of his religion. Inevitably, therefore, by the essential contrariety of its tendency and temper, this was the first antagonist of the Gospel; its first, and also, in some respects, its most effective and dangerous. It surrounded Paul in the synagogues. It even entered the churches. Peter himself, and many of the Christians, yielded at intervals to its vast influence; and, with an extraordinary tenacity of life, where it seemed altogether subdued and obliterated, it still persistently reappeared. So stubborn in its spirit, so thorough in its discipline, so fanatical in its zeal, and so fortified with strength on every side, it was only the prescience of an inspired apostle, and only the utmost courage of a will insphered as was Paul's in the will of the Most High, that could have predicted its absolute overthrow.

2. HEATHENISM.—In some form this was the common law and the common life of the inhabited world. First, it is to be recognized that the heathenism which withstood Christianity was not an altogether artificial system in any nation; that it grew out of real and even deep motions in the general mind. Its answer was a vain one, but it sought to *give* an answer, to questions which never since the exile from Eden have ceased profoundly to agitate the race. Unconscious prophecies of better things lurked in many of its forms, and in some of its traditions. There were thoughts in it that had drifted down, as has been said, as "planks from the wreck of Paradise." Its sacrifices were efforts to staunch the flow from bleeding hearts. And while the popular mind acknowledged chiefly the hold of its ceremonies and shows, the thoughtful found also some solace or stimulus in its sublimated legends.

Further, it must be noticed that as existing in any nation it took the form most germane to that people, to its genius and spirit, to its circumstances and habits; and that everywhere it allied itself with whatever was strongest, whatever most impressed and attracted men's minds. Thus in Greece, from the first, it enshrined itself in art; made eloquence its advocate; was indebted for the memorable form which it assumed to the noble poetry in which its mythologies were melodiously uttered. It was there at the same time a philosophy for the studious, a cloister for the religious, a splendid spectacle and continual entertainment for the excitable populace. In Egypt, on the other hand, it folded around it the solemn gloom of

those austere and mystic legends which told of the destruction of Osiris by Typhon, or traced in long unfolding terrors, on the walls of the sealed and unsunned tomb, the path of the spirit from its birth to its judgment. In Rome, the same power allied itself with politics, became a military force, selected and blessed the standards of the army, added sanctions to the laws, and apotheosized the Emperor. While eastward in Assyria, it subsided to a sluggish and luxurious development, as it touched the plains whose wealth fed empires, and whose teeming tilth gave license to indolence. Everywhere, with spontaneous flexibility and precision, the special form of the heathenism which prevailed was fitted to the needs and the temper of the people.

Still further we must remember that in no land was this recent; in none was it devoid of that dignity and authority which were derived from a high antiquity; while to all the peoples, in proportion to their advancement, it was associated with whatever was to them most renowned and inspiring in their history. Their early benefactors and eminent chieftains had been deified by it. It bridged the interval between their times and the Golden Age. It was signalized by connection with all their inspiring national successes. It was under the benediction, as he fondly believed, of his ancestral gods that the Greek had fought at Marathon and Platea. From the brazen spoils of the former of these victories the colossal statue of Minerva had been wrought, which, flashing afar from the summit of the Acropolis, seemed to keep perpetual ward over the consecrated city and scene. It was the god Pan who, in the terrible clash of Platea, overwhelming the Persians with sudden fright as his voice of thunder broke on them from the air, had delivered the nation in the crisis of its peril, and made the word "panic" thenceforth an inheritance of the speech of mankind. So with all that was majestic and delightful in the past—and we must not forget that the nations of the old world looked back into the past far more fondly than we do, whose eyes, by Christianity, have been turned with a higher expectation toward the future—with all that was charming and inspiring in their past, their religion was identified. It came to them consecrated by the memories most precious. It was dear to them as the bond which connected their life with heroic ages; which knit them

to those great fathers of the State who had learned from the gods their secrets of power as they walked with them familiarly in the morning of time.

And yet, further, we must remember that diverse as were the forms of heathenism which severally obtained among the nations, no one of them was essentially isolated from or discordant with the others around it; that the Greek might find much which to him was familiar in the worship of the East; that the Roman had no difficulty in opening his Pantheon to any god of all the tribes, in giving, as Gibbon says, "the freedom of the city" to all divinities; that, as matter of fact, the interchanges of commerce were continually bringing the different idolatries to blend with each other; and that when Alexander, in his rapid conquests, carried the Hellenic arts and influence over the East, the Western and Oriental heathenisms commingled, with ready affinities, to a singular extent. Thus all became modified, expanded, invigorated; and each, without losing its local prestige, derived a fresh access of strength from the others. In the temple of Diana at Ephesus, while the shrine was in all its conception Greek, and in all its execution of the loveliest of Greek styles, the image within was not the statue which a student of Phidias or Praxiteles would have chiseled of her who hunted with flying nymphs on Arcadian hills, instinct with a vivid, virginal authority; it was a crude, rough image of wood, like those still seen in Eastern temples—below, a simple-pointed block covered with mystic animal figures, above, a mass of many breasts.

So it was then, in part, that heathenism had power and supremacy on earth in the day of Paul; a power incomparable by that which it now has among any people; a supremacy almost literally unquestioned. It covered the earth, embosomed in its influence all ranks and vocations, molded every institution, infiltrated its forces into everything human. Springing out of the heart and mind of mankind, it had in turn, from its place of power, wrought these to its likeness, and toned them to an absolute sympathy with itself. It touched every class, and had its appeal for every person; from the Sybarite to the Stoic; from the profligate Alcibiades to Socrates, who seemed almost a forerunner of the Lord. The philosopher might sneer at it, but even he

infused into it an esoteric significance which dignified and endeared it to himself and his pupils. The popular mind absorbed it greedily, and was pervaded in every fiber by its impression. Its infinite complication of fancies and myths was to those who lived under it a spiritual system, as real as life, as vast as the skies, yet as near their souls as friendship or hope. Through it the living forces of nature, personified and familiarized, seemed to leap forth to greet the shepherd or the sailor. Through it the spirits of their dead ancestors seemed to the citizens invisibly but really to brood over and assist their troubled minds and periled fortunes. Above all, through it the vast Unknown, the something Infinite and Enduring, of which the heavens gave them witness, which inarticulately encircled their life, shedding on it at once a shadow and a gleam—the Unspeakable Power which, as Paul saw at Athens when looking on their pathetic altars, they "ignorantly worshiped," and to which the Romans were wont formally to pray when the shuddering undulations of the earthquake surprised them—THIS seemed to them brought nearer their souls, and almost made palpable to their imaginations.

Heathenism to many had thus the sacredness of a faith. It was felt a real infidelity to deny it; a kind of atheism, from which sensitive men shrank then as now, as from a denial of man's great birthright, a piercing confession of spiritual orphanage. And the religion which thus grappled and held them by manifold ties, which engaged to itself on every side their affections and passions, and intermingled its subtle influence with all their letters, laws, and thoughts, had become the very life of their life to all the nations; till it was in fact attempting to remold their nature to disturb it.

8. IMPERIAL ROME.—The opponent most powerful of all, the most dangerous to assail, to human view the most inaccessible to change or decay, supreme over every force that could touch it, and comparing with them all as the Mediterranean with the restless streams which sought and sank into it, was the *authority and power of Imperial Rome*. Immense in extent, immeasurable in energy, this was also so completely subordinated to heathenism, so entirely impregnated and energized by its spirit, that the Gospel could no more advance to dominion without its conversion or without its destruc-

tion, than light can break through seven-fold walls, or the brook can leap the mountain-chain. It was hardly as yet at its uttermost height, this imperial power; for scores of years still slowly passed before that age of Trajan and the Antonines which marked its consummate might and splendor; while it was later even than this that Severus carried his victorious arms to Ctesiphon and Seleucia, transferred the entire legislative power from the Senate to himself, and scattered the profuse memorials of his reign over Africa and the East. But already had Julius Cæsar, first of generals and foremost of statesmen, by natural force the leading man of all his world, laid the first courses of that immense structure in which others after him were to perpetuate his name, and without his genius to outrun his plans. Already had Augustus, with marvelous tact, dissimulation, and ability, overcoming all obstacles and destroying all rivals, raised himself by sure steps to the empire of the world. While retaining artfully some forms of the Republic, he had centralized all authority in his will, being recognized successively as General, Emperor, Supreme Pontiff, and Censor. He had adorned with the spoils of every land, and had almost rebuilt the imperial city; had added other regions and peoples to the empire; had disciplined the troops, tranquillized the provinces, and given to the world an unaccustomed peace; and he had fostered the brilliant literature which is the superb and imperishable crown of that whole age which bears his name. He had been enthroned for forty-five years on the Palatine hill; had been worshiped during life in some cities of the empire; and, after his death, had been raised by the solemn decree of the Senate to the rank of a God. The "dark and unrelenting" Tiberius who followed him, Caligula, Claudius, and now at last Nero, had successively inherited and abused his prerogatives; and their absolute power had been only confirmed by time and use. Nay, even their unspeakable cruelty and lust, by continually exciting the fears of the people, and as continually debasing their character, had but cemented into more solid strength the fabric of that unparalleled domination whose foundations had been laid by a genius so rare, a sagacity so sure, and a courage so complete.

And so was this empire now exhibited to Paul, encircling the sea which was the center of his thoughts, from Carthage to Alexandria,

from Alexandria to Ephesus, and on to the very pillars of Hercules; with no sign of weakness and with no shade of fear on all its frame; full, on the other hand, of the most intense and commanding vitality: the vigor of youth blending in its life with the disciplined craft which was the slow growth of ages; its organization the most perfect of time; its wealth the most ample; its military system the most exact and effective; its renown the most various; its ambition as unbounded as if conquest were a novelty, and the stream of the Rubicon still was its limit. Its name was a terror to the wildest barbarians, while scholars rejoiced in the letters which it cherished. The armies, to which it had given a name that signified of itself their constant practice and incessant activity, were arrayed over the earth at each point of command, from the Indus to the Tweed, from the shores of Scandinavia to the Libyan sands. Their helmets flashed in the streets of each city. Their iron-beaked galleys, from Misenum or Ravenna, were ready at a word to dart to the onset against every foe. The British woods and the Assyrian plains were equally familiar with their triumphing standards.

The hundred millions of inhabitants of the empire, from whom these armies were evermore reinforced, though not indeed pervaded by any strong principle of inward unity, were yet by no means merely encircled by a brazen ring of military force. Their obedience was in large part voluntary and stable. They were actually and strongly bound to the metropolis; by admiration of its splendor, as well as awe of its power; by the tolerance in each province of the local religion, and to some extent of the local law; by the Roman colonies, which were pushed in all directions after the arms which had opened the way for them; by the admission to citizenship of those provincials who most desired and most had deserved it; by the comparative immunity which certainly was given them from the yet more capricious and unendurable tyranny of the smaller despots whom Rome displaced.

The great roads that radiated in every direction from the golden milestone within the forum—crossing or even piercing the hills, and bridging the ravines, with an imperial disregard of all natural obstacles—were arteries along which flowed constant circulation from the heart to the extremities. The characteris-

tic productions of each region became gradually dispersed and domesticated in others. And commerce, religion, letters, law, wove each its strand into that immense and magnificent girdle with which the earth was well-nigh encircled.

Considering its history, considering its growth, it seemed hardly so much a construction of man, this empire of Rome, as one of the pre-ordained elements of nature; reaching in its exhaustive roots to the centers of history, and draining the earth to give it nutriment; increasing with a steadiness, and an immeasurable might, which no mere art or generalship could have given; in its production therefore resistible by no agencies, and in the result as indestructible by assault as Lebanon or the Apennines. Nay, it seemed hardly so much a power terrestrial, in its amazing and terrific augmentation—to the imaginative student contemplating its wonders, it still sometimes presents itself in history, hardly so much a power terrestrial—as a drear and vast fate; impersonal, immense; long-slumbering and inert, but expending itself rapidly from portentous beginnings as Christianity came near; spreading over the heavens, infolding the earth, locking liberty in paralysis, while giving an almost demoniac power to its auxiliary minds; combining all conquering passions and powers in one ultimate aggregate, and descending beyond help on the overwhelmed nations!

So it stood before Paul, as everywhere he met it, as he knew and felt it environing the earth. And so long as it remained undestroyed, unchanged, with its muscles unrelaxed and its heart unsubdued, the supremacy of the gospel could not be realized. It was absolutely arrested and forbidden. For in essential and immovable antagonism this fronted the gospel. Its kingdom, and law, and life were different. Its spirit was one of the most malign selfishness; its ambitions were fierce, its passions implacable, and its whole aim earthly. As soon, therefore, as the doctrine which Paul was proclaiming should emerge from the shelter of its early insignificance, and begin to declare itself a world-mastering principle, this mightiest empire of Time was its enemy, nay more, its most terrific and consuming assailant. All the powers that pertained to it, so prodigious and omnipresent, as swayed by one will, inspired by one aim, and pushed to their purpose with relentless ferocity, were to converge at once on the work of arresting and then of eradicat-

ing the hated Christianity. The sharpness of swords and the darkness of prisons would be its swift and certain answer to every appeal which invoked for the gospel the tolerance that it showed toward all other religions. And Paul knew that this as well, this mightiest establishment of government on the earth, this impregnable despotism which was touched by no fear, against which human power seemed vain, and to strike which was like trying to startle the stars—that this should also, in God's own time, be broken and wrecked, and "brought to nought."

4. AGENCIES FOR THEIR OVERTHROW.—By what agencies should each of these prophesied victories, over Judaism, heathenism, and the terrible iron-limbed empire of Rome, be brought to pass? The truths which had been taught the apostles, and afterward recalled to them and unfolded more fully by the witness of the Spirit, and which were to be enshrined in evangelical narratives, not one of which had yet been written, which were to be expounded in a series of letters by the apostles to the churches, of which only those by Paul himself to Thessalonica had thus far been prepared—*these* were the primary instruments to be used, with the oral proclamation of their principles and laws, for the spread of God's kingdom, and the overthrow of whatever withstood its advance.

The living energy of Christianity in the world, through the souls into which its truths should be transferred, throughout whose affections its charity should be shed, whose hopes should be kindled and their courage inspired by its high promises—this personal force of Christianity in the world, realizing the principles which epistles were to teach, and incarnating the spirit with which gospels were to glow: this was the second of the agencies to be used for the triumph of God's kingdom over all which withstood it.

These were the very agencies—these "Things which were not" in every sense—which were not regarded, and which hitherto existed only in germ, these gospels and epistles which were still to be written, these teachings and preachings which had scarcely commenced, these Christian forces in life and character which hardly thus far had appeared on the earth, which were not self-conscious enough to be formed as yet into separate communities, which could not be spoken of as one of the

fathers afterward spoke of them as "verdant islets amid raging oceans," but which now were only as scattered flowers casually dispersed on the surface of a sea that at any moment might swell with tempests—*these* were the forces which God had chosen to bring to nought the "things that were": the ancient, immense, and impregnable institutions, that stood in all their august might and tremendous effectiveness fronting the gospel. And through them, by his might, it did come to pass in the due time, as Paul had known and declared that it should, that the gospel which seemed so slight a force when he was proclaiming it in the school of Tyrannus, and the agencies for which looked so frail and so few, did triumph illustriously and dominate for all time over the colossal institutions and influences which resisted its march. Judaism was surpassed, absorbed, and terminated, in a higher religion, more adequate to man's wants, more illustrative of God's glory. Heathenism was not only broken down and exterminated on the scenes in which so long it had reigned, but it was made, thenceforth and for ever, the veriest outcast of civilization. The Roman empire was as finally extinguished as if the crust of the globe had been opened to swallow it up. And all was wrought—this change at which the world still wonders, and which no

other change recorded in history ever has paralleled—all was wrought, within a few centuries, by what at the outset had appeared so unreal or so ineffectual. God's might had crowned with an absolute victory what mankind had despised; and weakness, as used by Omnipotence, was supreme. The vanishing shadow, as it looked to men's eyes, had shaken and dissolved the earth-centered mountain. Doctrine and suffering had discomfited despotism. The market-places vocal, and the catacombs crowded, had been mightier than armies. The Mamertine prison had conquered the Capitol!

"The city of God is built," it has been said, "at the confluence of three great civilizations." It is built as well, let it never be forgotten, on the ruins of three prodigious, ambitious, and defiant establishments; a perverted Judaism, deriving vast strength from the truths it denied; an ancient, haughty, and universal heathenism; a military empire that encompassed the earth. And the forces which brought all these to nought were not astute combinations of statesmen, the eloquence of scholars, or the strategy of soldiers; they were forces which Paul could only describe, even in his day, a score of years after Christ had ascended, as "*THINGS WHICH ARE NOT!*" *R. S. Storrs.*

Section 394.

The Spread and Achievements of Christianity.

BEFORE thirty years had elapsed from the death of Christ, his Church had spread from Palestine throughout Syria; through almost all the numerous districts of Lesser Asia; through Greece and the islands of the *Ægean* Sea, the seacoast of Africa, and even into Italy and Rome. The number of converts in the several cities respectively is described by the expressions, "a great number," "great multitudes," "much people." In the thirtieth year after the beginning of the work, the terrible persecution under Nero kindled its fires; then Christians had become so numerous at Rome that, by the testimony of Tacitus, a "great multitude" were seized. In forty years more, we are told, in a celebrated letter from

Pliny, the Roman governor of Pontus and Bithynia, Christianity had long subsisted in these provinces, though so remote from Judea. Many of all ages and of every rank, of both sexes likewise, were accused to Pliny of being Christians. What he calls the contagion of this superstition (thus forcibly describing the irresistible and rapid progress of Christianity) had seized, not cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open country, so that the heathen temples "were almost forsaken," few victims were purchased for sacrifice, and a long intermission of the sacred solemnities had taken place. Justin Martyr, who wrote about thirty years after Pliny, and one hundred after the gospel was first preached to the Gentiles, thus

describes the extent of Christianity in his time: "There is not a nation, either Greek or barbarian, or of any other name, even those who wander in tribes and live in tents, among whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered to the Father and Creator of the universe by the name of the crucified Jesus." Clemens Alexandrinus, a few years after, thus writes: "The philosophers were confined to Greece, and to their particular retainers; but the doctrine of the Master of Christianity did not remain in Judea, but is spread throughout the whole world, in every nation, and village, and city, converting both whole houses and separate individuals, having already brought over to the truth not a few of the philosophers themselves. If the Greek philosophy be prohibited, it immediately vanishes; whereas, from the first preaching of our doctrine, kings and tyrants, governors and presidents, with their whole train, and with the populace on their side, have endeavored with their whole might to exterminate it, yet doth it flourish more and more." M. H.

Tertullian, writing about the beginning of the third century in vindication of the new religion, says to the Roman authorities: "Though we are strangers of no long standing, yet we have filled all places of your dominions, cities, islands, corporations, councils, armies, tribes, the senate, the palace, the courts of judicature. If the Christians had a mind to revenge themselves, their numbers are abundant, for they have a party, not in this or that province only, but in all quarters of the world. Nay, if they were to combine and forsake the Roman empire, how vast would be the loss! The world would be amazed at the solitude which would ensue." In an appeal to the persecuting governor of Africa, he says: "If you persevere in your persecution, what will you do with these many thousands, both men and women, of every rank and every age, who will promptly offer themselves? Carthage itself must be decimated." And again, enumerating the nations who have believed in Christ, he declares that the gospel has penetrated to regions which were inaccessible even to the eagles of imperial Rome, and that the Church had already spread itself more widely than the four great monarchies. "Excellent governors," says Tertullian, "you may torment, afflict, and vex us; your wickedness puts our meekness to the test; but your cruelty is of no avail. It is but a strong-

er invitation to bring others to our persuasion. The more we are mowed down, the more we spring up again. THE BLOOD OF THE CHRISTIANS IS SEED." J. W. A.

All religions that have taken place in the world's history have been established by moral and by material agency; all appealed from their very commencement as much to force as to persuasion, as much to the arm as to the tongue. Christianity alone lived and grew during three centuries by its own single native virtue, without any other appeal than that made to truth, without any other aid than that of faith. During those three centuries the dogmas, the precepts, and the miracles of its Author constituted its only weapons, and weapons which have prevailed against all other arms. Those dogmas, those precepts, and those miracles effected the conquest of man's mind and of human society in spite of the resistance of Greek philosophy, Roman power, and all the poetical or mystical mythologies of antiquity marshaled against them. The victory has not, it is true, put an end to all struggle of man's intelligence: neither has the light from Christ dissipated all darkness nor satisfied all minds; the explanation and commentaries of man have obscured the doctrines of Christ; human prejudices have mistaken his precepts; and legends have been grafted upon his miracles. But the fact does not the less exist that the dogmas, the precepts, and the miracles of Christ, without any aid from human sources, sufficed to found and insure the triumph of the Christian religion: this is a fact primitive and supreme. And from this single result shines forth the divine character of the Christian religion, for its triumph without the miraculous agency of God would be of all miracles the most impossible to receive. *Guizot.*

Christianity comes to our times as the survivor of all systems, and, after confronting in turn every imaginable form of error, each of which has gone to its almost forgotten place in history, itself alone lives. We have before us in this history a power which, even when the most enfeebled or perverted, could lend a grandeur even to folly, and a sublimity to extravagance; which has often imparted the energies of virtue to crimes; which has never visited mankind with a scourge, without bringing up a blessing; and which now at length stands forward in no other character than as the reprover of violence, and of oppression, and of

impurity; and as the guardian of whatever is most holy and happy. Its spirit and tendency, which once might seem ambiguous, are now, by universal acknowledgment, simply benign. *I. T aylor.*

When we remember what Christendom was when it began; the handful of fishermen and peasants that preached it; the narrow and obscure corner of the earth in which they lived; their absolute insignificance, measured by the politics or thought of the time; when we remember their persecution by their own countrymen, and that the few persons of culture who joined them sank in the eyes of the rest to the same illiterate level, yet how soon their doctrines shook and overthrew the stablest beliefs that then existed, and climbed upon thrones to rule the world; when we recall the mighty march of Christendom from east to west, and now back again from west to east, noiseless as the pillar of cloud, luminous as the pillar of fire; when we reflect on the great intellects it has seized, and how it has laid every art under tribute, claimed the homage of science, and, while impressing upon culture its own stamp, has widened it, and elevated it, and made it, instead of the badge and heritage of a few, as universal as itself; when we remember what geniuses it has molded, what wealth of eloquence and profound thought is inseparable from its teaching, in what majestic and immortal words it has poured its aspirations through the lips of the glorified dead, and how its influence has been felt far beyond those whom it may claim as its own, so that the greatest poets and historians, the greatest painters and sculptors, the foremost statesmen and orators, the solitary thinker whose "soul was like a star, and dwelt apart," have for centuries been its

debtors; when we remember the literature it has created, and, unlike all other systems, that it is creating still with unimpaired freshness and energy, and for which it uses every language under heaven; when we remember the nations it has builded, and the outcome of their national life, the commerce by which it crowds the restless sea and binds the parted lands; when we consider its liberating power, the energies and endowments it has set free for the service of the race, that it has struck the chains off the slave, and smitten the fetters of class, and proclaimed liberty to the captive mind; when we remember the unworn force of its truths, the consolations it pours into numberless stricken hearts, the braveries and heroisms with which it makes common lives illustrious, the untold peace with which it stills the trouble of conscience and the trouble of thought, the dying agonies it soothes, the streams of joy that flow from it to poor and sad and lonely lives; and that there is no sign of decay about it, of being set aside when it has served its turn; no failure to meet fresh needs, no lack of potency to rouse men to self-sacrifice, no weakness to resist assault, no want of breadth and elasticity to cope with novel conditions of society, no less spiritual grandeur than in those first days when the Spirit came down like a mighty wind—if all that might thus be fairly said could be woven by some skillful hand into one broad picture, it would surely represent a power that, for splendor and resource, is like no other of which we have any knowledge on this earth. Regal potencies are in it, unfailing, undecaying, inexhaustible, irresistible—potencies that, because they are of God, are to subdue and mold our human life. *W. F. Stevenson.*

Section 395.

Intimations of the Final Supremacy of Christianity

1. *The very fact that God has established it, and that he has introduced it to human knowledge, should lead us to expect this.* There is no presumption more definite or impressive, or more immediate, than that the system of truth and salvation in Christ, which God has prepared and has given to men, shall advance among them to ultimate supremacy. That God

will choose to accomplish this, it seems difficult to doubt. That he is able to effect it, can not be questioned. Amid the utmost confusions of history, through simply the superintending control of providence, his purposes have come to historic reality at just the point allotted for them. The central and harmonizing line in history is that on which these

plans have advanced. All history besides converges toward that, is interpreted in its radiance; and whatsoever that looked toward has been fulfilled. If such, then, is God's control over history, and if such has been the accomplishment of his plans, we look to see Christianity successful.

Still further must we presume this, when we remember through what processes it was brought to development and to general proclamation; how vast these were, and how full of sublimity. God showed it afar, remember, to the beings who had fallen; and the beauty of his promise stamped the bow upon the cloud that hung thunderous over them. From that time his purpose came ever into plainer and larger exhibition. It was shown to the patriarchs, to the lawgiver, to the psalmists. It quickened with a celestial hope the thoughts and hearts of many elect men. It gradually worked on to realization in the actual, through the pressure and clamor of national histories. It subdued and reorganized other movements and agencies. It came into clear prospective manifestation in the ecstasy of the prophets. It was at last accomplished in the advent of Christ, his ministry and passion, his death and his ascension. Through all this course, of four thousand years, there was never a point where God was not moving to bring this system to completeness. He touched the troubled currents of national progress with the sublime baptism of his presence and guidance, that they might bear redemption forward. He shed upon lofty and purified souls the unspeakable brightness of his omniscience; he carried nations into captivity, and brought them up again with shoutings; he raised up kings, and suddenly overthrew them; he established a theocracy and a priesthood at Jerusalem; he opened the waves of the eager sea, until they stood as a wall on each hand; he made the Syrian sands brilliant beneath the march of the pillar by night; he descended upon Sinai, till it trembled and rocked, through its every granite crag, under the majesty of Infinitude—ALL, that in its time redemption might be unfolded! And when we meet the heavenly hosts singing exulting chants above Bethlehem, adorning the midnight with their sweet beauty and filling it with their rapture, we find in even that no strangeness. The history that precedes it has prepared for such a close.

It is not probable, then, that a system like this, so associated with God, so sublime in itself, introduced with such patience of purpose and of aim, along a path so brilliant with theophanies, is to fail of success. Rather, as we look on, we predict its supremacy. If the presumption does not arise to proof, it is almost because it supersedes that, that this will triumph throughout the earth.

2. *The interior structure of Christianity, its fitnesses to man, the reply which it gives to his deepest demands,* also promise this supremacy.

It binds his understanding with the stress of its argument; and so, sometimes, it leads him to Christ. It appeals to his inward consciousness of unrest, and offers him peace unspeakable in God. It kindles within him the sense of sin, and so of exposure and of judgment to come; and then it offers him Christ in atonement, with his fullness of expiation, with the promises of God surrounding his cross, and the gates into heaven swinging inward at his touch. Through the perfect embodiment of excellence in Jesus it appeals to that inmost susceptibility to moral beauty which almost never is dead in any heart. Through its warnings it speaks to fear. Through its revelations of God it addresses the sense of dependence in us, the capacity for veneration and the sense of the sublime, as well as the conviction of moral obligation. Through its many great and precious promises it excites and justifies ardent desire. There is not one susceptibility within us, which is innocent and appropriate as a spring of endeavor, to which the system does not appeal. It addresses each power that God has placed in us. And so at length it enters the heart. Being full of force at every point, being framed into the subtlest adaptation to man's necessities, being accompanied by the grace and the might of God's Spirit, it overcomes the will and wins to itself belief. How often has this been illustrated before us!

And when Christianity has thus entered the soul, it establishes and maintains its supremacy therein, through the same divine fitness to every power. It addresses the intellectual nature, and gives it the noblest truth that can be proffered; truth that more than any other attracts and rewards study. It states that truth in every variety of aspect and relation. It makes effort needful, and thought-

fulness, for its apprehension. Yet it states it most clearly. It incites to the study of it by the vast importance which is shown to pertain to it. There is not an appetency or a capacity of the human intelligence which it does not address. The understanding, the imagination, the fancy even, and the taste for the beautiful in form, to all it holds a normal relation. It contradicts no true philosophy, but anticipates and involves every principle in such. It opposes no science, but interprets each; grounds its laws and their phenomena in an eternal reality, and harmonizes them all in the wisdom of God. It is a spirit of truth that illustrates and reconciles all departments of knowledge, while with its own force it fills each capacity and quickens it anew. We may go out on the view of it to the splendor and height of the throne of the universe, to the shores of that infinitude of truth which we shall for ever be exploring in heaven, and yet we may rest upon it elsewhere as on the familiar and obvious axiom.

So it addresses the conscience and the sense of obligation. The apprehension of a Right which is immutable and universal, which binds with its authority every moral intelligence, and unites into one the vast spiritual systems—an apprehension which seems bedded indelibly in every moral being, which finds obscure expression even in heathenisms, and which gives all efficiency but of force to human government and law—this the system of Christ alone perfectly meets; revealing the law of universal love, established permanently throughout God's system. That sense of sin, too, and of peril before this law, which leads to all manner of religious observances, to the endurance of every most terrible penance, that innocence may be reached or God propitiated, to this it ministers with entire efficiency. It does not crush it. It does not overlook it. It accepts it as just, and develops it more vividly. But it directs it to the cross, with the vicarious suffering thereon endured; a suffering which God appointed and accepted as the ground of forgiveness, before which the heavens were dark and dumb and the earth was heaved with a strange terror, yet through which God's holiness was declared to the universe, and in which forgiveness is pledged to the penitent. The most intensely aroused conscience can conceive of no law more pure than God's. The most thoroughly

startled and trembling conscience can ask no atonement more ample than Christ's.

So, equally, to the affectionate and emotive nature inherent in man Christianity appeals. Presenting God to us, as no other system does, in the beauty of that holiness through which love beams, in the majesty of that power which wisdom directs, in the grandeur even of that eternal glory which is all made visible and personal to us in Jesus, it offers the object for our purest affection. It brings him to us through the beautiful biographies of a human life. It appeals to our love from the level of equality, even while it shadows the heart with the mystery of God—so it addresses the sensibility to joy, to hope, to perfect repose of soul in confidence and faith. There is not one constitutional power implanted in us, there is not one moral want felt by us, which Christianity does not meet. The only influence that debars this system from an instant conquest of every heart is the love of that heart for the world and for sin. This may be overcome. The system itself brings powers for overcoming it; among them the greatest conceivable by us. When that has become accomplished, the supremacy of the system is established in the soul. And if we remember that God has framed it, that he has intentionally so fitted it to man and so endued it with power for every appeal that he has made it self-diffusive, we scarcely shall doubt that supremacy is before it.

8. The accomplishment of this final supremacy of Christianity *will nobly complete the circle of history; will give unity, wholeness to the annals of the race; will show through their courses a sublime method.*

It is a fearful mystery—the permission of sin with its power in the world, and the exposure of so many to its desolating influence! If it could not wisely have been prevented while the system remained, why was not the race cut off from being, its history stayed in mid-progress, and the period put to such destructions? The question recurs, and presses for an answer. The reply that seems most nearly to meet it, and to satisfy the heart that is agitated by it, is this: This sin is for a time. It is permitted for a purpose. Its course of triumph draws near the end. Christianity is to overcome it, as a system of God for human renewal, replete with quickening and sanative force. Righteousness is to follow it, to restore

beauty to the earth. And the ages that are past shall be as nothing in the comparison of those that are to come; peopled with happy and pure intelligences, serene with the presence and favor of God. If this is the order of history, then that becomes explicable, and God is revealed in it. Then sin itself shall be seen to have had uses. Then shall clearly be displayed, through the vast complete process, the wisdom, the grace, and the omnipotence of Jehovah. Before that majestic spiritual system amid which he presides, with which we have connection, where faculty is powerful, emotion vivid—before that shall be shown, through the progress of our race, the saddest yet the sublimest lessons. Light shall be shed on the nature of sin; on the terrible strength of its grasp on the will; on the fearful effects which it works where obeyed. Light shall be shed on the possibility of a recovery from sin unto holiness—a fact not unfolded in the economy of heaven; on the effectiveness of truth and moral appliance in meeting and subduing this terrible power; especially on the power and grace of God's spirit, the source of knowledge and purity to the fallen. Light shall be shed on God's character and being; on his patience, long-suffering, and unspeakable mercy; on the wisdom that arranged and the grace that established the agencies of redemption; on the Trinity of the divine nature, that stands above these and comes to manifestation at Bethlehem and on Calvary. Light shall be shed on the beauty of holiness, as contrasted against sin, in the blessedness which it erects on the ruins of the fall; on the power of God to make that holiness permanent. Light shall be shed on each principle of truth most needful to be known by intelligent beings, and each shall be set in vivid expression. Yet through the whole great scope of history, a sum of holiness, and so of joy, immeasurable by us, shall be secured; a result shall be accomplished most worthy of God. Where sin hath abounded, grace shall much more abound; and it shall reign, through righteousness, unto life. The splendid close of human history shall overshadow with beauty the gloom of

the beginning. The dissonance of sin shall be lost amid praises.

This seems to be the method of history. It commends itself to us as appropriate to God. On another hypothesis we can scarcely understand why the earth was not dissolved, or its total population destroyed by the flood, instead of being left to be ravaged by sin. Particular historic events suggest this; especially the laborious introduction of Christianity, with the agencies combined in it, and its retinue of miracles. There is something, indeed, within ourselves—an impression of moral progress and order, as realized in the system administered on the earth—a sense, if we may so express it, of the rhythm and proportion of the history which God frames—an intuitive apprehension of the possible majestic unity to which all agencies may be subordinate, and through which may be revealed the glory of the highest—which gives new impulse to the belief of this result. In such apprehension we use not fancy or desire, but the noblest intelligent and moral powers with which God has endowed us. We are spontaneously impelled to attribute to it objective reality. Through it we seem, to ourselves at least, to enter the greatness and breadth of God's plans; to stand for the time as under the shadow of the Throne! Remembering what man was, how fearfully he has fallen, yet what powers he retains, for what stations he is fitted, the inference fills us with the sense of its justness, it appeals to the soul with an almost self-evidencing power, that such a result is designed for the race. In its attainment the history of man shall come "full-circle"; the garden and the fall being lost in the effulgence of Calvary and the Ascension; and the earth, won back from darkness, restored from sin, illumined and purified by the grace of the holiest, becoming a nobler trophy of God's power, a more beautiful witness to his wisdom and his love, than when it first hung, blushing and glad, upon the morning skies! Christianity supreme will close with songs and harping symphonies the turbulent drama of human history.

R. S. Storrs.

Section 396.

The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

"All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God." Though this passage refers most directly to the Scripture of the Old Testament, yet it distinctly declares the nature of all inspiration; it is from God, it is God-breathed (Theopneustic). This is the radical import of the term; and it implies that, if a Scripture be not from God, it is not inspired; that, if it be from God, it is inspired. The text does not assert, as some interpret it, that all inspired Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for such a construction is contrary to the grammar of the sentence; but that each and all of those Scriptures to which the apostle refers are inspired and profitable.

1. PROBABILITY OF AN INSPIRED REVELATION.—Though the finite can not comprehend the Infinite, yet the Infinite One may condescend to reveal himself to his creatures; and man, though sinful, does yet ever know the law he always violates. Human language, too, with all its imperfections, if it can convey any real truth, may also impart such knowledge of God and man as is fitted to our needs. Man's religious wants lead him to long that an Infinite Being may impart himself to the finite, and that the Perfect One may have pity on our very sinfulness. And if such inspiration be possible, then, we add, it may be recorded; it may be given in a writing, a Scripture. Of this, again, there is no antecedent impossibility.

If an inspired record of Divine truth exists, it is found in the Bible, or nowhere. This is the only book which, on the basis of history and general consent, can pretend to hold such an eminent and supreme place. Here is the perfect revelation, or we have none. Here are the words of God, or we have them not in any credible form. No creed, no system, no book, in its probable claims and paramount influence, can be compared with the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The contents of the Bible, taken as a whole, afford a high probability of its inspiration. It is every way unique and wonderful. Its separate portions were composed by some forty writers, during a period of fifteen hundred years, and yet they all make one book, with one consecu-

tive plan, from Genesis to the final Revelation, more regular, more progressive, more stately, than any epic or drama. All in it centers in one Person—that of the Redeemer; and has respect to one object—that of the redemption of the race from sin. Its special doctrines, too, bear the marks of superhuman truth and grandeur. Nowhere does the Divine Being appear so majestic and so condescending, so holy and so loving; nowhere is man so truly portrayed in his dignity and humiliation, in both his native and his regenerate estate, and in his immortal hopes and fears. The unity of the race and of the divine government is everywhere implied and enforced. Central in this marvelous volume, its very center of unity, is the God-man, our Saviour, our Prophet, Priest, and King, the ever-living Head of a divine kingdom, which is never to pass away. Miracles attest his divine commission, and that of his prophets and apostles also; while Prophecy speaks of him in her most exalted strains, proclaiming his advent through thousands of years, and announcing the perpetuity and final victory of his kingdom in those daring promises, which only Omniscience could truly utter, which Omnipotence alone could carry into execution in a manner so indubitable and unexampled. And all this is presented in such a wondrous style and method, that human literature has nothing of stateliness or of simplicity, of poetic inspiration or prosaic fidelity, of that self-forgetfulness in the writers, which is one of the surest tests of genius, of largeness of grasp and accuracy of delineation, of fervid eloquence, touching appeal, and concentrated aim, to be compared even in fugitive analogy with these utterances of the seers of Judea and the apostles of Jesus. History and experience too add their testimony; for this Book of books has had a divine efficacy: its words are spirit and life; penitence still confesses its abasement in the language of David; faith lingers upon the rapt visions of Isaiah; with John we meditate upon the very words of Jesus; with Paul we receive the assurance of redemption in looking unto Christ; with the oldest of the prophets we still anticipate the day when the seed of the

woman shall crush all the powers of sin. The human heart knows no depth of spiritual sorrow, no height of spiritual joy, no elevation of faith, no wonder of divine or human love, for which it may not here find fitting speech. And to all the perplexing and final problems of human destiny, this same volume offers a definite, a truly rational, and an authoritative solution. Beyond its revelation no scheme of human wisdom has ever reached. The most arrogant system of pantheistic infidelity only resolves the Christian faith into barren and abstract ideas.—Such is this Book; and if it be such, if such a work has been written by fallible and sinful men, then we claim that there is an antecedent probability, that it is also from God, and not from man alone; that it is given by the inspiration of the Almighty. Inspiration is possible; it may be recorded; if it be recorded, it is only in the Bible; and the very contents of the Bible are such as to give an antecedent probability that it can not be the work of man, that it may be the Word of God.

2. NATURE OF INSPIRATION.—Inspiration designates that divine influence under which prophets or apostles spake or wrote, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Christ is the great Revealer; the Holy Spirit inspires.

God has revealed himself and his will to men in a great variety of ways: by ministering angels; in visible signs and tokens; in voices to the rapt ear; in visions of the night; in deep sleep, as to Abraham (Gen. 15 : 12); to Moses, mouth to mouth, as he beheld the similitude of the Lord (Numbers 12 : 8); in pictures of future events, spread out as on a prophetic canvas; sometimes, even, in such prophetic ecstasy that the recipient seems conscious of naught else; in words at the time but indistinctly understood, and again in words felt and known in all their fullness of wisdom and of grace. Such divine revelations, too, are progressive in the sacred annals, given as men were able to bear them, ever advancing with man's need and preparation, and in every stage fitted to his immediate wants, as also to prepare for yet higher manifestations. Three such eras are distinctly marked in Scripture, the legal, the prophetic, and the apostolic, the last centering in the person and words of Christ the Son, by whom he at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days

spoken unto us. He is the grand Revealer, described not as receiving but as making a revelation; he is the crown and center of these divine works; in him the revelation is final and complete.

Of inspiration, now, in distinction from revelation, the proper and Scriptural function is to declare unto the world, through divinely-commissioned prophets and apostles, either orally or by writing, under the specific influence of the Holy Spirit, whatever has been thus revealed, and also all things pertaining to the kingdom of God, which are to be a matter of permanent record and instruction. It is a special divine influence for a special purpose. Its object is the communication of truth in an infallible manner, so that, when rightly interpreted, no error is conveyed. At times the revelation and inspiration are, doubtless, inseparable; as when a prophet or apostle at once utters or records what is revealed. This definite usage of the term inspiration is authorized by the text (2 Tim. 3 : 16) which declares that all Scripture is inspired, theopneustic—using a word found nowhere else in the Bible, and here applied to written documents. The term was translated "*inspirata*," in the Vulgate, whence the word "*inspired*." In 2 Pet. 1 : 21, it is said that holy men of God *spake* as they were moved (borne along) by the Holy Ghost, in which the same fact of a specific influence in respect to the Scriptures is clearly implied, as is apparent from the preceding verse.

The same passage, from the second epistle of Peter, may be used to elucidate another fact as to the nature of inspiration; that in all the sacred writings, both divine and human elements and knowledge coöperate and concur, the divine being supreme and controlling. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"; they were *men*, holy men, retaining this character, while influenced by the Spirit. The reverend Scriptures, it has been well said from ancient times, like the adorable person of our Lord, who is their sum, are a union of the divine with the human; and the chief errors as to the nature of inspiration have been finely compared with the heresies about the person of the Redeemer; they sprang from insisting upon the one side to the exclusion or suppression of the other. In both cases we have Docetæ and Ebionites, those who demand pure divinity and those who insist upon mere humanity. But all in Scripture is both

divine and human; here, too, "the God shines gracious through the man." The very word inspiration implies that a divine influence moves men to their utterances; and it is applied to the books, or the words they utter, considered as the result of such an influence. "We are witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost," says Peter (Acts 5: 32). That man can thus be made the medium for the very oracles of God, gives the highest evidence of the possible capacities and dignity of human nature, and illustrates the doctrine that he was made in the image of his Maker.

That the sacred Scriptures do contain human elements, and in their human integrity, though never separated from the divine, is apparent in their very structure. They are given us in human language, in the languages and idioms of their times—which is necessary to the proof of their authenticity. If we could show, as some uninspired men have tried to do, that the New Testament was written in classic Greek, we should also prove that it could not have been written by the men whose names it bears, nor in their times. Each leading book, too, has the impress of its special author in style and sentiment; if it had not, how could we show that it was genuine? Inspiration does not annul, it elevates individuality. Prophets and apostles, too, *testify* as to what they have heard and seen; they come to us as witnesses; and when they speak as such, the Spirit of all truth could not and would not lead them to say what they had not seen and heard. The writers, too, make faithful use of antecedent documents containing historic facts, and, it may be, the record of more primitive revelations; and these are of value and need even to inspired men. The human elements of Scripture come out most fully in its history and biographies, where neither the errors nor sins of men are withheld or palliated. Bad men speak as well as good; the angel of darkness as well as the angel of light; Peter denies his Lord; Paul rebukes Peter to his face, because he was to be blamed; David lapses into gross sin; the majesty of Solomon is tarnished; Abraham deceives; Adam falls; and of all these facts and sins, we have an inspired record, giving us the truth. And if inspiration did not give us all these things, of what value would it be in respect to history and fact? Even the most trivial personal details may serve an important office, such as

inspiration could not neglect, in verifying the authorship and proving the authenticity of Epistles and prophecies. That cloak of Paul, of which it has been said that it "has come to higher honor than even the mantle of Elijah," that cloak which has been made the covert of so much skepticism, and the parchments, too, may help to identify the writer to the reader for all times; besides teaching, what is not directly intended, that we should be careful of clothing and manuscripts. And Paul's dietetic advice to Timothy about the "little wine," he must needs write, as an inspired friend, when and as he wrote. His Epistle would be hardly genuine without it; it would lack verisimilitude. Did he, then, need inspiration to write it? The inspiration of him who counteth the very hairs of our heads might extend to this, since it helps to prove the genuineness of the Epistle, to say nothing of the capital argument for temperance, incidentally conveyed.

So wonderfully do the divine and human elements commingle in the Scriptures, as do first and second causes also in all the realm of providence, that it is in vain to try to limit inspiration to doctrine and truth, excluding history from its sphere. The attempt is as unphilosophical as it is unscriptural. No analysis can detect such a line of separation; it is both invisible and not to be spiritually discerned. Historic facts contain as well as enforce truth and doctrine. The fact of the death of Christ contains the truth of the atonement; it is that truth. Genealogies instruct us in the truth of the Messiahship. Such a distinction lacks evidence, coherence, and possibility. The whole divine revelation is an historic matter; Christianity is a body of facts, and not of mere doctrines; Christ is an historic personage, and not a congeries of abstract truths; history and theology are in their inmost nature one.

Nor yet, again, is it possible to draw the line, and satisfy the conditions of the case, by the Arminian and Socinian formula, that the Bible contains a revelation, in distinction from the position that the Bible, as a whole, is an inspired book. The apparent truth in this position is due to the want of discrimination between revelation and inspiration. It is a fact that the Bible contains a revelation; it is also a fact that all that is in the Bible is not a matter of revelation, in the strict usage of the word. But these points do not help us at all about the real question, unless it be arbitrarily

assumed that inspiration extends no further than revelation, which it is impossible to prove either on rational or historic grounds.

To the idea of inspiration, also, it belongs that it should be considered as *plenary*—that is, the divine influence, which is its source, extends to and pervades the whole contents of the Scriptures, both historical and doctrinal; it includes the whole of the strict divine revelations, and also whatever the sacred writers utter as historians and witnesses. Inspiration is the organizing principle of the whole Bible, just as the principle of life is the organizing energy in every bodily frame, extending to all its parts, even those seemingly the most insignificant. It is not confined to new truths, it rehearses the old; but of both the old and the new it makes one coherent whole. It comprises both the matter and the form of the Bible; the matter in the form in which it is conveyed and set forth. It extends even to the language, not in the mechanical sense that each word is dictated by the Holy Spirit, but in the sense that, under divine guidance, each writer spake in his own language, according to the measure of his knowledge acquired by personal experience, by the testimony of others, or by immediate divine revelation. They spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. And thus is the inspiration plenary, since the Holy Spirit works in all parts of the Scripture, and makes of the many one, of terrestrial dialects a celestial tongue, out of human and divine elements one divine work, God's book, given by men and for men.

This doctrine of plenary inspiration is not inconsistent with the acknowledged fact that different parts of the Scripture are of different grades of importance for our immediate spiritual benefit. The books of the Chronicles are of importance for the history of God's kingdom, and to give us that history is one object of inspiration. Nor does the doctrine prevent us from recognizing the fact that the ceremonial law has passed into desuetude, for it was the historic type of him who fulfilled the law, and without inspiration it could not have had its accurate prophetic character. Nor does plenary inspiration forbid us to say that some portions of Scripture are of relatively greater and others of relatively less moment; all parts of it are needed as parts of the one whole; the head can not say to the hand, I have no need of thee, nor the eye to the foot, I have no

need of thee; but yet the head is better than the hand, and the eye is quicker than the foot. There are fundamental truths, and truths not fundamental; some parts have a majestic dignity, others are lowly and obscure; but the great and the small, the necessary and the contingent, together make one whole. As it is in the material Cosmos, so is it in the fair order of the Book of God—one mind working to one end pervades the whole; and the very marvel is that such innumerable facts and details are wrought together into one plan.

Nor does the doctrine of plenary inspiration demand absolute and final perfection in each writer or in each individual statement. The whole of revealed truth is to be gathered only from the whole Scriptures; nor is all truth revealed even here, but only what is necessary to the great object of the book—the manifestation of God's redemptive love. The statements of each writer, it is well said by Dr. Alliott, "may be partial and imperfect in point of fullness, while complete and perfect in point of truthfulness." We need all the gospels to get at the entire life of our Saviour; each is to be harmonized with the others; the four gospels combined together realize that beautiful comparison, which of old was made of them, to the cherubim, one living spirit, yet a fourfold form. The whole doctrine of the New Testament is to be gathered, not from Paul alone, nor from John, nor from Peter, nor from James, but from James, Peter, John, and Paul together. The harmonizing of different historical statements and the analogy of faith are as necessary in the interpretation of the Scriptures as of any other writings; and only a very mechanical and human notion of inspiration has ever led to a different conception.

Much less does plenary inspiration demand that the sacred Scriptures shall contain all truth on all subjects, or the scientific form of truth on the matters to which it incidentally refers, but about which it does not pretend to teach. Its popular statements in natural science are to be received as popular; they do not claim to be anything more. If we have entire truth on the subjects for which the Scriptures were written, and no error on other incidental matters, it is all that can be needed. And one of the most wonderful indirect testimonies to the Bible is found in the fact that science has not been able to establish conclusions inconsistent with the narration of the creation, or

overthrowing the unity of the race. One of the ablest naturalists of Germany, Wagner, the successor of Blumenbach, at Göttingen, maintains, as did Blumenbach, "that the latest results of scientific investigation leave the Biblical account of the descent of mankind from one pair wholly unmolested."

As to the nature of inspiration, then, we conclude that it is to be distinguished from direct revelation, that it involves a combination of human and divine elements with the constant supremacy of the divine, and that it is best described as plenary, extending to all parts of the sacred record, giving us in the whole Scripture all needful truth in respect to the history and doctrines of the kingdom of God.

3. PROOF OF THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE.

—The direct proof is derived from a variety of sources and not from a few isolated texts alone, yet it ultimately centers in the credibility of our Saviour and of his apostles. He testifies to the authority of the Old Testament as the Word of God, and he promises the Spirit who was to guide and inspire the apostles—so that the proof of inspiration stands or falls with the authority of Christ.

Of such inspiration there may be said to be an anterior probability, on the general ground, which we here take for granted, that God has made a revelation to man. If he would make a revelation, it is natural to infer that he would secure the record of it from error. With the fact of a revelation we naturally connect the idea of an authoritative and final Scripture, valid for all times. He who gave the greater would not withhold the less. He who proposed to redeem mankind would not leave them without sufficient and authentic witness of his gracious will.

The Scriptures of the Old Testament are pervaded by the most frequent claims of divine authority. The law given by Moses was to be kept by the side of the Ark of the Covenant (Deut. 31) within the Holy of Holies; it was to be read before all the people every seven years; it was to be copied by the kings of Israel (Deut. 17: 18); the subsequent writings were added to it; individual writers testify that they had a divine command to write, as Moses (Exod. 34: 27; Deut. 31: 19), Isaiah (1: 2; 8: 1), Jeremiah (1: 2; 36: 2). Daniel says, "The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." But the

chief and crowning proof is from the testimony of Christ and the apostles. They refer to these writings, and to these alone, as having divine origin and authority; they call them *the Scripture*, and apply this term in this sense to naught else.

While the apostles thus testify to the inspired authority of the older Scriptures, they also claim that their own writings are the Word of God, and are to be received as having at least an equal divine authority (1 Thes. 2: 13; 2 Cor. 5: 20; 13: 3; Eph. 3: 3-5). Apostles are coördinate with the prophets (Eph. 2: 20). Thus is the proof of the inspiration of the New Testament linked with the evidence for the inspiration of the Old Testament. In some respects the apostles claim, as throughout the Epistles to the Galatians and Hebrews, that the new is higher than the old. Moses was the servant, but Christ is the Son. While they testify to the inspiration of the Old Testament, they also claim for themselves a new, a higher, and a final revelation.

The direct evidence for the inspiration of the New Testament goes back to the testimony and authority of the Saviour; he declares of his own, as of the Old Testament words, that they shall not pass away (Luke 21: 33); that the word that he speaks shall judge men at the last day (John 12: 48); in his last intercessory prayer he pleads that he has given to his disciples the words which his Father gave unto him (John 17: 8). Four times, during his earthly ministry, he gave a special promise and pledge to his apostles that, in all they said as apostles, the Spirit should guide them into the truth. The first occasion was when he sent forth the twelve (Mat. 10: 19, 20), saying, It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you; the second is narrated in Luke (12: 11, 12), take ye no thought, for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say; the third is in the week of his passion (Mark 13: 11, and Luke 21: 14, 15), to the same import; the fourth and final pledge is preserved in the Gospel of John, in the full and abundant promises of Christ's parting lessons; his disciples were to receive the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth (John 14: 16, 17); he was to teach them all things, and to bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever Christ had said unto them (14: 25, 26); he was to guide them into all truth, was to show them things to come

(John 16 : 12, 13). Such were the promises and pledges of the Redeemer, and they were most perfectly fulfilled in the royal Pentecostal gift (Acts 2 : 4 ; 4 : 31), whereby the disciples received wisdom and boldness which none were able to gainsay or resist. And the promise includes and covers there writings as well as their sayings; if it did not, it were broken in that which is most important. They themselves say they write as they speak (1 John 1 : 3, 4 ; 2 Thes. 2 : 15 ; Gal. 1 : 8, 12). And through their writings there is but one strain, one language. Paul begins each of his Epistles, excepting that to the Hebrews, with a claim of divine authority and commission, which never deserts him; he proclaims, as under a conscious divine influence, in a lordly strain, the very oracles of God. He declares to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 2 : 11, 12) that he has received the very Spirit of God, who alone knoweth the things of God; his words are in demonstration of the Spirit (1 Cor. 2 : 4, and 2 Cor. 2 : 17); he has a revelation of the mystery not made known in other ages (Eph. 3 : 5, and Gal. 1 : 12); the word which he declared to the Thessalonians (1 Thes. 2 : 13) was in truth the word of God; even the words he speaks are those which the Holy Ghost teacheth (1 Cor. 2 : 13). It is indeed said that Paul twice disclaims inspiration; even if he did in the cases alleged, he by inference claims it elsewhere; but when he says (1 Cor. 7 : 12), I speak and not the Lord, and that he has no commandment (v. 25), he is not distinguishing between what is inspired and uninspired, but between what is a matter of direct command and of apostolic advice. That this advice was inspired appears from verse 40, when he adds, I think also that I have the Spirit of God.

Peter, too, reckons Paul's writings as Scripture (2 Pet. 3 : 15, 16), and claims like authority for himself (1 Pet. 1 : 12); he preaches the word which endureth for ever (1 Pet. 1 : 25, and 4 : 11); he puts his sayings on the same ground as the Old Testament (2 Pet. 3 : 2). The authority of Mark and Luke is resolved by the universal consent of the Church into that of Peter and Paul. The Apocalypse in its very form is an immediate divine revelation.

Such is the substance of the evidence, which leaves us only the alternative between imposture and inspiration. Self-deception to such an extent with such men is incredible. And these isolated citations give us the bare outline

of the proof; the full evidence can only come from reading the Scriptures themselves, and seeing the unequaled majesty and authority with which the prophets and apostles discourse of those high themes upon which the wisest of men lisp and stammer. An air of conscious truth pervades their discourse; they speak as by a divine impulse, and in the name of him from whom there is no appeal. Their authority is from him. The Spirit of Christ was the spirit of prophecy; the Spirit of Christ is the spirit of the apostles.

We rest here upon the authority of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. The argument for the inspiration of both the Old and New Testaments runs back to and centers in Him, who is the way, and the truth, and the life. The ultimate testimony to inspiration is thus not human, but divine.

4. CONCLUSION.—The theory of plenary inspiration, as we have already given it, allows that all of Scripture is inspired; it recognizes the relative integrity of the divine and human elements; and it judges all parts of the Bible with respect to the great object for which it was given, to redeem mankind. Men are the free organs for this high communication of divine truth; they are selected and trained for this special work; and the divine influence elevates and purifies their faculties, their thoughts, and, where needful, their very language. And the book, written under such inspiration, for our instruction, contains whatever is needful for all mankind, whether in this life or in that which is to come, and is thus a treasury for all times. Solomon gives us the maxims of worldly wisdom, and John discourses of the heavenly Jerusalem; we have that marriage song of earthly love, which only the impure revile, as well as the promise of that blessed estate where they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God. Temperance and chastity are enjoined for the care of our mortal bodies, while by faith we look forward to the time when this mortal shall put on immortality. History here instructs us even in minute details as to the chosen people of God, for of them the Redeemer was to come; and in his sacred Person the sum of type and prophecy was fulfilled. The same history tells us of the relations of the ancient nations to this one central kingdom, while prophecy, not yet con-

summated, but ever in the course of fulfillment, holds up the elevating vision of its final triumph to cheer us in all our conflicts. The highest truths, beyond which thought can not reach, as to God and man, and their relations to each other, center in him, who is both God and man, and the king of this divine empire. All, even the most insignificant portions of the original Scriptures, have their life from his Spirit, even as the principle of life embraces the hairs of the head as well as the beating of the heart. All is shaped by the wise Builder into one glorious temple, which speaks of him from the foundation to the topmost stone, and whose arches reverberate with songs of saints and angels magnifying the glories of his grace.

And hence, in conformity with the teachings of Scripture, with the confessions of the Church in all times, with the demands of Chris-

tian experience and of a wise philosophy, we judge that inspiration is to be defined as *plenary*, working in all portions of the Bible. It is unwise and mechanical to try and measure it out by degrees, here a suggestion, there an elevation, again a direction, and in fine a superintendency. It is more than a superintending guidance; for that expresses but an external relation between the Spirit and the writer. But inspiration is an influence within the soul, divine and supernatural, working through all the writers in one organized method, making of the many one, by all one book, the book of God, the book for man, divine and human in all its parts; having the same relation to all other books that the person of the Son of God has to all other men, that the Church of the living God has to all other institutions. *H. B. Smith.*

Section 397.

Faith and Revelation.

FAITH, in its widest usage, designates a conviction in the reality of things unseen and eternal; in a more religious sense, it is trust in God and God's word; in a more specific and theological meaning, it embraces the articles of belief drawn out into a definite system; in its most specific and evangelical sense, it denotes that full reliance upon Christ by which we become partakers of the salvation which he alone has purchased for the human race.

In all these senses, excepting the first, it has certain marked traits by which it is distinguished from philosophy.* It rests upon

authority, upon good, upon the highest authority, but still upon authority—confirmed, indeed, by experience; but it is the authority, and not the experience, which is ultimate and supreme. That authority is divine and decisive; it is the very word of God recorded in the Scriptures. As face answers to face in a glass, so does faith to the Bible, which it receives, both in history and in doctrine; and it is not so anxious to harmonize the parts as to imbibe the whole. It connects all things directly with the providence of God; to this it is ever submissive. It is content with mira-

* Of the relations of Philosophy and Faith, the same profound thinker eloquently writes: "The problems of the union of the finite with the infinite, of the reconciliation of a holy God with a sinful race, and of our personal and immortal destiny, which philosophy can only state, the Christian system solves. The full perception and conviction of this great fact about Christianity would end, and this alone can terminate, the unnatural war between philosophy and faith; for philosophy and faith are set at variance only by sin, and kept in discord only from not seeing Christ as he is! Philosophy and faith! both are from God; the one may decry the end, and the other gives us the means; the one states the problems which the other solves; philosophy shows us the labyrinth, and Christ gives us the clew; the former recognizes the necessity of redemption, the latter gives us the redemption itself. The two at variance! When every Christian knows, what one has said, that 'when we speak the lan-

guage of the Bible, we speak our mother tongue'; at variance! only when philosophy goes 'sounding on its dim and perilous way,' averting the heart from him who of God is made unto us wisdom, as well as, and because, righteousness and redemption; at variance! only as the light of the sun is at variance with the heat of the sun, or as the light and heat of the great ruler of the day are at variance with the lesser lights that rule the night; at variance! only as redemption is at variance with sin, eternity with time, the incarnation with creation, and the God of grace with the God of justice; at variance! ever and only as the solution of a problem is at variance with the problem itself; since all that Christ proposes and does is to solve, in a practical, living method, the absorbing problem of the relation of man to God and of sin to redemption. For this end was he born, and for this cause came he into the world, that he might be the King of the eternal truth."

cles, and it accepts mysteries; it says God alone is wise. Here we see as through a glass, darkly; there we shall know as we are known.

Such is faith; it is called a life, and it is worthy of the name of life, it is so full and satisfying. The man who has it would as soon doubt whether his body were animated by the life of nature, when he is conscious of the movements of its muscles in their most strenuous efforts, and of the full delights of nervous sensation, as he would doubt whether his soul were a partaker of spiritual life, when its powers are expanded to their utmost intensity of action and of blessedness by the gracious truths which center in the person of our Lord.

If this be so, we ask next, what is faith, what does it claim to be, in what does it rest? Faith, internally, is a state of trust; but it is always trust in something external. Its real character can only be determined by stating its objects. And the Christian's faith reposes, as we before said, upon a revelation—an historical revelation—a revelation historically attested, attested by miracle and by prophecy; a revelation recorded in a volume which claims to be inspired. It is not primarily a system of doctrines, nor a confession, nor a speculation; but it is a grand historical economy, a manifestation of God and his purposes, an annunciation of supernatural truth by natural agencies, by prophets and teachers, and, last of all, by Jesus Christ; a manifestation forming a part of human history, connected and progressive through thousands of years. And all this series of revelations comes to us in the Scriptures, which give us both the facts and the divine interpretation of them. Christianity thus claims to be a real revelation of God, made in the best form in which we can conceive a revelation to be made, made to give the highest and most needed knowledge, made to redeem mankind. And this whole historic revelation bears with steady and concentrated aim upon one person, himself an historical personage, himself a man, in whom it is declared that heaven and earth are reconciled, that the great problems of human destiny are solved. And thus the Christian religion presents itself as adapted to man's highest wants in an exclusive sense, and with redeeming efficacy. This is the first aspect of the Christian economy, and here is the primary

basis of faith. But this is not all, for faith claims an internal evidence as well as an historical basis. Man is a believer, made to trust. The infirmities of his finite and the necessities of his sinful condition make faith necessary to the attainment of the great ends of his being. And the Christian finds in his own heart a profound experience which fills and satisfies his soul, and which is entirely responsive to the substance of the divine revelation, as recorded in the word of God. And here is another series of facts, reaching through thousands of years, embracing men of every clime and degree, the sage and the simple, the civilized and barbarian, the young and the mature, the living and the dying, who all, with one consent, testify that in this revelation they have found their solace and support, that it is the source of the highest activity and blessedness of all their powers. And, in the experience of believers also, all converges around the same divine person, who is the center and crown of the historic revelation.

Nor is this all. That revelation, historically so grand in its origin, and confirmed by human experience, has also entered into and controlled the whole course of human history and of human thought since the coming of Jesus of Nazareth. And here is another series of facts. History is the grand test of truth; it does not lie, for it is the ever unfolding providence of God. It is more authoritative than mere speculation, for it gives us the highest reality. And in history the Christian system has existed as a real and permanent power; it has been the center of man's noblest thoughts and strongest feelings in his most cultivated state for eighteen hundred years; it has controlled the destinies and led the march of the nations; from its bitter contests it has ever emerged with added luster, as though endowed with immortal energy. It is superior to defeat. Its power is now more intense and diffused than ever before. And thus is Christianity not only an historic revelation and an internal experience, but also an organic, diffusive, plastic, and triumphant force in human history; and in this history, as in the revelation, and as in the experience, the center around which all revolves is the person of Jesus Christ.

Nor yet is this all. This revelation has another aspect which has already been hinted at, but which requires a fuller statement. If man were entirely satisfied with the course of

nature—with being born, living, and dying; if he had no sense of sin, if he had never sinned, he would not be ever asking those sublime questions, to which nature is deaf and reason is dumb. But he knows something of God, of law, of death, and eternity, and he would fain know more; for here are inquiries in comparison with which all the secrets of nature are not only insignificant, but patent to our gaze. Now, it is the grand claim of the Christian revelation that it answers these vital questions; that it solves all the great moral problems of human destiny. For each enigma, so dark to reason, it has a definite and an authoritative response; for all the great moral problems of our destiny it offers a solution, and the solutions are given in the person and work of Christ; they all meet in the same radiant center, in whom the revelation converges, in whom the believer finds his blessedness, and to whom

all subsequent history has brought its loyal tribute.

This, then, is the primary aspect in which the Christian faith is to be viewed; as an historical reality, confirmed by experience, influencing history, and professing to solve the greatest questions of our destiny, and all centering in Jesus Christ, a personal object of faith and love, the very manifestation of God here upon the earth. And here, under God, is the hiding-place of the strength of faith. It is the majesty of a revealed economy; the profoundest experience of the human heart is with it; the might of history testifies unto it; it, and it alone, gives the key which unlocks the mysteries of our moral being. And thus is the Christian revelation, considered as a grand, historic, experienced economy, centering in one person, distinct from all other pretended revelations. *H. B. Smith.*

Section 398.

The Church.

Christ the Institutor of one Church in Successive Dispensations.—God has had but one Church in the world, and that Church has existed since the revelation of the seed of the woman at the fall of man. When, at first, Adam and Eve united in the act of offering sacrifice, connected with prayer and praise, the visible Church catholic was formed, and we can not doubt that it owed its being to “the voice of the Lord God,” who was heard in the garden at the cool of the day, calling the attention of the guilty pair to their destitute and sinful state, and to the way by which fallen men were to be rescued from the curse and condemnation of a broken law. The covenant made with Abraham was without doubt an ecclesiastical covenant, in which the visible Church in general was interested. This appears from the fact that, while some of the patriarch’s natural posterity were shut out from its blessings, express provision was made for the admission of others who were not his seed; and from the promise of being made “the father of many nations,” which could not have been fulfilled if the covenant had had respect only to the one nation of the Jews. He who proclaimed this covenant to the patriarch was no other than the angel of Jehovah, the

uncreated Messenger of the covenant; for that covenant, we know, “was confirmed of God in Christ.” With regard to the solemn and awful transactions at Sinai, when the whole Levitical economy was fixed and arranged, we are assured that the law was “ordained by angels in the hands of a Mediator.” At the introduction of the New Testament dispensation—that dispensation which is to continue to the end of time—we are assured that the Lord Jesus Christ himself administered ordinances, authorized and sent forth ministers, countenanced with his presence the social meetings of the Church, and, on the day of Pentecost, shed abundantly on his assembled disciples the influences of his Spirit.

Christ Head over all Things to the Church.

—The fact of Christ’s mediatorial rule over the Church is plainly testified in the Scriptures. He is “King upon the holy hill of Zion—King of Zion; he reigns over the house of Jacob for ever; the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church; he is the Head of the body, the Church. Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant, but Christ as a son over his own house, whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence

and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." They "who sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb," address him, besides other titles, by that of "King of Saints." Therefore, however independent of man, the Church is *under subjection to Christ*. The doctrines which it is the duty of the Church to believe and profess are such as *he* taught. The ordinances to be observed are *his* institutions. The laws to be obeyed are *his* laws. The matter of faith, the form of worship, the line of conduct, are alike sanctioned by his authority. The ministers of religion, neither individually nor collectively, possess any legislative power. Their authority is wholly ministerial, and is subordinate to that of Christ. They are at best but servants, and whatever they do they are required to do in the name of their divine Lord and Master.

The Church possesses a Character of Visible Organization.—It is spoken of in Scripture as "a body," the members of which exhibit admirable symmetry, nice adaptation, and wise subserviency one to another—as a "house," all the parts of which are "fitly framed together"; as a "city," whose streets are distributed with regularity, and whose municipal regulations are calculated to secure the peace and order of the inhabitants; as a "kingdom" and as a "nation," figures which suggest ideas of good government, orderly management, and proper subordination. The nature of things and the necessity of the case require that the Church be considered as a thoroughly organized society. W. S.—God has made some things to be essential in the organization of the Christian Church, without which there can be no church, but a merely human association. There must be credible evidence of piety, some visible form of public recognition and mutual bond of covenant relationship, and an assent to a Scriptural creed. Provision must also be made for gospel officers, ordinances, and discipline. The whole must rest on the foundation of Jesus Christ, and his sovereign authority must be recognized in the prayers and praises and personal consecration of all the members. There may be good men where there is no such organization—yea, there must be good men, in order to such an institution; but those good men can constitute no gospel church in the absence of these requisitions. The *forms* in which these elements

shall be combined have less consequence; the *substance* must be present. L. Hickok.

The Church consists of an Organized Body of Believers in Christ.—A Christian is a man united to Christ by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and a church is a body of men, really or by a credible profession, thus united to Christ, organized for the purposes of Christian worship, the proclamation of the gospel, and for mutual watch and care. If this be the Scriptural definition of a church, we are not at liberty to alter it. The Church consists of the called, and every body of the called organized for church purposes is a church, whether local or denominational. Everywhere in the New Testament the word *ecclesia* is used as a collective term for the *called*. As a man's being a Christian does not depend upon anything external—upon circumcision or uncircumcision, upon stature, color, or nationality—so whether a body of Christians be a church can not depend upon anything external. A nation is a nation, whether its government be monarchical, aristocratic, or republican. So a church is a church, whatever be the form of its external organization. Nothing can be essential to the being of a church that is not essential to the Christianity of its members. "Ubi Spiritus Dei, ibi Ecclesia," has in all ages been a motto and an axiom. C. H.

On the authority of the New Testament, the Church is the body of persons who believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and Saviour of men, crucified and risen; and so believe in him as to be personally conscious of a supreme desire to live his spiritual life, to resemble him, and be his true redeemed disciples. This definition takes the whole qualification for church-membership out of the power of sects and external ceremonies, lodging it in the internal region of the heart, among the affections and motives, whence all life makes its way out into speech, profession, and conduct. Its only test, therefore, is spiritual, not formal. Love to God as manifest in Christ, and love to man as God's child, must be the ruling affections in the soul, whether they have conformed the character perfectly to them or not. The Church is the aggregate of these consecrated souls, aiming and longing, above all things, to live righteously, irrespective of names, of forms, of creeds, of age, of place, except so far as these affect this internal, central consecration to Christ. If there were only "two or

three" such persons in the world, they would be a church, and Christ, fulfilling his promise, would be there in the midst of them. In all periods since Christ ascended, this has been the Church. It is distinct from all other bodies, whether scientific, civil, educational, benevolent, moral; or even religious, if they are not religious after the way and gospel of Christ. Its boundaries, as it is embodied in actual persons, may be indistinct to man's eye, but they are plain to God's; and the definition is plain. The Church is that body of people, in whatever age or nation, of which Christ is literally and spiritually the Head. And any one particular church, here or there, is a smaller collection of such people, and so a branch of the Church Universal. F. D. H.—There is a Church invisible, which enfolds and embraces all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity; which embraces these, to whatever confession they may belong—these, and none else but these. T.

The Church is the nursery of saints, not less than the refuge of sinners. By its doctrine and discipline, by the spiritual instruction and vigilant superintendence it provides, the edification of its members in knowledge, holiness, comfort, and social duty is promoted. The ordinances to which it gives access, and the interest it secures in the prayers of those who have power with God, can not fail to render the fellowship of the Church a distinguished means of extending knowledge, strengthening faith, confirming love, deepening humility, increasing joy, and cherishing every devout and holy affection. W. S.—The relations of the believer with the living water, which is Christ, are immediate; and the Church, the Christian commonwealth, during successive ages, is the river which brings to us the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and, so to speak, Jesus Christ himself. Without the Church there is no Christianity and no Christians. The very book which contains the truth is altered, forgotten, or perishes; and without an entirely new revelation, without a miracle incessantly repeated, you remain in ignorance and death. The Church, by its volume and its weight, forms a current which carries it forward, and bears to each of you that word, that name, that invisible element which, incorporating itself with you, renews your whole being. What formed around you that Christian atmosphere which you have not been able

to avoid breathing? what created in your heart those spiritual wants of which before the gospel there was no idea? Though you knew it not, it was the Church; and if you believe me you will understand, perhaps for the first time, the importance which the apostles and Jesus Christ himself attach to the idea of the Church, that living and continual personification of the whole body of believers, and the remarkable prepossession which so often leads the sacred writers to speak of the Church where you would have spoken only of the soul. In fact, your Christianity, how individual soever it may be (and it never can be too much so), is extracted from, is stamped, so to speak, by the Christianity of sixty generations. Ages and nations have labored for each of you; each of you is an heir of antiquity, and the work of a whole world. A. V.

The Christian Church of the present, with all its faults and weaknesses, *is the salt and the light of the world*. As holding, preserving, and spreading the faith of Christ, as built on the feeling of brotherhood, and on trust in a common Saviour, as bound together by social worship, sacraments, a ministry and a discipline, and as containing in itself a self-reforming power, it is one of the bonds which bind mankind together, and on it the hopes of mankind in a great measure rest. Its influence extends far beyond its own pale, and beyond the religious interests of man; it originates or aids every effort to make him wiser, happier, and more manly. T. D. Woolsey.—Its aim is not reached in the communion of saints. There is a real end to which these are preliminary. It exists for the blessing and conquest of men. The field given to it is the world: the world of all kindreds and tongues, but also the world of human sin, and human misery, and human want. All this human life, with its stately possibilities, with its ceaseless thought and energy, its huge but common daily toil, its cries of pain and despair, its weakness, and crushed hopes, and awful shame, its alleys of poverty, its dens of vice, its wounded spirits, its bleeding hearts, its pitiful social sores—to win this life for Christ, to penetrate it at every point like the light of the morning—this is the mission of the Church. W. F. Stevenson.

Christ's doctrine of brotherhood is the germ of all social virtues and reforms. It refines sympathy, quickens justice, kindles charity,

and inspires devotion to truth, duty, and public welfare. There is no refinement of education, manners, virtue, or charity, not provided for in this doctrine. A late historian of communism, deploring its failures, incidentally directs attention to the Christian Church as the most cheering hope of socialism. And what do reformers seek, not provided for in the Church? Her philosophy is more profound, reforming the life by changing the heart. Her dispensation of charity is without expense of rents, pageants, or official service, and better guarded against frauds and partiality. Besides, she cultivates moral feeling and religious aspiration, without which material charities lose half their value. The Church perfected is the most effective Temperance Society, the most promising Moral Reform Association, the most useful Beneficial Order. While the special reformer strikes at a branch, the Church lays the axe at the root of the tree. While the special reformer would direct his water-power upon some single detached wheel, the Church would direct it upon a shaft, that by impinging cogs turns all the related wheels of a stupendous machinery. The most comprehensive of all reforms is Christianizing the world. Christianity incarnated in feelings, sentiments, customs, manners, and laws, will perfect the social order of the world. *W. W. Everts.*

Perpetuity of the Church.—No outward events affect its existence. The apostles, one by one, pass away; the Church lives on. Great teachers and preachers arise and work, through many lands, and then are not; the Church remains. One language disappears from use, and others become mere languages of letters; but the Church learns others, and is not for an hour interrupted in its life. The Empire falls,

in flaming ruin—the trophies of twelve hundred years crashing together in smoking heaps, above which rise barbarian shouts, with wails of woe that fill the heavens. The Church is not smitten by that destruction. It teaches the savage barbarian its truth, and is seen, like its Lord, walking unscathed amid the furnace, speaking the words of holy cheer to them that suffer. It is corrupted; but again it renews its life from Christ, and becomes, as of old, his faithful witness. A new era begins in human affairs; it is not thereby superseded. It makes the recent arts its ministers, the more powerful machineries its facile instruments. It rides abroad on the wheels of new letters, scatters its seeds in the furrows of revolution, and incorporates other races in itself. When the time for that has come, it crosses the seas in the track of the discoverer; it plants its standards upon new continents, and makes the farthest islands its home as truly as was Antioch or the plain of Philippi. And it is around us here to-day as vital in itself, and as closely conformed to its primitive model, as if but eighteen years had passed, not eighteen centuries, since first it appeared. Resting for ever on the lordship of Christ, established in him as a brotherhood of believers, simple as the home is, yet more impressive in its simplicity than in all the glitter and complex apparatus of Roman pomp—the Church abides; immovable as mountains; not afraid of decay; watching the rise and change of states; waiting the development and the glory it shall have, as speeding years bring in millennium. It abides, while all things pass. It shall abide, while the earth continues; because founded on the fact that in him from whose life and death it springs God was incarnate. *R. S. Storrs.*

Section 399.

Considerations respecting Christian Missions.

Principle underlying all Christian Effort.—As the organizing principle of the kingdom of God on earth is the love of God, inbreathed by the Holy Spirit, so the characteristic expression of it is love to Christ manifested by his followers. Love to Christ as man; as the representative of a race redeemed and purchased by his blood; as the representative of

that eternal and all-comprehending Mercy, which, through the agency of his followers, is to fall, like the rain and the sunlight, upon the pathway of universal man. This, as touching the relation of man to his fellow-man, is the distinctive and characteristic feature of the kingdom of God on earth. In one word, this is Christianity. “Inasmuch as ye have done

it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." There may be much in other organizations, other systems, other sovereignties which Christianity approves. There may be many precepts and maxims of human morality and human prudence which it envelops and sanctions. But in this one thing it is peculiar. In this one thing it stands forth, transcendent, glorious, alone. IT IS THE LOVE OF GOD MANIFESTED IN LOVE TO UNIVERSAL MAN.

But manifested, let us ask further, in what form? The kingdom of God is spiritual and moral. Its appropriate and characteristic action is therefore spiritual and moral. It is action which aims to deliver mankind from the power of sin, by propagating everywhere faith in Christ as a spiritual deliverer from sin. The spirit which prompts the Church to this action, we call the Missionary Spirit. It would be easy to cite a thousand crucial instances to prove that where this spirit burns the Church lives and flourishes, that where this spirit flags the Church wanes and dies. As touching human relations, then, it follows that the missionary spirit constitutes Christianity. It is the very core and essence of it. It is that which being given, Christianity is given, and which being taken away, Christianity is taken away. It is that without which Christianity can not exist or be conceived. And conversely, it is that which without Christianity could never have existed, and would never have been conceived by man.

If these views touching the characteristic essence of Christianity itself are correct, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the true missionary spirit in the Church is the measure of her Christian principle, the test and thermometer of her piety. *H. Smith.*

The Missionary Idea and Spirit an Inspiration of the Gospel.—The one blood of the cross is offered to all, and adapted to all in whose veins flows the one blood of creation. That blood is as adequate for the redemption of the whole race as for the redemption of a single soul. It is wonderful to observe how the unities cluster around the cross of Christ—one God and Father of all, one Mediator, one dying race, one offering for sin, one divine Spirit, one faith, one baptism, one gospel, one Church, one common salvation, and one eternal heaven. There is but one Bible and but one religion made for man. In this respect Christianity stands forth in solitary and un-

approachable grandeur. All other religions have been local and national, without even the conception of a universal extension. All others have risen, flourished, and decayed within their narrow domains, except only as they have been propagated by immigration or the sword. None but Christianity has ever sent its missionaries across the seas and its evangelists to the ends of the earth. It has been reserved for the gospel to grasp the idea of one faith for all nations, and to teach that its field is the world, and its home the heart of every human being.

Christian Europe and America the Result of Missions to Heathen.—The European nations are now the most enlightened, powerful, and highly civilized portion of the globe. And what has civilized them? The gospel of Jesus Christ. By what instrumentality were they converted to Christ? By the preaching of the cross; by missions to the heathen. They were once all heathens, of the darkest, fiercest, most vindictive character. When Christianity first encountered them they were as ignorant, as barbarous, as much without hope and without God in the world as any of the pagan tribes and nations to which the gospel is now sent. But during the long progress of ages the gospel was preached, the Scriptures were translated, the generations were taught and trained, the foundations of the Church were laid, a native ministry was raised up, and the mighty change was wrought. For centuries all Europe was a missionary field; and at last all Europe was converted from idolatry to Christ. The rude Goth, the roving Vandal, the treacherous Frank, the warlike Norman, the daring Saxon, the ferocious Hun, the sturdy German, the impetuous Celt, the hardy Scot, the fur-clad Scandinavian became a Christian. Let it never be forgotten that all the nations of modern Europe were evangelized and civilized by Christianity. This was its second great missionary triumph, not less decisive and important than the first. This is the work which it was doing through all the middle ages. And though its power was greatly impaired by the corruption and despotism of the papacy, yet its progress was onward and upward; and it prepared the material out of which sprang the memorable Reformation of the sixteenth century. And now behold the result of missions to the heathen—Christian Europe and Christian America, two continents conquered and

given to Christ. Shall we, then, whose own ancestors were once savage idolaters, doubt the power of the gospel to convert the heathen, and to win its final and universal victory?
L. J. Halsey.

The Purpose of Modern Missions is to reproduce among all other Heathen Peoples what has been wrought in the now Christian Nations.—

What cultivated peoples now present of the spirit of discovery and invention; of logical argumentation and research; of profound conceptions of life, of man, of God, of futurity—what each of them has produced in natural and mental philosophy, in chemistry, agriculture, theology, law, medicine, political economy, poetry, history, biography, travels—all these, Christian missions hold the philanthropic purpose and competency to produce for all that sit in darkness, of every kindred and nation and tongue and people. Actually and truly, Great Britain and the United States are to be reproduced, intellectually, upon all pagan countries! And when these missions shall have been planted extensively over pagan countries, and shall have turned the heart of the people generally unto God, religion will have reached a new and holier age; piety attained a vaster power. There will be outflowing a larger tide of charity; there will be a purer scene of all good works upon the face of society. And we, God's people, are intrusted with this great enterprise of exalting Jehovah in the world. Our missions, which are to exalt him, must be taken close into the arms of the Church till they feel the warmth and faith of her heart throbbing, glowing as a life all through them. Nothing less must she give to them than the whole vitalities of her spirit and the whole strength of her arm. We are detached to the service of bringing man back and presenting to Jehovah his godlike intellect, his vast heart, his powerful hand, his iron will, his entire being, his whole race. *C. White.*

A Chief Objection answered.—It has been asked, Why has the progress of missions been so slow? If Christianity be divine, and the only religion for man, why have not all nations been converted long ago? In answer to such an objection, it is sufficient to say that the God of Providence is not straitened for time. "Providence," says one, "makes a step, and ages have rolled away." If it took four thousand years to prepare the way for the

advent of Christ, and the first promulgation of his gospel to the nations, shall we say that eighteen centuries are too long for its final consummation? If it took three centuries to convert the nations bordering the Mediterranean Sea, and from five to ten centuries to evangelize the great nations of modern Europe, are we to say that Providence is too slow, and that the chariot wheels of a final triumph are too long delayed, because the Gospel has not conquered all Asia, Africa, America, and the islands of the sea, in less than a hundred years? Let us not forget that almost all great movements are slow. The coral reefs are slowly built; but when at last they rise from their deep and broad foundations, they form the bulwark of mighty continents, and defy the ocean and the storm. Colonization is slow. The growth of nations is slow. The advance of science, of art, and of human liberty is slow. The progress of the gospel is in analogy with all other great moral movements. It has, indeed, led the van in the march of human civilization.

Let no one then say that the work of modern missions has failed in its grand purpose of converting the world, because everything has not been accomplished within this nineteenth century. When tempted to think that too much money and time have been spent on the mission work, and too many valuable lives sacrificed, let us remember that the foundations of Christianity among the heathen have to be laid in the lowest depths, and that it requires time to raise the structure. The apt illustration of one of our missionaries now in the field is here in point: "We build, as they build a breakwater upon some coast where there is no harbor. Year after year, thousands of tons of stone are quarried and brought and cast into the sea. Thousands of dollars are spent, but the passer-by sees not the faintest sign of any result. Years pass, and the waves roll on unbroken, but at last a solid wall rises above the water, and remains to defy all storms to the end of time. How rejoiced the builders must be when the first frail line of stone peeps out of the sea! Till then they have toiled in faith; then faith begins to be aided by sight, and they go on joyfully to assured triumph. Just so it is that we rejoice over any sign that Christ's breakwater against idolatry and sin—the Christian Church—will ere long arise here high and

strong—lasting enough to bear all assaults, and defy all opposition. Men may say, ‘The sea has swallowed up all your Bibles and tracts, your teaching, your preaching, and your prayers, and gives no sign.’ But we can *see* the wall arising, and it shall never be swept away, for the corner-stone is Christ.” *L. J. Halsey.*

Lo, I am with you, saith the Master, till the world shall end. It is enough. It is everything. Be of good heart, ye servants of the Lord! Moreover, Providence opens to you a cheering vision. Unmistakable gleamings there are even now of that coming light that shall beam in upon every family of the earth. The heralding star is up. Night is waning. The morning breaketh. Work on in joy and hope.

The final consummation reached; Jehovah exalted to reign; the whole world subjugated affectionately, obediently before him, and all is done! All might has passed from the oppressor to the Protector, from the corrupter to the Sanctifier, from the extinguisher of hope to the Giver of assurance and glory. Man is a sanctified intelligence; earth is a suburb of heaven; divine holiness is poured abroad over it all. As the lofty anthem swells up from every nation and tribe and tongue, responsive peals forth the glorious psalm in heaven: heartier, warmer goes answering back the acclamation from the heart of the world! Chorus of heaven and earth, shout on! shout on! For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth for ever! *C. White.*

AUTHORS CITED, AND KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS.

[THE titles of leading works, *additional* to those given in the previous volume, are here also appended to the names of authors. An excellent service in the interest both of readers and writers is thus subserved.]

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|----------|--|----------|--|
| W. A. | Wm. Adams, D. D. | H. A. B. | H. A. Boardman, D. D. |
| N. A. | Nehemiah Adams, D. D. | | <i>Earthly Suffering and Heavenly Glory.</i> |
| J. A. A. | J. Addison Alexander, D. D. | | Horatius Bonar, D. D. |
| J. W. A. | James W. Alexander, D. D. | | <i>Light and Truth.</i> |
| W. L. A. | W. L. Alexander, D. D. | G. B. | George Bowen. |
| A. | Henry Alford, D. D. | | Thomas Bowdler. |
| | <i>How to Study the New Testament.</i> | | J. B. Bossuet, d. 1704. |
| | Ambrose, d. 397. | C. B. | Chas. Bradley. |
| J. A. | Joseph Angus, D. D. | | <i>Parochial Sermons.</i> |
| T. D. A. | Thomas D. Anderson, D. D. | | Chas. Bridges. |
| M. B. A. | M. B. Anderson, D. D. | | William Bright. |
| | Anselm, d. 1109. | | <i>Faith and Life.</i> |
| | Johann Arnd. | S. A. B. | Stopford A. Brooke. |
| T. A. | Thomas Arnold, D. D. | | Thomas Brooks, d. 1680. |
| | <i>Christian Life.</i> | P. B. | Phillips Brooks. |
| | Wm. Arnot, D. D. | | <i>Sermons.</i> |
| | <i>Church in the House.</i> | | Sir Thomas Browne. |
| | Wm. Arthur, D. D. | | <i>Religio Medici.</i> |
| | <i>Tongue of Fire.</i> | D. B. | David Brown, D. D. |
| Aug. | Augustine, d. 430. | J. B. | John Brown, D. D. |
| | Francis Bacon, d. 1626. | | Chas. Buck. |
| A. B. | Albert Barnes. | W. I. B. | Wm. Ives Badington, D. D. |
| | <i>Sermons.</i> | Bun. | John Bunyan, d. 1688. |
| | Isaac Barrow, D. D., d. 1677. | | Wm. Burkitt, D. D., d. 1703. |
| | C. G. Barth, D. D. | | Edward Burton, D. D., d. 1836. |
| | Wm. Bates, D. D., d. 1699. | H. B. | Horace Bushnell, D. D. |
| Baz. | Richard Baxter, d. 1691. | | <i>Sermons.</i> |
| | Basil, d. 379. | | Bp. Joseph Butler, d. 1752. |
| | G. T. Bedell, D. D., Bishop of Ohio. | W. A. B. | Wm. Archer Butler, D. D. |
| L. B. | Lyman Beecher, D. D. | B. | J. G. Butler, D. D. |
| Beng. | J. A. Bengel, D. D., d. 1752. | | John Caird, D. D. |
| T. D. B. | T. D. Bernard, D. D. | Calv. | John Calvin, d. 1574. |
| | Bernard de Clairvaux, d. 1153. | | John Cameron, d. 1625. |
| | G. W. Bethune, D. D. | | R. S. Candlish, D. D. |
| | R. Besser, D. D. | | Joseph Caryl, d. 1673. |
| | Bp. Wm. Beveridge, d. 1708. | A. C. | A. Caspers, D. D. |
| T. B. | Thomas Binney, D. D. | | <i>Footsteps of Christ.</i> |
| | <i>Welsh House Chapel Sermons.</i> | | Daniel Cawdrey, d. 1664. |

- Richard Cecil**, d. 1810.
- T. C.** **Thomas Chalmers**, D. D.
Stephen Charnock, d. 1680.
Peter Charron, d. 1608.
- G. B. C.** **Geo. B. Cheever**, D. D.
Windings of the River of Life, etc.
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Chrysostom, d. 458.
- S. T. C.** **Samuel Taylor Coleridge**.
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John Cumming, D. D.
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Cyprian, d. 258.
Cyril of Jerusalem, d. 386.
Cyril of Alexandria, d. 444.
- O. E. D.** **O. E. Daggett**, D. D.
D. D. **David Dickson**, D. D., d. 1662.
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